

## **UMBC Mathematics GEP Requirement**

### **Information & Procedures for Requesting a GEP Mathematics Course Substitution**

As part of UMBC's core curriculum in the General Education Program (GEP), one course in mathematics or statistics is required to demonstrate the quantitative reasoning competency for graduation. While UMBC views the learning of mathematics to be an essential component of a liberal arts education, it recognizes that otherwise qualified students with mathematics-based learning disabilities may find the conditions of the GEP mathematics requirement to be a barrier to degree completion due to the functional limitations of a documented disability.

**Please note:** a mathematics substitution is not an option if GEP math is deemed an essential component to the student's major or program of study. Further, SDS approval for a mathematics substitution is limited to the core GEP mathematics requirement only. Requests to modify program-specific requirements will be directed to the academic department.

To facilitate success in mathematics, UMBC provides students with disabilities reasonable and appropriate academic accommodations in the classroom and also encourages the use of academic support services such as tutoring, supplemental instruction, and meetings with faculty or teaching assistants. However, when a documented learning disability in mathematics would significantly interfere or prevent a student from being able to learn mathematics or successfully complete the core math requirement, the student may request a course substitution of the GEP math requirement through the Office of Student Disability Services (SDS). A mathematics course substitution is an accommodation due to disability that must be approved by SDS through an interactive process between SDS and the student.

In order to establish eligibility for a mathematics course substitution as a disability accommodation, students may refer to the procedures outlined below.

- **The student must be registered with the Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) and have on file (or submit) documentation of their disability diagnosis and limitations that demonstrate clearly how their disability impacts their mathematics skills.**  
Appropriate documentation of a math-based learning disability is typically in the form of a psychoeducational or neuropsychological assessment report that includes test administration data, speaks to the student's math performance and aptitude, provides a diagnosis by an appropriately qualified professional, and identifies recommended academic accommodations that may facilitate access to mathematics or indicates why an accommodation is insufficient to provide access to mathematics.
- **A student can submit their request for a course substitution through the SDS student *Accommodate* online software portal, in writing to SDS through an email if already registered with the SDS office, or this information can be shared verbally with an SDS disability specialist during an office appointment.**

- **The written request should:**
  - 1) State the difficulties the student has experienced with learning math in relation to their disability limitations,
  - 2) Identify any and all attempts to take mathematics courses, and
  - 3) Describe the support services and accommodations utilized during any previous mathematics course attempts (e.g. tutoring, meeting with instructors one-on-one, calculator, etc.).
- **If mathematics courses were taken at other higher education institutions, the student's transcript should be submitted to the UMBC Registrar so that an official record of course attempts and grades are part of the documentation review.** If a waiver or substitution of math was granted in high school, please submit the corresponding documentation to SDS as part of the request (this information may be noted on a student's high school IEP). Please note that a waiver/substitution at another institution does not guarantee eligibility for a course substitution at UMBC.
- **Although not required, supporting documentation from a student's prior math instructor(s) can accompany the student's substitution request.** Such a letter should outline the student's progress or lack thereof with the course material, the student's performance as compared to peers, and any additional pertinent feedback such as meeting during office hours for support.
- **Documentation from UMBC's Learning Resources Center (LRC), or another institution's similar academic success center, regarding participation in math-related tutoring or other learning supports related to achieving success in math courses, may also be useful.**
- **Once the student's course substitution request is submitted, all relevant information will be reviewed by an SDS Disability Specialist who will respond to the student within two weeks with the status of the request.** If additional information is needed to complete the processing of the request, such as additional disability documentation, the Disability Specialist will notify the student as such. Follow up with the student may be necessary to gather additional information.
- **The SDS Disability Specialist will complete a final review of all requests with the SDS team, considering all supporting documentation and information obtained, to decide whether there is sufficient evidence to warrant a mathematics course substitution.**
- **The Disability Specialist will notify the student of the decision.** If the substitution request is granted, the Disability Specialist will notify the University Registrar in writing and will document the substitution in the student's online advising record.
- **If approved, the student will be instructed to meet with their Academic Advisor to plan for registration of the appropriate substitute course.** The student must select from an approved substitute course that carries a Science GEP designation in order to meet UMBC's graduation requirements.