

SENATE POLICY

Policy on Course Equivalency

(Inception: December 17, 1997)

(Amended: May 11, 2010, January 9, 2015)

(Amended Due to Administrative/Organizational Changes and New Course Numbering: January 1, 2019)

The University of Windsor acknowledges its responsibility to balance flexibility in accommodating students' degree pathways with the need to ensure that students graduating from the University have acquired the essential graduate attributes of their programs. On the recommendation of the chair / department head / director of the program and approval of the dean or associate dean, and in exceptional circumstances (*e.g.*, the unavailability of the course either now or in subsequent terms would prevent the student's normal progress to graduation), a student may replace one course with a substitute course. The substitute course must be evaluated in a thorough and comprehensive manner to ensure that the following criteria for equivalency are met.

Criteria for Equivalency

1. Equivalent learning outcomes. The substitute course must deliver the equivalent program learning outcomes in terms of breadth, depth, and the balance and nature of the skills, attitudes, and content delivered by the course being replaced. For example, a course from one area of business administration may be considered a substitute for another course in another branch of business administration because it requires a comparable balance of skills, attitude and content.
2. Breadth/depth. Survey and introductory courses generally provide breadth while more advanced courses tend to provide depth. In considering equivalency, this dimension should be taken into account. For example, an introductory course in one field might be considered a substitute for an introductory course in another.
3. Level of course. A course must be offered at an equivalent level to be eligible for substitution. Level is evaluated by considering the degree of sophistication of the course requirements. For example, a 2000-level course may at times be substituted for a 3000-level course. A lower level course cannot normally be substituted for a 4000-level course.
4. Similarity of origin or source. Substitution of courses from cognate disciplines is generally more readily established than substitution of courses from unrelated disciplines. In some cases, substitution of courses identified as anti-requisites might be acceptable (*e.g.*, statistics courses) as they are likely to deliver the equivalent program learning outcomes. For example, an entry-level history course might substitute for an entry-level political science course, but an entry-level literature course might not substitute for an entry-level chemistry course.
5. Course delivery format. Alternate formats of course delivery are acceptable when they provide an equivalent learning experience. For example, a theatre history course delivered in an online format might be considered a substitute for a face-to-face lecture-based course, but a nursing course requiring experiential learning might not be a substitute to an online nursing course with no practical component.

Regulations Governing Equivalency Approvals

1. The allowable number of course substitutions by a student in one degree should be determined at the Faculty level as long as this determination is not in contravention of university-wide academic requirements.

2. Approval of a course substitution is not a general statement of equivalency between two courses; it is a singular identification of equivalency based on the student's unique case and program.
3. The process of establishing equivalency usually requires consultation with the department housing the proposed substitute.
4. A recurring course equivalent substitution approved in a given program should be formalized through a general policy that would allow for standardizing substitutions in like cases.
5. Course substitution approvals must be tracked at the departmental level in order to identify and ensure efficient programmatic response to calendaring and scheduling problems, rather than temporary, piecemeal solutions. These data should be submitted to the dean for annual review.
6. Course substitutions are approved by the dean or associate dean following the recommendation of the program director or department chair.
7. The course substitution satisfies the equivalent program learning outcomes and the original requirement set out in the program requirements.