

## Disability Services Accommodations Process

Students with disabilities are eligible for reasonable accommodations per Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA of 1990. Accommodations provide equal opportunity to obtain the same level of achievement while maintaining standards of excellence.

Disability Services staff work with college faculty, staff and community agencies to provide opportunities for students with disabilities that provide them access to fully participate in and enjoy the benefits of higher education. We recognize that disability reflects diverse characteristics and experiences and is an aspect of diversity integral to society. Disability Services achieves individualized support by honoring the uniqueness of each student and providing resources and services that promote academic success and self-advocacy skills. In addition, we collaborate with instructors, staff, Minnesota State system colleagues and community agencies to create usable, equitable, inclusive and sustainable learning environments.

It is generally understood that this is an interactive process that involves participation by the student, disability services staff and the faculty member(s) providing instruction for the student the term accommodations are being determined. DS Coordinators must review every student application for services on a case-by-case basis.

1. Student expresses interest in learning about, and/or, receiving disability services. *[Student Initiated]*
  - Come from a variety of avenues: Registration event, Student Development Services, faculty, in class, faculty referral, web search, direct call, support center, tour, parentally driven, college fair, high school visit, walk-in, drop-in, student/family-driven application received.
2. Apply for Disability Services *[Student Initiated]*
  - Documentation and/or application received. Email is sent to the student to encourage them to complete the rest of the materials (documentation and/or application) depending on what is received first. Indicates that once those items are received, an appointment is encouraged to complete the intake process.
  - Also may include educating students and families about high school accommodations versus college accommodations
3. Review of Application and Supporting Documentation *[Disability Services Staff]*
  - Application and documentation is received prior to intake meeting.
  - Confirm information in application
  - Review documentation and do research in the DSM or online.
  - Identify possible obstacles/barriers as well as strengths based on review of documentation and research done and student input
  - Identify possible accommodations based on research and review of documentation.

4. Have a dialogue with student about barriers to their education. Guided by survey of limitations documentation based on ADA language and guidelines. Answers help in determining accommodations that are reasonable. *[Disability Services Staff]*
  - May include reinforcing differences between college and high school as it pertains to disability services.
5. Identify possible accommodations request based on provided documentation and student interview. *[Disability Services Staff]*
6. Disability Services will communicate the accommodations request to faculty. *[Disability Services Staff]*
  - In some cases, i.e., for an extension (deadlines, due dates, etc.) request, faculty may receive a communication initiated by the Disability Services Coordinator with a plan outlining recommended parameters for the extension (deadlines, due dates, etc.) as applicable for each course the student is enrolled in. The communication is the first step in a collaboration with faculty to begin a discussion relative to the accommodation prior to sending out the request.
7. Faculty review accommodation. Implement if no questions. If faculty has questions about the accommodation request, reach out to Disability Services coordinator. *[Faculty and Disability Service Staff]*
  - If a question arises, disability services and faculty then discuss accommodations and possible alternatives or denial.
  - Based on Office of Civil Rights guidance, student is to receive accommodation until agreement can be made by faculty and Disability Services coordinator.
  - If denial of services is the determined outcome by disability services coordinator and faculty, provide appeal information. Appeal routed to Student Development Services Leadership.

Faculty must consider the following questions when determining how requested accommodations may impact the student's access to the course:

- Would this accommodation negatively impact the integrity of the course outcomes?
- Would this accommodation alter the fundamental nature of the course?
- Would this accommodation prevent the student from contributing "in class" or participating with peers?
- Would this accommodation provide the student with a significant advantage over his/her peers?

8. Complete new Accommodation Request Forms for each semester [*Student Initiated*]
  - If a break occurs in attendance, the entire process may need to be repeated. Otherwise, only the accommodation request is sent to new faculty members each semester.

Student is expected to be an on-going participant in the interactive process. They may have to discuss accommodation with faculty for logistics. If student has concerns regarding implementation or effectiveness, then s/he should contact DS coordinator.

*As a general rule, faculty should direct questions related to specific student accommodations to disability services staff.*

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