

# Dakota Wesleyan University

## Office of Student Disability Services

### Faculty Handbook

#### Rights of Faculty to Students with Disabilities

Faculty has the right to:

- ask for verification in the form of an accommodation letter from Disability Services; the Accommodation Letter ensures that the accommodations requested are reasonable and appropriate
- expect the student to initiate discussions concerning their academic accommodation requests for each course; if the student does not approach you, request accommodations, and provide you with documentation from Disability Services, you are not obligated to provide accommodations
- expect Disability Services to proctor and administer exams in a secure and monitored environment.
- discuss alternative accommodations with Disabilities if the academic accommodations requested seem to violate the goals or requirements of the course
- maintain the academic standards and integrity of their courses
- expect class attendance and timely submission of assignments
- fail a student who does not perform to passing standards
- be treated respectfully by all students

Accommodation requests are based on documentation on file in Disability Services, if warranted; temporary services are provided while documentation is being obtained. *Due to confidentiality, the nature of the disability may not be disclosed to the faculty unless there is a specific need to know.* When beneficial to the faculty/student relationship, students are encouraged to self-disclose.

#### Responsibilities of Faculty to Students with Disabilities

Faculty has a responsibility to:

- maintain student confidentiality - treat and protect all disability-related information as confidential, keep disability-related information in protected locations, not "out" the student to other students, faculty or staff.
- clearly communicate class policies and procedures to the student with a disability
- consult with Disabilities Services and the student if the accommodations requested seem to violate the goals or requirements of the course
- provide accommodations to students who are registered with Disability Services
- use a syllabus statement and class announcements to invite students to disclose their disability and accommodation needs to Disability Services
- act immediately upon obtaining a student's request for accommodations
- work with Disability Services and the student with a disability if alternative formats for textbooks, class handouts, course packets, or audio-visual materials are needed
- refer a student to Disability Services if a student notifies the faculty of a disability

<http://www.dwu.edu/campuslife/disability/rights.htm>

#### **Letter of Accommodation**

At the beginning of the semester you may be approached by a student with a disability who has a letter of accommodation written and signed by the Disability Services coordinator. This letter will verify that the student has a documented disability. The letter will contain educational accommodations for the student based on his/her disability. It is the student's responsibility to present this paper to inform you of the disability early in the semester so that accommodation procedures are clear from the start. It is best to meet with the student individually to discuss the accommodations and how they will be carried out. If you have any questions regarding the recommended accommodations, you may contact the Office of Student Disability Services for clarification.

Along with the letter of accommodation, you will receive a Confirmation of Test Accommodation Form to be filled out after each exam accommodation occurs. This is to be completed by the faculty or staff member administering the accommodations and initialed and signed by the student receiving accommodations. This form is to document that adequate accommodations were provided and were seen as satisfactory by the student receiving them. A copy is sent to the instructor of the course that the student is receiving accommodations in, and another copy is sent to Student Disability Services McGovern Office #231, Box 923.

Please sign the letter of accommodation, return it to Student Disability Services McGovern Office #231, Box 923. Retain a copy for your records. Your signature on the accommodation letter, which is kept on file in the Disability Services Office, will verify that you are aware of the accommodation request.

The need for accommodations can vary depending on what is determined to be a “reasonable accommodation” appropriate to the disability. The underlying purpose of these accommodations is to enable students to be evaluated on the basis of their abilities, not their disabilities.

It should be stressed that the primary person with whom to work in making appropriate and/or necessary changes is the student with the disability. Arranging appropriate accommodations involves a shared responsibility between the classroom instructor and the student. Students with disabilities are responsible for bringing their individual needs to the attention of their instructor as early as possible in the semester, but some students are hesitant to make special requests. Therefore, ***it is important that instructors include the following statement on every syllabus.***

#### **Student Disability Services and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):**

Any student who believes she or he may need academic accommodations or access accommodations based on the impact of a documented disability are encouraged to contact and register with Student Disability Services no later than three weeks after the first day of classes. Student Disability Services is the official office to assist students through the process of disability verification and coordination of appropriate and reasonable accommodations. Students currently registered with Student Disability Services must obtain a new accommodation letter each semester.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guarantees the privacy of students with disabilities.

For more information, questions, and/or accommodation arrangement, please contact:

Donna Dunn  
Disability Services Coordinator  
Office: McGovern 231  
(605) 995-2904 or (605) 995-2931  
Fax: (605) 995-2660  
[dodunn@dwu.edu](mailto:dodunn@dwu.edu)

<http://www.dwu.edu/campuslife/disability/rights.htm>

### **Rights of students with disabilities**

Students have the right to:

- expect all disability-related information to be treated confidentially; Student Disability Services is the only office designated to review disability documentation, determine eligibility and appropriate accommodations
- equal access to all facilities on campus
- receive reasonable and appropriate accommodations in a timely manner from faculty and Disability Services
- appeal decisions regarding services and accommodations
- non-discrimination and freedom from retaliatory discrimination

### **Responsibilities of students with disabilities**

Students have a responsibility to:

- provide Disability Services current documentation from a qualified practitioner that describes the nature of the disability, functional limitations due to the disability, severity of these limitations, and reasonable accommodations
- initiate discussions with faculty concerning accommodation requests

- initiate requests for accommodations in a timely manner
- inform Disability Services if materials are needed in an alternate format as soon as possible
- inform faculty and Disability Services immediately when an accommodation is not being provided completely or correctly
- notify faculty and Disability Services when an accommodation is not being used or is no longer needed
- adhere to DWU code of student conduct

## **Rights of the Office of Student Disability Services**

Student Disability Services has a right to:

- receive the appropriate documentation from the student prior to services being initiated
- expect students and faculty to work cooperatively with Disability Services to facilitate academic accommodations
- deny unreasonable academic accommodations; academic accommodations cannot impose undue hardship to, or fundamentally alter a program or an activity of the university
- deny academic accommodations if appropriate documentation is not provided

## **Responsibilities of the Office of Student Disability Services**

Student Disability Services has a responsibility to:

- collect, evaluate, and securely house disability documentation and determine eligibility for services
- treat and protect all disability-related information as confidential
- meet with the student privately in an accessible location to discuss disability-related needs
- provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations in collaboration with the faculty and the student
- communicate procedures clearly to the student and faculty

## **Testing Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**

Student Disability Services has a responsibility to:

- review written documentation of the functional limitations and associated educational recommendations for each student to determine if testing accommodations are reasonable and appropriate
- prepare a Letter of Accommodation summarizing the appropriate educational accommodations
- provide the individual administering test accommodations a Confirmation of Test Accommodation Form to have the individual and student receiving accommodations sign to document that adequate accommodations were provided

Students have a responsibility to:

- review testing accommodation requests with the Coordinator of Student Disability Services
- share the Letter of Accommodation with each course instructor early in the semester. Accommodations are not retroactive and will not be provided until the Letter of Accommodation is presented for a signature.
- appear on time and complete exams in accordance with instructor's policy
- notify Disability Services promptly if not able to take the exam for some disability-related reason

Faculty and Academic Department has a responsibility to:

- review the Letter of Accommodation and discuss it with the student
- discuss options to accommodate the student's testing needs including addressing issues related to the provision of a distraction-limited space and quiet location
- contact the Disability Services Office to resolve any questions about testing accommodations
- return a copy of the Confirmation of Test Accommodation Form to Student Disability Services and give the original copy to the instructor of the course the student received test accommodations for

## Comparison of Disability in High School and College

High School	College
Under IDEA, children with disabilities are absolutely <i>entitled</i> to a "Free and Appropriate Public Education."	<i>Equal access</i> to education is the order of the day – no one is <i>entitled</i> to anything, but rather students have <i>civil rights</i> and they must advocate for themselves in order to enjoy those rights.
Section 504 in the public schools includes "Free and Appropriate Public Education" language, and accommodations may include a shortening of assignments, or the use of notes on tests, when other students cannot use them.	Section 504 is the first civil rights legislation that applied to colleges. It upholds the institution's right to maintain the academic standards, and no accommodations may be permitted to reduce that standard for any student. Thus there is no "free" education, and shortening assignments and using notes when other students do not are not considered "reasonable accommodations."
Plans, either the IEP or a 504 Plan, drove all services and accommodations, and involved the teachers, counselors, and absolutely required a parent's signature.	There is no plan, and instructors are not contacted, except by the student. In fact, parents may not receive even a student's grades without the student giving written permission.
"Placement" is determined by the child's "team," and outlined in the plan, and must, by law, be in the least restrictive environment.	Placement integration is assumed, and is the order of the day. We adjust the environment through accommodations, but we don't deliberate and select the environment for the student in advance.
Students were qualified for public education simply by being of the appropriate age, and because they had a disability.	"Otherwise qualified," in college, means that the student must meet all entrance and academic requirements, whether they receive accommodations or not.
Everybody knew about a student's placement, and practically everybody signed the plan. Each teacher would know about a student even before he or she entered the classroom, and have a good idea what the student's needs were.	DSS never contacts a professor without express permission from the student. Thus, the student must initiate all actions regarding accommodation with each professor, for each course, every semester. In addition, students have the civil right to <i>refuse</i> accommodations they don't need or want; and if they do not request an accommodation it is assumed they do not want it.
Public schools, for the most part, are responsible for appropriate assessment of a student's disability.	Higher education does not have to assess the student, but can expect that the student will provide proof of their disability within accepted guidelines.
Some subjects may have been waived for a student before graduation, if they were specifically related to the student's disability.	Substitutions for specific graduation requirements may be requested by following a rigorous petition process, but "waivers" for requirements are <i>never</i> granted. Substitutions are also granted typically after the student has <i>both</i> provided adequate verification to DSS of their disability <i>and</i> unsuccessfully attempted the courses in question with the appropriate accommodations recommended by DSS.
Labels are a way to categorize people.	Student has a right to disclose to whom and when they choose, but must own their disability in order to enjoy a level playing field.
Assessment, physical or other therapy, or personal care provided by school while in school.	Student is responsible for personal services -- personal care, medical and related requirements, just as if they would if they were living independently and not attending school.
Students often receive "Un-timed tests" if they have a disability.	"Un-timed tests" are not reasonable, but time extensions may be reasonable, typically time-and-a-half but no more than double time.
Teachers may be expected to learn all they can about the disability of a student in one of their classes.	Professors need know only that which applies to the accommodations the student requests.

Thank you to Disability Services for Students (DSS) for contributing informative content to our website.  
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