

FACULTY HANDBOOK

TEACHING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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Introduction

[Student Life Disability Services](#) (SLDS) is committed to creating the extraordinary student experience at The Ohio State University by affording equal access to an educational experience through the provision of academic accommodations. The office delivers accommodations, services, auxiliary aids for students with documented disabilities. Disability Services also helps faculty to fulfill their responsibilities for student access to classroom instruction. This handbook is a guide to assist faculty in this endeavor.

Legal Obligations

Two primary legal mandates protect students with disabilities from discrimination and ensure that they have equal access to all aspects of university life. One of these laws, Title II of the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) of 1990, as Amended](#), makes Ohio State's responsibilities for access clear:

"A public entity shall make reasonable modifications in policies or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the public entity can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity."

A second federal law, [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#), also outlines the university's obligations:

"No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States....shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

[Disability Services](#) works diligently to ensure its operations are legally compliant. At the same time, its staff is also available to help instructors of students with disabilities to

be consistent with the law. Disability Services maintains a close and collaborative relationship with the [ADA Coordinator's Office](#) to facilitate university-wide compliance. Instructors are welcome to contact the ADA Coordinator's Office for more information.

What is an "accommodation," and what makes it "reasonable?"

An accommodation is an adjustment that allows someone to overcome or work around a disability. In higher education contexts, this change is usually made to instructional approaches or to methods of expressing academic knowledge or skills. Thus, this type of accommodation mitigates the impact of a person's disability on their access to academic content and means of demonstrating their mastery of that content. Federal law expects that such accommodations be offered at Ohio State, as long as they are "reasonable."

An accommodation is generally considered reasonable unless it gives rise to one of several specific conditions. Anything that would "fundamentally alter" an academic requirement is unreasonable. This means that a reasonable accommodation does not entail changes to learning objectives, course expectations, performance requirements, or educational goals. Additionally, anything that would cause undue hardship to the university is not reasonable. Finally, any accommodations that would pose a direct threat to health or safety are not reasonable. Apart from these exceptions, the university is generally required to provide accommodations. Instructors should contact Disability Services if they suspect an accommodation is unreasonable.

Student, Instructor, and Staff Roles

[Disability Services](#), students with disabilities, and instructors must work together to provide reasonable accommodations based on disability documentation, functional limitations, and collaborative needs assessment. Each member of this team shoulders different responsibilities:

- **Disability Services Staff:** The staff of Disability Services is expected to authorize students' accommodations, to empower and train students to

advocate for themselves and their personal preferences when requesting authorized academic accommodations, to help students request and access accommodations in a timely manner, to provide specific appropriate accommodations to students as necessary, to honor student preferences for those accommodations whenever possible, and to address instructors' questions and concerns.

- **Students:** Students are expected to register with Disability Services, to request accommodations promptly from their instructors with accommodation requests, and to, otherwise, complete the same class requirements as all other students.
- **Instructors:** Instructors are expected to provide appropriate accommodations to their students in collaboration with Disability Services, consulting with Disability Services staff as needed. Instructors also assist student in arranging for note takers, help to facilitate the exam accommodation process, and collaborate with students and Disability Services staff to make sure course materials are accessible.

By embracing their responsibilities to foster access together, students, instructors and Disability Services staff can best effect the accommodations required by federal law.

Best Practices for Instructors

Supporting Students with Disabilities

[Disability Services](#) is the campus office designated to provide appropriate accommodations, services, and auxiliary aids for students with disabilities. In order to implement most accommodations, students, instructors, and Disability Services staff must collaborate, communicate, and follow through on commitments in a timely fashion. The following best practices can assist instructors in making this collaboration successful:

- **Including a statement about disability accommodations in course syllabi:** This statement should read as follows: "The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. You are also welcome to register with Student Life Disability Services to establish reasonable accommodations. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. **SLDS contact information:** slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 092L Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue."
- **Maintaining students' confidentiality about their disabilities and respecting their choices to disclose or withhold the nature of their disabilities:** Disability information is confidential. While students requesting services in the classroom must disclose to their instructors their registration with Disability Services, they are not obligated to reveal their disabilities or the nature of their limitations to their instructors. Some students may choose to tell their instructors, but many may not wish to discuss the specifics. *Additionally, Disability Services staff will not disclose any student's disability unless that student has granted written permission.* For these reasons, instructors should conduct accommodation and disability-related meetings in a private location. Ideally, students and instructors will meet in private, one-on-one sessions to [fill out Proctor Sheets](#), [locate note takers](#), or discuss any other accommodations.
- **Supplying accommodations only to students who have registered with Disability Services:** While it is the sole campus office authorized to review disability documentation and determine students' eligibility for specific accommodations, not all students with disabilities are registered with Disability Services. If students have not registered, they are ineligible to receive services. Instructors are always free to confirm a student's

registration with Disability Services, which can provide a letter of verification when required.

- **Supplying accommodations as requested, only when requested:** Most students' accommodations are administered through Disability Services, but when instructors provide accommodations themselves, they must implement the appropriate accommodations correctly. Instructors should not guess or predetermine what students may need without a specific request for accommodations; persons with disabilities have the right to choose not to use accommodations, and in exercising that right, they accept the resulting outcomes. This means that instructors are under no obligation to retroactively fix any problem arising from students' choices to forgo accommodations. Instructors may consult with Disability Services Access Specialists for further guidance on the reasonableness, parameters, or adequacy of authorized accommodations.
- **Working with Disability Services to supply students with accessible formats for print materials and other classroom media in a timely manner:** Students registered with Disability Services must receive all converted materials at the same time as their peers. This requires particular proactivity from instructors of students who receive these accommodations, ideally through selecting already-accessible materials (e.g., print materials available in a searchable text digital version, audiovisual recordings with accurate captions embedded, etc.). Disability Services is able to assist instructors with this process. If instructors do not have accessible formats for print or audiovisual materials for their students, it is critical that they inform Disability Services of the materials they plan to use as soon as they are requested to do so by a student or by Disability Services.
- **Understanding that students with disabilities vary in their academic success:** [All instructors expect their students to perform to the best of their abilities](#). It follows, likewise, that instructors should require students with disabilities to perform the essential functions of the class. Just as academic

performance varies among students without disabilities, students with disabilities can display a wide range of academic abilities as well.

- **Remembering that the student is the expert on strategies that may help:** Many students registered with Disability Services have experience advocating for their needs. Most are knowledgeable about their disability, the strategies and accommodations that work for them, and the assistive technology they use. Meeting with students individually can provide instructors with additional insights and helpful suggestions.

Supporting all Students

While advising instructors on course management and instructional methods falls outside of its scope of service, Disability Services suggests the following practices may be helpful to all students in class, potentially averting the need for many student-specific accommodations:

- **Practicing Universal Design for Learning:** Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an approach to designing course instruction, materials, evaluation, activities, and content in such a way that all persons can participate in the educational process without adaptation or retrofitting. Using this concept, accommodations would likely not be necessary because options for learning and evaluation are available to anyone participating in a class. Incorporating these ideals, in whole or in part, is both feasible and helpful to students. More information on UDL is available through the [Center for Applied Special Technology website](#).
- **Ensuring all media—especially Carmen content—is accessible:** All course content loaded into Carmen is the instructor's responsibility. While Ohio State ensures Carmen's accessibility by working with [Desire2Learn](#) to continually monitor the level of accessibility compliance, Desire2Learn works on the basic interface only; materials loaded by instructors are not monitored by their designers. The [Accessible Classroom Technologies \(ACT\) wiki](#) can provide guidance for instructors who wish to make their classroom media accessible for everyone, including students with disabilities. As many online

materials are inaccessible to students with disabilities, following [ACT guidelines](#) can help instructors ensure that content is able to be accessed by all students. (Incidentally, [captioning videos also aids students without disabilities](#) because it presents content in multiple modes.) If any classroom instruction is on the web, the [Web Accessibility Center \(WAC\)](#) and [its website](#) can help to ensure accessibility.

Accommodations at Ohio State

In order to receive services, students provide [Disability Services](#) professional documentation of their disabilities. Some disabilities calling for academic accommodations include psychiatric conditions, learning disabilities, mobility disabilities, medical diagnoses and conditions, disabilities resulting from brain injury, and sensory disabilities (e.g., those students who are D/deaf or hard of hearing or who are blind or have low vision). Disability Services also pays particular attention to [meeting the unique disability-related needs of Ohio State's student veterans](#). The [Prospective Students page](#) on the Disability Services website describes the office's documentation and registration guidelines in more detail.

Upon registration, students are authorized to receive any or all of the following six types of accommodations through Disability Services:

- [Exam Accommodations](#);
- [Accessible Media](#);
- [American Sign Language Interpreting, Real-Time Transcription, FM Systems, and Audiovisual Captioning](#);
- [Assistive Technology](#);
- [Note-Taking and Lab Assistance](#); and
- [Disability Counseling and Advocacy](#)

1. Exam Accommodations

Disability Services collaborates with students and their instructors to offer exam accommodations that ensure equal access. Depending on students' specific needs, exam accommodations can include any of the following:

- Allowing 50% or 100% more time to complete exams
- Testing in a distraction-reduced space
- Taking exams in alternate formats (e.g., digital formats or large print versions)
- Using a reader or scribe to complete exams
- Using [assistive technology](#) to complete exams

Exam accommodations may be facilitated by the instructor, by the University Registrar's Testing Center, or by Disability Services Exam Scheduling staff. If an instructor is capable of providing the approved accommodations in a classroom, office, or departmental office, the student will not need to take the exam at Disability Services. Many instructors prefer arranging with their students to proctor their own exams because this process is simpler and usually results in quicker grade turnaround. These instructors are also relieved of completing the paperwork required for Disability Services to proctor the exam. Students may also benefit from this arrangement by having their instructors at hand to answer questions about the exam. Of course, Disability Services Exam Scheduling staff and Access Specialists are available to supply guidance to instructors about providing their own exam accommodations.

Another option for instructors is to make arrangements with the [University Registrar's Testing Center](#), which is located in the Student Academic Services Building. The Testing Center is equipped to provide accommodations for extended time, which will satisfy many students' requirements. For more specialized accommodations, however, either the instructor or Disability Services will be required to proctor the exam. The [Testing Center's website](#) has more information on its services.

If the instructor and student choose to have Disability Services Exam Scheduling staff proctor an exam, they must completely fill out a [Proctor Sheet](#) together and promptly return it to the office. Instructors should keep in mind that scheduling exams at Disability Services must be done well in advance (the timeline for submission is detailed on the Proctor Sheet): *per current policy, students must return completed forms to Disability Services at least two (2) full business days prior to the exam to be able to schedule an exam with the office.*

2. Accessible Media

Accessible Media: Some students may be authorized to use "Accessible Media" accommodations, that is, traditional print materials (e.g., textbooks) rendered in a more accessible format. Some examples of Accessible Media include the following:

- **.rtf (rich text format) files,**
- **.pdf images or searchable text,**
- **.epub files (electronic publications),**
- **Paper enlargements,**
- **Audible mathematics and scientific notation,**
- **Braille, and**
- **Tactile and raised-line images.**

Instructors can quickly and directly afford equal access for their students by selecting course materials that are already formatted in an accessible manner. Disability Services Accessible Media staff is available to consult with any instructors who wish to provide accessible media themselves.

Disability Services can also support instructors as they create their own materials and design their courses. The [Accessible Classroom Technologies website](#) provides useful resources, processes, and tools for instructors creating accessible documents. Detailed on this website are [a process for creating accessible .PDF, Word, and PowerPoint formats](#) and [a description of accessible graphics](#).

Instructors are also able to convert inaccessible materials through Disability Services. The office staff is able to render textbooks, electronic documents, exams, and other print materials into a more usable format. *Instructors of students who are authorized for this accommodation are responsible for identifying the respective course materials for Disability Services in advance of use in the class: delays in source identification may result in students not being able to access their materials in a timely manner.*

3. American Sign Language Interpreting, Real-Time Transcription, FM Systems, and Audiovisual Captioning

Disability Services coordinates interpreting and transcribing for registered and authorized students. Alternatively or in addition, some students may be authorized for audio amplification. These [services are available for classroom and lab requirements](#), academic-related activities, and university events. Students may also use these services for study groups and one-on-one meetings with their instructors. Instructors are advised to allow interpreters or transcribers to select a location in the room that will provide the best access for the student.

Additional information on these services beyond the following descriptions may be found on the [Disability Services website](#):

- **Interpreting and Transliterating:** A team of American Sign Language interpreters interpreting or transliterating academic-related activities
- **Real-Time Transcription:** A transcriber using a laptop computer with abbreviation software to transcribe meaning-for-meaning all audio content in class lectures, discussions, meetings, or any other academic-related activity
- **FM Systems:** Devices available for students who benefit from audio amplification in the classroom, in one of various configurations to meet students' specific requirements
- **Audiovisual Captioning:** Some students are authorized for accommodations to enable their access to audiovisual materials. In many cases, such accommodations require closed captioning of this media. The

easiest avenue to supply these accommodations is for instructors to select only those videos that have already been accurately captioned. (In particular, instructors are advised that YouTube content is rarely captioned accurately.) Alternatively, the [Accessible Classroom Technologies website](#) can assist instructors in captioning web-delivered audio and video on their own and describes captioning requirements mandated by Ohio State's Web Accessibility Policy.

- Understandably, selecting a captioned version of audiovisual materials is not always possible. In these cases, Disability Services staff members are able to overlay English captions onto digital videos with audio components. Disability Services provides captioning services for online courses, including videos and audio-enabled PowerPoint presentations. *Instructors of students who are authorized for this accommodation are responsible for identifying the respective course materials to Disability Services in advance of use in the class: delays in source identification may result in students not being able to access their materials in a timely manner.*

4. Assistive Technology

The Assistive Technology Training Center (ATTC) is a computer lab housed within Disability Services. The ATTC offers a quiet and studious computing environment for all Disability Services students as well as the latest in "assistive technology" (i.e., hardware or software designed to compensate for disability or limitation?). ATTC staff members train registered students to use the technology and advance their skills. Instructors are also welcome to [contact the ATTC](#) to learn more about the kinds of assistive technology available at Ohio State:

- **Reading/Writing Enhancement Software:** Software offering scan-to-speech, text-to-speech, or web-to-speech functions using bimodal output via a computer-generated voice, among many other tools. Once print material is scanned into the computer, the program will read aloud the information.

- **Voice Recognition Software:** Software allowing a user to "type" hands-free, word processing their spoken dictations and computer commands. This can be particularly helpful for people who have difficulty typing, who have no ability to type, or who compose thoughts and ideas better orally.
- **Screen Magnification Software:** Screen enlargement programs magnifying the computer screen (in part or in entirety) and allowing students to see with better clarity and focus.
- **Screen Reader Software:** Software reading aloud everything that is text-based on the computer screen, including internet sites and word processing applications.
- **Alternative Input/Output Devices:** Alternative input devices such as adaptive mice and keyboards, closed-circuit TV (CCTV) magnifiers, and refreshable Braille displays. The ATTC also offers some workstations with adjustable height tables and workstations for left-handed users.

Some of the software provided at the ATTC is available in [computer labs and libraries across campus](#). All Ohio State students have access to these programs in the other campus labs, whether or not they have registered with Disability Services.

5. Note-Taking and Lab Assistance

Disability Services coordinates note-taking services for authorized students. Students may secure this critical service in one of three ways:

- **Obtaining Instructor-Provided Notes:** The instructor provides a copy of notes or PowerPoints (if comprehensive) directly to the student. This is often the most efficient and effective means of providing note-taking accommodations.
- **Audio Recording or Using a Livescribe Smartpen:** After securing permission from the instructor, the registered student records the lectures using a Livescribe Smartpen, .mp3 recorder, or similar device. The student understands that the audio recordings are only for personal use, that they

may be considered intellectual property, and that their use is subject to the [Code of Student Conduct](#).

- **Using a Volunteer Note Taker:** The registered student provides a letter to the instructor that explains this process in more detail. In general, the instructor makes an announcement in class or sends an email requesting a volunteer note taker. *In the announcement, instructors must not reveal the identity of the student with a disability.* If there is significant difficulty acquiring a note taker, instructors should contact the student's Disability Services Access Specialist for assistance. Once a volunteer is found and identified to the student receiving services, they mutually agree upon a method to deliver notes promptly. The note taker is paid a stipend of \$25 per credit hour upon satisfactory completion of assistance for the academic term.

Disability Services also arranges for assistants to work with registered and authorized students during hands-on (e.g., lab work) activities. Lab assistants act only as hands or eyes for the student with a mobility or sensory disability; all information about actual class processes and procedures remains the enrolled student's responsibility.

Additional information about these processes may be found on the [note-taking assistance page](#) on the Disability Services website and in this document's [FAQ section](#).

6. Disability Counseling and Advocacy

Students registered with Disability Services are assigned a staff Access Specialist who is trained and knowledgeable about disability-related needs and inquiries. In addition to assisting students with academic services and accommodations, Disability Services Access Specialists are available to meet with students as needed to provide additional resources such as:

- Connecting students with time management or study strategies assistance
- Supplying referrals for students in need of further disability evaluation

- Advocating for students and working to enhance self-advocacy as they work with faculty to ensure access to appropriate accommodations and auxiliary aids

Instructors should be aware that students must sign a release for Disability Services to share any diagnostic information with instructors or other university officials.

For this reason, office staff cannot discuss the particulars of students' individual disabilities without their express permission.

Nonetheless, instructors should feel comfortable contacting Disability Services Access Specialists with questions or concerns about accommodations for which students are eligible or to confirm registration with Disability Services. Access Specialists also serve as resources to faculty and staff in a variety of ways:

- Assisting instructors who want to incorporate the needs of students with specific disabilities into their instructional approaches. Specifically, Access Specialists can advise faculty as they develop any of the following:
 - Reasonable accommodations;
 - Curriculum modifications;
 - Class or course adjustments; or
 - Instructional strategies.
- Serving as consultants to faculty and staff on disability-related issues
- Facilitating in-service training for the university community

For more information about training opportunities for an academic department, please contact a Disability Services Access Specialist.

Emergency Procedures

Whether accidents, natural disasters, or medical crises, emergencies occasionally occur, as do emergency preparedness drills. Instructors and staff should develop a plan of action if they are aware that one or more students in their classroom are D/deaf or

hard of hearing, are blind or have low vision, or have a mobility disability. Ultimately, persons with disabilities are responsible for their own safety in an emergency situation, but classroom instructors always play an important role in student evacuation. For assistance in developing an evacuation plan, instructors may contact the [ADA Coordinator's Office](#). The following are some initial suggestions for accounting for disabilities when handling emergencies.

Students with Mobility Disabilities

In emergencies, instructors should assist individuals with mobility disabilities to ensure their safety:

- **During emergency evacuations:** During fires or other emergencies requiring evacuation, persons with mobility disabilities should be guided out of the building to a safe distance from the building whenever possible and expedient. For some emergencies, this is impossible due to blocked emergency egress, requiring such persons to "shelter in place" instead.
- **When sheltering in place:** In all cases of sheltering in place, noting the relative location of the nearest stairway or room number (e.g., NW corner stairs, 5th floor) is vital, as it can facilitate efficient rescue from these areas. Instructors should inform sheltering students that rescue personnel will be notified of their exact position.
 - *During tornadoes*, a person with a mobility disability should be guided to an area of refuge in an internal room, away from windows.
 - *In cases of fire*, the student should be guided to a hall or a room, as close as possible to a stairway, protected by fire-rated doors and/or walls.
 - In most instances, attempting to carry a person with a disability is dangerous and ill-advised, as it can cause injury to both the carrier and the student.
 - While waiting in the area of refuge, the sheltering student should not block any stairway, as this can harm the student or others evacuating via the stairway.

- Whenever possible, instructors should wait with students with mobility disabilities in areas of refuge. When this is not feasible, these students should be left with a cell phone to communicate with outside personnel.
- Instructors should then alert [emergency personnel](#) of the location and need for evacuation of sheltering students.

Elevator Breakdowns and Repair

Elevator breakdowns and repair are a relatively common occurrence on campus and can be inconvenient or even life-threatening to a person who uses a wheelchair. When an elevator serving their classroom ceases to operate, instructors should contact the [Facilities Operations and Development](#) at 614-292-HELP (-4357) immediately. The [ADA Coordinator's office](#) should also be made aware of this accessibility issue. Finally, instructors of students with mobility disabilities who become aware of a long-term repair of an elevator that could interfere with classroom access should contact Disability Services or [Classroom Scheduling](#) about getting the class changed to another site.

Students Who are Blind or Have Low Vision

Students with vision disabilities should already be familiar with their surroundings after mobility and orientation training. They may not, however, be aware of emergency exits. Additionally, regardless of their prior training or experience, students who are blind or have low vision may be prevented from accurately orienting themselves due to the extra noise and commotion common to emergencies. Instructor assistance is critical to their safety.

- **During emergency evacuation:** Instructors must alert these students to the nature of the situation, offer them assistance, and guide them through the nearest emergency exit, out of the building, and to a safe distance.
- **When sheltering in place:** For emergencies (e.g., tornadoes) that require sheltering in a safe area inside the building, instructors must alert students

who are blind or have low vision to the nature of the situation, offer them assistance, and guide them to the secure shelter location.

In all cases, a good way of offering assistance to a person who requires guidance is to use the "sighted guide" technique. The sighted person offers an elbow, which is grasped and held by the person with the vision disability. While guiding, the sighted person relays their current location to the guided person, advising of obstacles, debris, doorways, or narrow passages. Upon arrival to the appropriate place of safety, the guide orients the person who is blind or has low vision to the surroundings and determines if further assistance is needed.

Students who are D/deaf or Hard of Hearing

Students who are D/deaf or hard of hearing may not hear alarms or other audible warnings. Instructors should inform such students of an emergency. There are several ways to get a student's attention:

- Writing a note for the student, calling attention to the emergency and instructing where to go;
- Turning the light switch off and on to gain attention; or
- Tapping the person who is D/deaf or hard of hearing on the shoulder.

In most instances, there will be an interpreter or transcriber in the classroom to explain the emergency to the student. Provide any assistance a student might need during the evacuation process.

Seizures

Most people who have a seizure disorder are able to control their seizures through the use of medication; however, medical management of a seizure disorder is not completely effective for some people, so seizures may occur in the classroom. Students with an active seizure disorder will likely speak to their instructors about how to respond to their seizures, which for some may be infrequent or unexpected.

To assist individuals during their seizures,

- Do not restrain them;
- Keep objects away from their mouths;
- Cushion their heads with available sweaters, sweatshirts, coats, etc.; and
- Rotate them onto their sides.

To assist individuals after their seizures,

- Look for medical I.D. if the affected individuals are disoriented;
- Ask them to give their name and their present location; and
- Contact [University Police](#) at 614-292-2121 in case of marked confusion, incoherence, or inability to respond.

Call 911 for emergency assistance when affected individuals exhibit any of the following:

- Seizures lasting longer than one minute,
- Additional seizures immediately following in succession,
- Breathing difficulties,
- Faint or non-existent pulse, or
- Extreme disorientation after emerging from a seizure.

Instructors should assess the situation and use their best judgment in determining the need for immediate medical intervention. Erring on the side of caution is usually the best course of action when a student is having a seizure.

Frequently Asked Questions

Determining and Authorizing Appropriate Accommodations and Access

Q: Who is responsible for determining appropriate accommodations?

A: Disability Services determines appropriate accommodations for Ohio State students in consultation with several entities. Decisions for accommodations are based

on medical documentation, assessment of the students' functional limitations, and students' clarification about specific needs and limitations.

Q: A student has asked for accommodations. How can an instructor know that the student truly has a disability and needs accommodations?

A: Instructors may ask students to provide a letter verifying that they have registered with Disability Services. Such students, if registered, will be given a verification letter within 24 hours of requesting one. Remember, due to confidentiality requirements, the specifics of a disability cannot be disclosed without express student permission.

Q: What obligations do instructors have to honor requests for disability accommodations that are made late in the academic term?

A: Disability Services continuously reviews documentation, and registering with the office is a process that may take many days or weeks. There are several reasons why a student may appear to have registered late with the office: medical offices' delay in sending appropriate documentation, time required to review documentation and determine appropriate accommodations, or recent discovery and diagnosis of a previously unknown disability. Whatever the reason, students may make requests for accommodations any time during the semester or their academic career, and all instructors are thereafter required to honor them.

Q: What recourse do instructors have if they disagree about students' requests for accommodations?

A: While registered students' requests for accommodations have been verified and are supported by Disability Services in almost all cases, some students may occasionally ask for unreasonable accommodations which are not authorized by Disability Services. To clarify any confusion or to register a disagreement about a requested accommodation, instructors should first contact their student's Disability Services Access Specialist. If further attention to the issue is required, the Director of Disability Services is also available to discuss any instructor concerns. If instructors are

unsatisfied with the result of these conversations, they may also contact Ohio State's [ADA Coordinator](#).

Q: Who covers the cost of providing accommodations, the extra time authorized students require, etc.?

A: All students registered to take classes at Ohio State, regardless of program, are eligible to apply for accommodations through Disability Services. Student fees cover disability accommodation provision, so individual departments are not responsible for assuming the cost of these obligations.

Q: Are all university departments, colleges, and professional degree programs obligated to accept applicants with disabilities, assuming they have met all other admission requirements?

A: Students with disabilities must meet the same requirements as all other students when being considered for acceptance in a program. If a student has done so and is otherwise qualified for acceptance, then any disability-related concerns cannot be taken into consideration. For further information and clarification about these types of circumstances, it is recommended that individuals address concerns to the [ADA Coordinator](#) or to Disability Services.

Exam Accommodations

Q: Are instructors required to allow exam accommodations for all students who request them?

A: Both [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#) and the [Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended](#) protect students with disabilities. These laws require that qualified students with disabilities have equal access to an education, including appropriate exam accommodations. For this reason, all instructors are required to allow authorized exam accommodations for students registered with Disability Services at their request.

Instructors may provide these accommodations themselves by making arrangements directly with the requesting students. The University Registrar's Testing Center and Disability Services can also proctor exams for instructors who are unable to implement appropriate accommodations. Instructors are never expected to operate without support from Disability Services. Office staff can verify accommodation approval, advise on accommodations' reasonableness, recommend effective plans for implementing accommodations, and arrange for proctoring services.

Q: What is a "Proctor Sheet," and do all instructors have to fill one out?

A: No, many instructors are not required to complete the Proctor Sheet. Those who have made arrangements with their students to proctor their own exams do not have to fill out a Proctor Sheet to meet exam accommodation requirements. Likewise, instructors of students taking their exams at the [University Registrar's Testing Center](#) are not required to use a Proctor Sheet. *Only instructors of students who will be taking their exams through Disability Services are required to complete a Proctor Sheet with their students.*

This single form enables Disability Services to schedule and administer all quizzes, exams, midterms, and finals for an entire semester course, using instructors' specific environmental requirements. In order for students to secure exam accommodations at Disability Services, instructors must promptly and completely fill out Proctor Sheets. It is often very helpful for instructors to meet with their students during office hours so both parties can complete the Proctor Sheet and establish appropriate testing parameters together.

Q: A student with a disability will be taking an exam at Disability Services. Will instructors' exams be safe there, and can students gain an unfair advantage by using Disability Services?

A: Disability Services Exam Scheduling staff has developed a secure system for conveying exams to and from faculty. The office maintains rigid check-in and check-out procedures for exams, and all students must have due authorization and photo identification prior to beginning the exam. While exams are at Disability Services, they

are kept in a locked file until they are returned to the instructor electronically or in a sealed envelope. All Disability Services exam spaces are monitored by office staff via a closed-circuit video monitoring system. Any students observed with any unauthorized resource during an exam are reported to the university Committee on Academic Misconduct and to their instructors.

Q: If a student requests accommodations during the last few weeks of the academic term, do instructors have to re-administer all of their exams with accommodations?

A: This decision is left to instructors' discretion. The student's mandated accommodations only apply after the student has officially registered with Disability Services and are not retroactive. If a student is requesting the opportunity to retake exams administered before accommodations were implemented, instructors are advised to consult with the student's Disability Services Access Specialist.

Accessible Media and Captioning

Q: How far in advance must instructors select their course texts and audiovisual media to accommodate students who are authorized for text conversion or captioning through Disability Services?

A: [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#) and the [Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended](#) require that qualified students with disabilities have equal access to an education. Thus, students authorized for Accessible Media and captioning need to be able to access their resources at the same time as others in the class. Textbook conversion is a time-consuming, labor-intensive task; likewise, captioning videos can require significant front-end work. Because of this, selecting course texts and videos in a timely manner is extremely helpful to Disability Services. Without sufficient notice of selections, Disability Services cannot promptly convert materials to an appropriate format, requiring students to start the academic term without equal access to their materials. For these reasons, instructors are advised to return their text and audiovisual materials selections within 2 – 4 business days after initial request from Disability Services staff.

Interpreting, Transcribing, Note Taking, and Lab Assistance

Q: Must an interpreter or a transcriber be present in class to serve a student who is D/deaf or hard of hearing? What if the classroom is very crowded or students watch the interpreter instead of the instructor?

A: Yes, if a student is approved to use an interpreter or a transcriber, the provision of this service is mandatory. [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#) and the [Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended](#) require that qualified students with disabilities have equal access to an education. This includes having a sign language interpreter or transcriber in the classroom when there is a need. Other students in the class will eventually adjust to having the interpreter or transcriber in their class.

Q: Are instructors required to provide notes to students who request them?

A: [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#) and the [Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended](#) require that qualified students with disabilities have equal access to an education. This includes having the means to derive notes from in-class information. While instructors are not required to provide notes for students authorized for and requesting note-taking services, they must allow these students to obtain class notes in some manner. Often, the easiest way for these students to secure notes on course content is for instructors to supply them when they are available and sufficiently comprehensive. In reality, as many instructors do not generate fully fleshed-out notes to facilitate their classes, students with disabilities may be better served by using a volunteer [note taker](#) or by recording class lectures for later study. It is an instructor's responsibility to facilitate one of these means or to provide an equal alternative for an authorized student to secure appropriate notes. Instructors are not expected to operate without support, however: Disability Services can provide clarification about which accommodations are approved or what is deemed reasonable.

Q: A student in class asks for assistance getting notes. After these arrangements have been made, the student with a disability has missed most of the lectures. Should the student still be getting these notes?

A. Students are contractually obligated to attend class to receive their note-taking accommodations. If a student with a disability regularly skips class, instructors should call and speak with a Disability Services Access Specialist to discuss these accommodations. Then, a Disability Services Access Specialist will discuss the circumstances with the student and render an appropriate decision.

Q: Does Disability Services provide assistance in labs for students who have disabilities that might interfere with lab assignments? Are these assistants required to be present?

A: If an authorized student requests a lab assistant, this accommodation must be provided. When possible, instructors can arrange for an assistant by finding a volunteer in the classroom. If an assistant cannot be found, Disability Services will provide a lab assistant for students who need this arrangement in class. The assistant will carry out the functions of the lab assignment with specific directions from the student enrolled in the class. A lab assistant will not do the work in place of the student. Instead, the lab assistant is there to provide access for students who are not able to see components of the lab or to gather and manipulate the instruments necessary for the lab.

Academic Performance and Assessment

Q: What should instructors do to assist students who have difficulty in their classes? What should instructors do when they suspect a student may have an undisclosed disability?

A: Many instructors may feel uncomfortable recommending a student to use services at Disability Services. However, some students who could greatly benefit from accommodations may simply not be aware of this option. When instructors suspect a student is experiencing academic difficulties because of a disability, privately sharing their observations with the student may be beneficial. Although it is ultimately the

student's choice to disclose a disability to Disability Services, a referral to the office can lead students to explore this means of assistance. Instructors should suggest such students contact Disability Services for further information, advising them that registration with Disability Services is confidential and will not be noted on their academic record. Disability Services staff can explain the registration process or refer students to qualified professionals who can make a diagnosis. Students may also find [Student Life Counseling and Consultation Service](#) and the [Student Life Student Advocacy Center](#) helpful in surmounting the difficulties they face both in and out of class.

Q: Can instructors call Disability Services to speak with an Access Specialist about a specific student with a disability?

A: Instructors should feel comfortable contacting Access Specialists at Disability Services to discuss student issues. Access Specialists are able to provide insight, guidance, and possible solutions to problems in the classroom. Disability Services Access Specialists often converse with instructors about difficult situations, and they are excellent resources for help understanding a policy, an accommodation, or how to best help a student. That said, unless the student in question has signed a release of information, Access Specialists are not permitted to discuss with instructors the nature of that student's disability.

Q: Are instructors required to lower the standards of a required assignment because a student has a disability? How do disability accommodations impact student grading?

A: All university students, including those registered with Disability Services, are expected to perform the essential functions of the class. Work performed by students with disabilities should be equivalent to their peers' and should be graded according to the same standards. Of course, instructors are always wise to discuss their observations with all students experiencing difficulty in their classes, whether or not those students have a disability.

At times, a student registered with Disability Services may ask for additional accommodations that are above and beyond what has been specifically mandated or approved. In other cases, a Disability Services Access Specialist may contact an instructor directly to discuss a student's request to modify an assignment. In these circumstances, collaboration between the Disability Services Access Specialist, the student, and the instructor will reveal how best to assist this student. Such situations are never cut-and-dry; instructors should contact a Disability Services Access Specialist whenever they are unsure about approved accommodations.

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Contact Information

Instructors and staff are welcome to contact Disability Services at any time to consult and collaborate about providing students with disabilities access to the classroom as well as other types of programming options for students. The following Ohio State service units have been referenced in this document and may provide additional information:

ADA Coordinator's Office

Hale Hall, Ground Level
154 12th Avenue
Columbus, OH 43210
Voice: 614-292-6207
TDD: 614-688-8605
Fax: 614-688-3665
ada.osu.edu

Fax: 614-292-7199

registrar.osu.edu/scheduling

Counseling & Consultation Service

Younkin Success Center, 4th Floor
1640 Neil Avenue
Columbus, OH 43210
Voice: 614-292-5766
Fax: 614-688-3440
ccs.osu.edu

Classroom Scheduling

Student Academic Services Bldg., 5th Floor
281 W. Lane Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43210
Voice: 614-292-9330

Disability Services

098 Baker Hall

113 W. 12th Ave
Columbus, OH 43210
Voice: 614-292-3307
VRS: 614-429-1334
Fax: 614-292-4190
<http://slids.osu.edu/>

Facilities Operations & Development

150 Central Service Building
2003 Millikin Road
Columbus, OH 43210
Voice: 614-292-0257
Emergency (voice): 614-292-HELP (-4357)
fod.osu.edu

University Police Division

Michael Blankenship Hall
901 Woody Hayes Drive
Columbus, OH 43210
Voice: 614-292-2121
www.ps.ohio-state.edu/police/

Public Safety

Michael Blankenship Hall
901 Woody Hayes Drive
Columbus, OH 43210

Voice: 614-247-6300
www.ps.ohio-state.edu

Student Advocacy Center

1120 Lincoln Tower
1800 Cannon Drive
Columbus, OH 43210
Voice: 614-292-1111
Fax: 614-688-4267
advocacy.osu.edu

University Registrar Testing Center

Student Academic Services Bldg., 5th Floor
281 W Lane Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43210
Voice: 614-292-9330
Fax: 614-292-7199
registrar.osu.edu/testing

Web Accessibility Center

098 Baker Hall
113 W. 12th Ave
Columbus, OH 43210
Voice: 614-292-1760
Fax: 614-292-4190
wac.osu.edu

Additional Resources

Federal Mandates

[Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#)

[Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) of 1990, as Amended](#)

Accessible Digital Documents

[Accessible Classroom Technologies \(ACT\)](#)

- [Creating Accessible .PDF, Word, and PowerPoint Files](#)
- [Describing Graphics](#)

Universal Design for Learning and Accessibility for All Students

[Captioning Benefits for Students without Disabilities](#)

[Center for Applied Special Technology \(CAST\)](#)

Accommodation-Specific References

[Disability Services: Accessible Media Production Center](#)

[Disability Services: Assistive Technology Training Center \(ATTC\)](#)

[Disability Services: Disability Documentation](#)

[Disability Services: Exam Administration](#)

[Disability Services: Interpreting/Transliterating, Transcribing, and Phonic Ear FM Systems](#)

[Disability Services: Note-Taking Assistance](#)

[Disability Services: Student Veterans with Disabilities](#)

[Disability Services: Temporary Disabilities](#)

[Disability Services Transportation Accommodations](#) and [Disability Parking](#)

[University Registrar Testing Center: Exam Proctoring](#)

This handbook is available in an alternate format upon request to Disability Services at 614-292-3307 (voice), 614-429-1334 (VRS), or 614-292-4190 (fax). It is also available online at slds.osu.edu.

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