

Background

The El Camino Community College District intends that its graduates master the competencies required by Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. This entails the completion of required courses to obtain a degree or certificate with appropriate documentation as specified in Title 5, Section 56006 (DSPS Regulations). El Camino Community College District's policy is to respond to a student request for reasonable accommodations in a timely manner. However, provision of these accommodations does not guarantee the outcome of the student's endeavors. The Superintendent/President or designee shall establish standards of review for academic requirements to ensure that such requirements do not discriminate against students with disabilities or have the effect of excluding students solely on the basis of disability.

Verification of educational limitations and prescriptive planning of academic accommodations with otherwise qualified students with a disability is the responsibility of the Special Resource Center (SRC). The El Camino College District shall provide students a process to request reasonable accommodations, which may include course substitution of degree requirements. It is the student's responsibility to request accommodations. Additionally, it is the student's responsibility to provide documentation of disability along with identified educational limitations to support their request for accommodations. Accommodation requests are considered on an individual basis. Considerations include, but are not limited to, whether the student is an otherwise qualified student with a disability, documentation of educational limitations, the essential nature of the course and program, and accommodations and disability management strategies previously utilized by the student.

Requests for Academic Accommodations

There are two types of request for academic accommodations:

1. Request for Reasonable Accommodations – an adjustment that allows a student with a disability an equal opportunity to complete course requirements;
2. Request for Course Substitution – the replacement of a required course with an approved alternative course to complete program or degree requirements.

Reasonable Accommodations

The District recognizes the provision of reasonable accommodations is intended to mitigate functional limitations to facilitate a student's academic access and ability to

complete a course or achieve proficiency. For most students with documented disabilities, this first level of accommodation will involve an attempt to complete the course with additional help such as learning facilitation, in-class support services, educational material in alternate formats, assistive technology, auxiliary aids, test accommodations, and note-taking assistance. Other options may include a request to complete an extended version of the course, and/or advisement to complete developmental courses or courses in an alternate format to promote academic success.

Procedure for requesting an accommodation:

1. Students are responsible for requesting course accommodations with a counselor or disability specialist in the SRC and providing appropriate documentation of a disability.
 - a. As an alternative, students who do not want to use the services of the SRC may contact the Dean of Student Support Services and request reasonable accommodations.
 - b. Students are encouraged to request accommodations at the start of the matriculation process. A timeline for requesting services is available in the SRC student handbook posted on the District website. Reasonable accommodations are not retroactive and will commence in a timely manner relative to factors including but not limited to the term of enrollment, time of request, approval of the disability/documentation, the interactive process, and resources available.
 - c. The SRC professional staff or Dean of Student Services, in collaboration with the student, will evaluate and determine reasonable accommodations based upon the student's educational limitation(s) related to a documented disability.
2. After consultation, if the student disagrees with the recommendation for accommodations made by the SRC or Dean of Student Support Services, the student may request a review of the accommodations through the grievance procedure outlined in the SRC student handbook. This request for review must be submitted to the SRC within ten (10) business days of the time the student receives the recommendation for accommodations.
3. If approved accommodations are not being provided by the instructor or appropriate staff, students must notify the SRC within ten (10) business days, in accordance with the SRC grievance procedure. At this point, the SRC will attempt to resolve the conflict within five (5) business days.
4. If a resolution is not attained regarding the accommodation, the student, instructor, or SRC professional staff will refer the matter to the Americans with Disabilities Compliance Officer ("ADA Officer") or representative for review. The ADA Officer or representative will review and attempt to resolve the conflict informally with the student and faculty member within five (5) business days.

5. If no resolution is reached, the ADA Compliance Officer or representative will convene an Academic Accommodations Committee to investigate and resolve the issue within ten (10) business days. Depending on the circumstances and pursuant to the grievance procedure, the Academic Accommodations Committee may consist of the following:
 - a. The El Camino College ADA Officer or representative (chair).
 - b. The dean of the division or a designee from the department in which the course is taught.
 - c. An instructor who teaches the course in question, or from the department in which the course is taught, or from a closely related discipline.
 - d. The SRC faculty or staff member with knowledge of the disability and/or educational limitations of the student.

During this time period the SRC will continue to provide recommended reasonable accommodations pending a final resolution.

Grounds for Academic Accommodations

The Academic Accommodations Committee will evaluate and determine the appropriateness and feasibility of the accommodation to ensure access, and whether the requested academic adjustment fundamentally alters the course or program of instruction, or if implemented, will conflict with a direct licensing requirement or jeopardize a requirement essential to the program of instruction.

If necessary, the Academic Accommodations Committee will evaluate and determine alternative academic adjustments that may be considered to ensure the student is not denied the benefits of, or is excluded from participation in the academic program without impacting the integrity of the course.

Course Substitution

A course substitution is the replacement of a required course with an approved alternative course. A course substitution may be appropriate provided that the following four conditions are met:

1. The required course is found by the Academic Accommodations Committee to be nonessential to the student's course of study;
2. Reasonable accommodations offered do not enable them to successfully complete a required course;
3. Attempts with additional or different accommodations have been exhausted or if the student's identified educational limitations are of such magnitude that any attempt at

completing the course would be futile; and

4. A suitable course for substitution exists. The institution shall explore alternatives such as Independent Study, but is not required to develop a substitute course if one does not exist. Academic requirements essential to the program of instruction or major being pursued by the student, or directly related to licensing requirements, will not be regarded as discriminatory.

Procedure for Requesting a Course Substitution

1. The student will consult with the SRC to evaluate and determine reasonable alternative courses to meet degree requirements based upon the student's educational limitation(s) related to a verified disability.
 - a. Students are encouraged to request course substitutions two (2) semesters before applying for graduation.
2. If a course substitution is not obtained, the student is referred to the ADA Officer for consultation. Upon meeting with the student, the ADA Officer will then consult with appropriate college representatives to determine appropriate course substitutions informally. The student will be notified of results within ten (10) business days.
3. If no course substitution is approved, the student must submit an Academic Accommodations Request form with supporting documentation to the ADA Officer or representative.
 - a. The student is encouraged to consult with an appropriately qualified SRC disability specialist or counselor to review all submitted documents for accuracy and completeness prior to submission to the ADA Officer.
 - b. It is the student's responsibility to provide all required documentation at the time of request.
4. Once a complete request is received, the Academic Accommodations Committee shall convene within twenty (20) business days within a primary (spring and fall) term to review the student's request.
 - a. The student will have an opportunity to present the request accompanied by any relevant documentation for an academic accommodation to the committee.
 - b. The student may choose to have an advisor present to support them through the process. However, the advisor may not speak on behalf of the student during the process.
 - c. Thereafter, the committee will deliberate and reach a consensus for the appropriate academic accommodations – course adjustments or substitution.
 - d. The ADA Officer or representative shall notify the student of decisions within five (5) business days and maintain records of all decisions of the Committee.

5. An exception to the timeline will be made if the petition is received so late in a primary term it creates a challenge for the committee to complete its process within the term. In such cases, the Chair of the Academic Accommodations Committee will convene the committee at the earliest possible time during the following primary term. The timeline for the committee's decision will remain the same and begin the first day of instruction of the following primary term.
6. Pending the decision of the Academic Accommodations Committee, accommodations will be made in the interim period as recommended by the ADA Officer or representative.
7. Completion of a substitute course shall not be construed as meeting the prerequisite for other courses.
8. A course waiver is the elimination of a required course from a student's program of study. Academic Accommodations Committee may consider course waiver under the following three conditions:
 - a. There is evidence the student has met the requirements noted above for substitution;
 - b. There are no viable alternative courses offered at El Camino College, as determined by judgment of the Academic Accommodations Committee; and
 - c. The required course is peripheral to the student's course of study or major, and the student must not require any further classes or training in the specified area.

A waiver of the course requirement will not be considered a waiver of the student's responsibility to complete the minimum number of units required by the institution for completion of the program of study. A waiver of a course requirement shall not be construed as a waiver of any prerequisite for any other course. The absence of a substitute course does not automatically establish grounds for a waiver.

Recognition by Other Institutions

A course substitution or waiver applies to El Camino College courses exclusively. Students shall be informed that a substitution or waiver granted by El Camino College may not be recognized by another educational institution. Similarly, the college does not recognize substitutions or waivers granted by another institution. It is the responsibility of the student to contact potential transfer institutions regarding the acceptability of the substitution to meet transfer requirements.

Notification

The ADA Officer or representative shall notify the student, the SRC, the Registrar in Admissions and Records and all other pertinent offices of any changes allowed by the Academic Accommodations Committee to the student's course of study in writing within five (5) business days after a decision has been determined.

Appeals

The decision of the Academic Accommodations Committee is final unless there is new information that was not previously available. Under this exception, the student may only appeal the decision one (1) time and submit documents or information not previously submitted that they and the SRC specialist believe are pertinent in support of the appeal. If the appeal is denied, the student may submit a written request to the ADA Officer that the appeal be forwarded to the Vice President of Academic Affairs for review. This request must be submitted within twenty (20) business days of notification of the committee's decision. The decision of the Vice President of Academic Affairs is final.

El Camino College

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