

# Piedmont Community College Accessibility Services Policy and Procedures



## PHILOSOPHY

Piedmont Community College (PCC) is dedicated to providing quality educational services for all students. The Accessibility Services Office (ASO) operates out of the Department of Student Development to ensure that programs and facilities of the College are accessible to every student in the PCC Community. The Accessibility Services Office provides reasonable accommodations to assist *otherwise qualified students with disabilities* in meeting the demands of college life.

Through the Accessibility Services Office, the College seeks to meet individual needs by coordinating accommodations and implementing policies regarding programs, services, and activities for individuals with disabilities. The office serves as a source of information for students, faculty and staff, and as a link between students, departments, and other associated agencies. The goal of PCC is to promote programs and practices that are accessible to all individuals.

## LAW

In 1973, Congress passed Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act which states:

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

Section 504 protects the rights of qualified individuals who have disabilities such as, but not limited to:

Blindness/visual impairment	Specific learning disabilities
Cerebral palsy	Speech and language disorder
Deafness/hearing impairment	Spinal cord injury
Epilepsy or seizure disorder	Tourette's syndrome
Orthopedic/mobility impairment	Traumatic brain injury

Section 504 also protects student with chronic illnesses and "treatable disabilities", such as, but not limited to:

AIDS	Diabetes
Arthritis	Multiple sclerosis
Cancer	Muscular dystrophy
Cardiac disease	Psychiatric disability

## **POLICY OF NONDISCRIMINATION**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) gives individuals with disabilities civil rights protection against discrimination, which is similar to that provided to all individuals on the basis of race, sex, national origin, and religion. The act guarantees equal opportunity in employment, public accommodations, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications.

Consistent with the ADA and Section 504, Piedmont Community College is committed to equality of educational opportunity and ensures that no qualified person shall by reason of a disability be denied access to, participation in, or the benefits of any program or activity operated by the college. Each qualified person shall receive reasonable accommodations to ensure equal access to educational opportunities, programs, and activities in the most integrated setting appropriate.

Piedmont Community College does not discriminate in the recruitment, educational process, or treatment of students. Students who have self-identified, provided documentation of disability, and requested reasonable accommodations are entitled to receive approved modifications of programs, appropriate academic adjustments, or auxiliary aids that enable them to participate in the benefit from all educational programs and activities, as specified by federal laws and regulations.

Compliance with the requirements of the ADA and Subpart E of Section 504 of the

## **ADMISSION**

Rehabilitation Act of 1973 resides with the Vice President for Administrative Services.

Piedmont Community College subscribes to the open-door policy established by the North Carolina State Board of Community Colleges. Neither the nature nor the severity of one's disability is used as a criterion for admission.

## **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORT SERVICES**

With respect to an individual, a person with a disability is defined ..."any person who (1) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities [including walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, caring for oneself, and performing manual tasks], (2) has a record of such an impairment, or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment."

*A "qualified person with a disability" is defined as one ..."who meets the academic and technical standards as requisite to admission or participation in the educational program or activity."*

Accommodations give access to programs, but accommodations do not guarantee success in meeting program requirements. If an individual with a disability cannot meet the fundamental requirements of the academic program in which he or she is enrolled, even with reasonable accommodations, then they are not "otherwise qualified" to participate in the program.

## REQUESTING SERVICES

Any student requesting disability accommodations from PCC must self-identify to the Accessibility Services Office. Students requesting accommodations from the College must have a disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act/Americans with Disabilities Act.

Students are required to submit current documentation to the Accessibility Services Office in order to be qualified for services. Students must complete the **Self Identification Form** and the **Request for Accommodations Form** prior to implementation of accommodations. Completion of these forms and providing current documentation does not ensure the student will be accepted for services. Identification of oneself as having a disability to an individual instructor, dean, staff, or department other than the Accessibility Services Office is NOT considered official notification to PCC.

Students can self-identify at any time; however, accommodations are **NOT** retroactive and the student must allow reasonable time for accommodations to be implemented. Services and accommodations offered by the Accessibility Services Office are provided at no cost to the student.

Students are responsible for contacting the Accessibility Services Office at the beginning of, or prior to the start of, every semester and request their **Approved Accommodations Notification Form**. Approved accommodations forms are only valid for the current semester in which they are generated.

If a student leaves or withdraws from PCC for any reason (with the exception of summer breaks), upon readmission, the student must reapply and may be asked to submit updated documentation prior to receiving services and accommodations.

## DOCUMENTATION

Documentation is used to establish that an individual has a disability and to describe and document the functional impact of the disability for use in establishing the need for and design of accommodations.

Documentation will also be used to evaluate requests for reasonable accommodations and/or auxiliary aids. The evaluation process will include the impact of the documentation on the goals and standards of the program, course and/or activity.

In order to be eligible for services and accommodations through the Office of Disability Services, the student must provide documentation regarding their disability/chronic medical condition that contains the following:

- 1) A diagnostic statement identifying the disability, date of the most current diagnostic evaluation, and the date of the original diagnosis.
- 2) A description of the diagnostic tests, methods, and/or criteria used.
- 3) A description of the current functional impact of the disability which includes specific test results and the examiner's narrative interpretation.
- 4) Treatment, medications, and/or assistive devices/services currently prescribed or in use.
- 5) A description of the expected progression or stability of the impact of the disability over time, particularly the next few years.
- 6) The credentials of the diagnosing professionals if not clear from the letterhead or other forms.

All reports should be on letterhead, typed, signed and otherwise legible.

Students are required to provide current documentation of disability to allow for effective assessment of individual needs. Evaluations and diagnosis that is older than five years maybe deemed as insufficient. In cases where documentation is deemed insufficient, the student may be required to obtain an additional evaluation.

Piedmont Community College is not required to conduct or pay for a new evaluation to document a student's disability and need for accommodations.

#### **QUALIFICATIONS OF THE EVALUATOR**

Professionals conducting assessments, rendering diagnoses of learning disabilities, and making recommendations for appropriate accommodations must be qualified to do so. Comprehensive training and direct experience with an adolescent and adult LD population is essential.

The name, title and professional credentials of the evaluator, including information about license or certification (e.g., licensed psychologist) as well as the area of specialization, employment and state/province in which the individual practices should be clearly stated in the documentation. For example, the following professionals would generally be considered qualified to evaluate specific learning disabilities provided that they have additional training and experience in the assessment of learning problems in adolescents and adults: clinical or educational psychologists, school psychologists, neuropsychologists, learning disabilities specialists, medical doctors, and other professionals.

Use of diagnostic terminology indicating a learning disability by someone whose training and experience are not in these fields is not acceptable. It is of utmost importance that evaluators are sensitive and respectful of cultural and linguistic differences in adolescents and adults during the assessment process. It is not considered appropriate for professionals to evaluate members of their families.

## **REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS**

The ADA requires an institution of higher education to provide reasonable accommodations to a qualified individual with a disability, provided that the accommodations do not create an undue hardship.

An accommodation is provision of a modification or adjustment that will enable a qualified individual with a disability to participate in the essential functions of a position. Examples of reasonable accommodations include, but are not limited to, the following: a) making existing facilities readily accessible and usable by persons with disabilities, b) modified schedules, c) acquisition or modification of equipment or devices, d) appropriate adjustment or modifications of examinations, and e) provision of qualified readers or interpreters.

An undue hardship refers to any accommodation that would require significant difficulty or expense, when considered in light of several factors including but not limited to the following: a) the nature and cost of the accommodation, b) the overall financial resources of the facility involved, c) the effect on expenses and resources, and/or d) the impact otherwise of such accommodation upon the operation of the facility. Thus, any accommodation that would be unduly costly, substantial, disruptive, or that would alter the nature of the program is considered an undue hardship and is not required.

## **RECORD MAINTENANCE/ CORRESPONDENCE/CONFIDENTIALITY AND RELEASE OF INFORMATION**

Any written material received by the Accessibility Services Office related to verifying a disability, documenting/planning for appropriate services, etc. is considered confidential. Documents relating to a student's disability are not part of the academic record. All disability related documents are housed in a secure file in the Special Populations Counselor's office. Only staff working in the Accessibility Services Office will have access to these documents.

Except in cases of emergency, information regarding a student's disability is not released without the student's written consent. Students who request services acknowledge and understand that some level of disclosure to appropriate faculty may be necessary to provide accommodations. Disclosure to faculty will *occur* only with the student's written consent and will only include information for the purposes of accommodation. The Association of Higher Education and Disabilities (AHEAD) states that, "Disability related records provided by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional are not subject to free access under The Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974."

A student may request to review the contents of their own file. However, this review is subject to consent of the student's disability services counselor, medical doctor and / or associated therapist. If consent is granted, the student must review the file with a disability services staff member present. All information in the file is the property of the Accessibility Services Office; students may obtain copies of information that has been deemed appropriate to review with the student. The student must sign a release for the copies and a record of information copied will be kept in the student's file.

Any information related to the student's disability will be destroyed 5 years after last enrollment at PCC.

If asked to submit information regarding the services provided through the Accessibility Services Office, the data will be reported in a manner that protects the identity of all students.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

Any student having a complaint related to a disability is entitled to prompt and equitable resolution of their complaint. At PCC, resolution of all grievances through open and informal communication between the affected parties is encouraged. However, when this is not possible, student may utilize the Student Grievance and Appeals procedure described briefly below. The policy in its entirety may be obtained from the Dean of Student Development.

A grievance shall specify the statute, policy, rule or regulation at issue, as well as the details of the alleged violation, misapplication, or misinterpretation of same.

There are three levels in the Grievance and Appeals Procedure:

- Level 1: Vice President for Instruction and Student Development**
- Level 2: Review Committee**
- Level 3: President**

All grievances will be processed on an individual basis and must originate at Level 1. All grievances shall be in writing and the written statement thereof shall remain the same throughout all steps of the procedure.

The complaint must be filed within ten (10) days after the student knew or should have known of the action upon which the complaint is based. Within five (5) days after receipt of a grievance, the Level 1 administrator shall hold an informal interview with the student to discuss the grievance and determine whether remedial action is justified. At the interview, the student shall discuss with the Level 1 administrator the facts from which the grievance arose, its nature and the remedy sought. Within five (5) days after the interview, the Level 1 administrator shall deliver his/her decision to the student. With respect to a grievance, within five (5) days after receiving the decision of the Level 1 administrator, a student who is not satisfied with the decision of the Level 1 administrator may request a review by the Review Committee.

Within ten (10) days after receiving the request for review, a hearing by the Review Committee shall be scheduled by the Review Committee chairman, upon not less than three (3) calendar days notice of the date, place, and time thereof to the student. Within three (3) days after the hearing, the committee shall summarize the evidence and set forth its recommendations in a written report. Within five (5) days after receiving the decision of the Review Committee, the student may request that the decision be review by the President. Within five (5) days after receiving a request for review, the President shall review the request, the prior decision, the record of the Review Committee, and all other written materials relating to the complaint. On the basis of this review, the President may affirm modify, or reverse the decision from which review is requested and require such remedial action as deemed necessary. The decision of the President shall be final.

## **FUNDING**

Services and accommodations offered by the PCC Accessibility Services Office that are provided to ensure equal access are made available at no charge to the student. PCC is responsible for ensuring that no student with a disability is denied the benefits of, or excluded from participation in, a program because of the absence of auxiliary aids. However, funding for auxiliary aids may be the responsibility of state rehabilitation agencies, such as Vocational Rehabilitation and the Division of Services for the Blind. Students are encouraged to seek funding for auxiliary aids from external sources. The Accessibility Services Office is available to assist students in seeking funding from these sources.

Auxiliary aids may include interpreters (or other methods of making orally delivered materials available to students with hearing impairments), readers for students with visual impairments, classroom equipment adapted for use by students with physical impairments, and / or other similar services or equipment. If the student is not eligible to be served by the state agency, or when the state agency sets limits on the amount of assistance they provide for auxiliary aids, the primary responsibility for ensuring the student is provided with any remaining auxiliary aids lies with PCC as needed. However, PCC is not required to provide prescription devices or devices and services of a personal nature. (See Miscellaneous Accommodations).

## **COLLEGE RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **College Rights**

- Identify and establish essential functions, abilities, skills, knowledge, and standards for courses, programs, services, jobs, and activities, and to evaluate students on this basis;
- Request and receive current documentation from a qualified professional that supports requests for accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services;
- Deny a request for accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services if the documentation does not demonstrate that the request is warranted, or if the individual fails to provide appropriate documentation;
- Select among equally effective accommodations, adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services;
- Refuse to provide an accommodation, adjustment, and/or auxiliary aid and service that impose a fundamental alteration on a program or activity of the college.



### **College Responsibilities**

- Accommodate the known limitations of an otherwise qualified student with a disability;
- Ensure that courses, programs, services, and activities, when viewed in their entirety, are available and usable in the most integrated and appropriate settings;
- Provide or arrange accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services for students with disabilities in courses, programs, services, and activities;
- To maintain appropriate confidentiality of records and communication, except where permitted or required by law;
- To maintain academic standards by providing accommodations without compromising the content, quality, or level of instruction.

## **STUDENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Student Rights**

- Equal access to courses, programs, services, jobs, and activities offered by the college;
- Equal opportunity to work, learn, and receive accommodations, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids and services;
- Confidentiality of information regarding their disability as applicable laws allow;
- Information available in accessible formats.

### **Student Responsibilities**

- Meet qualifications and maintain essential institutional standards for the programs, courses, services, and activities;
- Self-identify disability status in a reasonable and timely manner;
- Provide disability documentation from a qualified professional that reflects the student's current disability status, and how their disability limits participation in courses, programs, services, and activities;
- Follow published procedures for obtaining academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services.

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDENTS**

- Some accommodations require extra time so it is imperative to self-identify and request accommodations as soon as possible;
- Attend classes and follow instructions provided in the class syllabus concerning absences, emergency needs, or other information specific to class;
- If possible inform instructor ahead of time of any absences;
- Contact other outside agencies for possible eligibility in additional services;
- Arrange for personal attendants if needed, whether paid for by an agency or family (colleges are not required under ADA to provide personal attendants, tutors, or personal items such as hearing aids, prostheses, individually designed and fitted special extensions or wands for computer or other resource operation).
- Students with disabilities should process their own college business i.e., registration, drop/add, refunds, etc.

## SERVICES AND ACCOMMODATIONS

Facilities/Barrier Removal- Qualified persons with disabilities may not be denied the benefits of, or be excluded from participation in, any PCC program or activity because the facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by, persons with disabilities. Upon individual case review, each program or activity shall be readily accessible to qualified persons with disabilities, or made accessible through alternative means such as reassignment of classes, staff or services, delivery of services at accessible sites, redesign of equipment and/or facility, and/or appropriate signage.

Facilities are not required to have every outside entry accessible and structural changes in existing facilities are not required where other methods provide program accessibility. New facilities, or parts of facilities, constructed for PCC are required to be designed and built so that they are readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities, meeting the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines or the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards.

Academic Adjustments - Academic requirements may be modified, with accommodations made as necessary, to ensure that they do not discriminate against qualified applicants or currently enrolled students with disabilities. Generally, academic standards that are essential to programs of instruction (e.g. grade point average requirements, prerequisite courses, etc.) considered non-discriminatory and adherence to these standards cannot be waived. Thus, modifications/accommodations are made to ensure that academic requirements can be satisfied and these shall neither affect the substance of the educational program nor compromise educational standards. These modifications/accommodations are coordinated through the Office of Disability Services.

Academic adjustments (accommodations) are requested by the student in writing. Academic adjustments must be supported by documentation and should be made in a timely manner (generally no later than two weeks prior to the start of the semester). Although every effort will be made to fulfill late requests, untimely requests may result in a delay, substitution, or denial of accommodations. All requests are evaluated by the Office of Disability Services on a case-by-case basis.

The following list (although not exhaustive) represents the services and modification/accommodations that are commonly provided:

- A. Faculty Notification - The Office of Disability Services provides approved students documentation of their authorization to utilize specific accommodations. The student is then responsible for providing this documentation to the faculty/staff member. Notification to the faculty member does not imply that accommodations will be in place, specific requests by the student must be made as needed. Faculty members have been advised not to provide accommodations to any student who is not registered with the Office of Disability Services. **Students are responsible contacting the Office of Disability Services at the beginning of, or prior to the start of, every semester and request their Approved Accommodations**

**Notification form. Approved Accommodations forms are only valid for the semester in which they are generated.**

B. Testing Accommodations - Testing Accommodations may include the following (and will be based on medically documented recommendations): extended test time (usual time is x 1.5 and unless specifically approved by ODS, maximum time is x 2), scribe/oral examination, computer for written exams, use of a spell checking device, calculator, alternative format (e.g. non-scannable answer sheets / large print exams), and/or an alternative location. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the faculty member of the need for testing accommodations (as approved by ODS) prior to any regularly scheduled examinations or tests. Faculty may provide approved accommodations without the intervention of ODS, in which case ODS does not need to be notified of the arrangements. However, if the faculty member is not able to arrange the accommodations, the student must notify ODS at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to a regularly scheduled examination in order that arrangements can be made available. All examinations will be taken at the regularly scheduled time unless approved by the faculty member. Any student who arrives late for a scheduled exam must finish the test in the time remaining (extended time will be calculated from the scheduled time of the test, not the time of arrival).

C. Classroom Adjustments - Classroom adjustments may include: sign language interpretation, assistive listening devices, note-taking services, use of a tape recorder, preferential seating, classroom relocation, adaptive equipment (eg. use of calculator, computer, etc.), and/or accessible materials (e.g. enlarged print textbooks, etc.). Students must attend class on a regular basis or risk losing these services. All classroom adjustments will be based on documentation.

- Sign language interpretation must be requested at least 5 days prior to the academic/college-related event and as early as possible (or upon registration) for classroom interpretation. Any change in course schedule must be made in writing to the Office of Disability Services as soon as possible in order to alter interpreter arrangements. If a student learns of an event less than 5 days in advance, the student must notify the Office of Disability Services, in writing, as soon as possible and complete a Request for Interpreter form. If a student who has requested interpretation services finds that s/he will not be attending the event, the student must notify the Office of Disability Services, in writing, at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the event. A student who fails to cancel a reservation for interpreter services is considered "absent." *The cancellation of an interpreter can only be made through the Office of Disability Services.*
  - i. If the absence is beyond the student's control, the student must submit, in writing, the circumstances of the absence to the Office of Disability Services within three (3) days of the absence. The absence will only be excused if the circumstances warrant the excusal and the explanation of the circumstances received within the time frame allowed.
  - ii. If a student has not arrived by fifteen (15) minutes after a class session or an event is scheduled to begin, the student will be considered "absent" and the interpreter will leave. The student will then follow the procedure above (i).
  - iii. If a student has more than three (3) unexcused absences in a given course,

he/she will be notified, in writing, that interpreting services for that course will no longer be provided by the College for the remainder of the semester. If a student has more than four (4) unexcused absences from any reserved interpretation events or classes, the student will be notified, in writing, that all interpretation services will be withdrawn for the rest of the semester.

- iv. Interpretation services may be reviewed for reinstatement. The student must make arrangements to meet, in person, with the Office of Disability Services and the Dean of Student Development. After this meeting, a determination will be made regarding whether or not to reinstate interpreter services.
  - v. Any student who has a problem or concern regarding a specific interpreter should report such, in writing, to the Office of Disability Services. Every reasonable effort will be made to resolve the situation fairly and expeditiously.
- Preferential seating and use of a tape recorder will be coordinated with the instructor (following the student notification to the instructor of the accommodation).
  - Note-takers are provided for students with disabilities who: i) physically cannot write; ii) due to the nature of the disability, cannot take notes because they must concentrate on the lecturer or the sign-language interpreter; or iii) must miss some class sessions due to a chronic medical problem. Note-taking is not a substitute for class attendance and is designed only to supplement the student's attendance. (See Class Attendance for more information.) Note taking services will occur as follows: The student will be supplied with note taking paper and will inform the faculty member. The student and/or faculty member will request a volunteer to serve as a note-taker. The note-taker will be given the note-taking paper. The volunteer takes notes throughout the class and upon the end of class, the volunteer keeps the original copy of the notes and gives the ODS student the carbon copy. (If the ODS student desires anonymity, the carbon copy can be given to the faculty member or dropped off in the Department of Student Development to be given to the ODS student.)
  - Classroom relocation: Whenever possible, a student's schedule will be developed to ensure classrooms are accessible with respect to location, with allowances for adequate travel time to and from destinations before and after class. Classroom relocation will be utilized to adjust classroom assignments to accommodate a student who has a documented physical disability or medical condition that prevents him/her from accessing regularly scheduled classrooms. Classroom relocation will be determined by the submission of the trial schedule. If a classroom needs to be relocated, the Office of Disability Services will inform the Dean of Student Development who will coordinate the relocation. If a student requests that a classroom be moved upon late registration, every effort will be made to accommodate the request.
  - Use of assistive listening devices, adaptive equipment (e.g. use of calculator, computer, etc.), and or accessible materials (e.g. enlarged print textbooks, etc.) will be coordinated through the Office of Disability Services. ODS does not supply these materials on a regular basis but will assist in securing these materials from an outside source or

arranging for these to be loaned from the College on an individual basis. Students are encouraged to request these materials as early as possible before the semester begins to allow adequate time for processing/shipping/etc. *For students who need recorded textbooks, the student must apply to Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D) to obtain an identification number. Every effort will be made to secure recorded textbooks from this source before other alternatives are considered.*

D. Degree Requirement Modification - Students are expected to complete all degree requirements for graduation. Only under unavoidable and exceptional circumstances (and in accordance with College policy) will the faculty permit substitution for, or exemption from, the prescribed curriculum. The student must request deviation from the course of study from the appropriate advisor, curriculum dean and the Vice President of Instruction and Student Development. The Class Substitution Request form must be completed and submitted to the Coordinator of Student Records.

E. Class Attendance - The Office of Disability Services does not participate in determining course attendance policies. As stated in the General Catalog and Student Handbook:

A student is expected to be regular and punctual in meeting all classes. To receive credit for a course, the student must attend class prior to the census point and attend a minimum of 80 percent of classes, labs and shop hours. Failure to attend class is an absence, regardless of the reason. All work missed during absences must be made up to the satisfaction of the instructor. Any exceptions to this policy must be authorized by the instructor.

The Office of Disability Services does not issue official written excuses for absences. ODS can provide written verification of a disability based on appropriate documentation that may be a factor in a student missing class. This verification may address the legitimacy of, but not necessarily excuse, an absence.

F. Modified Course Schedules - A student must generally be enrolled in a course load of twelve (12) academic hours in order to be considered a full time student. Based on the documentation of individual needs by the appropriate qualified professional, and with the recommendation of the Dean of Student Development, it may be possible for a student to take less than the required 12 hour minimum and still be considered a full-time student with all the associated privileges. A modified course schedule must be requested and will be determined on a case-by-case, semester-to-semester basis.

G. Registration Assistance - The Office of Disability Services makes every effort to secure registration assistance for those students for whom the College must plan accommodations ahead of time. Examples include those *for* whom interpreter services, relocation of classrooms, and/or securing alternative formats of class materials (e.g. enlarged textbooks) are needed. The following procedure will be followed for Registration Assistance: all completed trial schedules must be submitted to the Office of Disability Services at least three (3) days prior to the first scheduled registration date. All completed trial schedules will be evaluated for accommodation purposes and upon approval, will be processed on the first day of registration. Registration Assistance ends on the last day of registration. Any further adding or dropping of classes must

be completed in accordance with College policy/ procedure and is the responsibility of the student.

Students must be listed with the Office of Disability Services and have all registration holds cleared in order to be eligible for Registration Assistance. This service is intended to address specific limitations imposed by a disability; registration assistance does not apply to students with disabilities whose accommodations do not have to be planned ahead of time.

H. Miscellaneous Accommodations - In compliance with state law, services animals assisting students with disabilities are permitted in all facilities, of the College. However, the Office of Disability Services does not provide, or pay for, personal services, such as those services and/or equipment that the individual would need even if s/he were not enrolled at the College.

## DISABILITY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

### ***Accommodation***

Adjustments made in course materials or instructional methodology which do not change the essential nature or academic and technical standards of the course.

Adjustments made in the physical attributes of a classroom such as provision of tables and/or chairs, which do not disrupt the essential activities of the class or program.

Assistive technology made available to persons with disabilities in college learning labs, the library, test center or classroom.

### ***Americans with Disabilities Act***

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities. It mandates equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in areas such as employment, public accommodations, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications.

### ***Assistive Technology***

Any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off-the-shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities for individuals with disabilities.

### ***Attention Deficit Disorder***

Attention deficit disorder, commonly referred to as ADD, is a neurological disability characterized by inappropriate attention skills, impulsive behavior, and in some cases, hyperactivity. The behaviors may include: fidgeting, difficulty remaining seated, difficulty following instructions, leaving tasks uncompleted, and appearing not to listen when others are speaking.

### ***Blind***

Visual acuity (20/20 scale) and the range of peripheral vision evaluate a person's vision. Normal vision is defined as 20/20 visual acuity and an average range of 180 degrees in peripheral vision. An individual is legally blind if after methods of correction, such as glasses or contact lenses, he/she has a visual acuity of 20/200 or higher denomination, or a range of peripheral vision under 20 degrees.

### ***Closed Captioning***

Closed captioning allows individuals who are deaf or have limited hearing to view television and understand what is being said. The words spoken on the television are written across the bottom of the screen so the person can follow the dialogue and action of the program.

### ***Communication Disabilities***

Communication disabilities include any visual, hearing, or speech impairments that limit a person's ability to communicate.

### ***Deaf-Blindness***

Deaf-blindness, or dual sensory impairment, is a combination of both visual and hearing impairments. An individual with deaf-blindness can experience severe communication, educational, and other developmental problems. A person with deaf-blindness cannot be accommodated by services focusing solely on visual impairments or solely on hearing impairments, so services must be specifically designed to assist individuals with deaf-blindness.

### ***Deafness***

Deafness can be defined as a total or partial inability to hear. An individual who is totally deaf is unable to hear with or without the use of a hearing aid, whereas a person who is partially deaf may be able to hear with the help of a hearing aid. Deafness can be genetic or also acquired through disease; most commonly from meningitis in the child or rubella in the woman during pregnancy.

### ***Descriptive Video***

Descriptive videos are designed for people who are visually impaired. The videos provide additional narration which carefully describes the visual elements of the film, such as the action of the characters, location, and costumes, without interfering with the actual dialogue and sound effects.

### ***Developmental Disability***

A developmental disability is a severe and long lasting disability which is the result of a mental and/or physical impairment. It is likely to continue indefinitely and results in substantial functional limitations in three or more areas. These areas include: self-care, self-direction, economic self-sufficiency, independent living, learning, receptive and expressive language, and mobility.

### ***Disability***

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act protects and considers a person disabled if he or she:

- has a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities (including walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, caring for oneself, or performing manual tasks).
- has a record of such impairment; or
- is regarded as having such an impairment.

### ***Documentation***

Verifying documents which verify a person's mental or physical impairment and which describe the impairment adequately for the college to be able to determine the degree of resulting limitation on a major life activity to aid in the design of reasonable accommodations.



### ***Essential Nature of a Course***

This is language from applicable case law; ref. ***The Davis Decision***. Colleges need to identify the essential elements of each course requirement and curriculum program. Colleges are not required to waive or substitute alternate courses in place of courses which are essential elements of programs.

### ***Health Impairments***

The term, health impairments, refers to any type of chronic illness that affects how a person lives his or her life. Common examples of health impairments are AIDS, cancer, diabetes, arthritis, etc.

### ***Hearing Impairment***

This term is used to describe any level of hearing loss, such as hard of hearing or deafness.

### ***Hyperactivity***

Hyperactivity generally refers to a group of behavioral characteristics, such as aggressiveness, constant activity, impulsiveness, and distractibility. The actual behaviors displayed include: fidgeting, an inability to remain seated or still, and excessive talking. Hyperactivity is commonly associated with attention deficit disorder.

### ***Learning Disability***

Learning disabilities is a broad term used to refer to disorders that affect a person's ability to interpret what they see or hear and link information from different parts of the brain. These disorders usually manifest as problems with reading, writing, reasoning, or mathematics. Learning disabilities are neurological, lifelong disorders, but can often be overcome through appropriate intervention and support.

### ***Mental Illness***

The term mental illness refers to any illness or disorder that has significant psychological or behavioral manifestations, is associated with painful or distressing symptoms, and impairs an individual's level of functioning in certain areas of life. There are several different types of mental illness with differing levels of severity. Therapy and medication are the most common forms of treatment.

### ***Intellectual Disability***

Intellectual disability limits the intellectual capacity of an individual. A person is considered to have intellectual disability if they have an IQ below 70, the condition is present before age 18, and limitations exist in two or more adaptive skill areas. The adaptive skill areas include communication, self-care, home-living, social skills, leisure, health and safety, self-direction, functional academics, and employment.

### ***Physical/ Mobility Impairment***

The inability to move (or limited / restricted movement), or the inability to effectively use one or more body parts, which may require the use of aids/ appliances for independent movement in activities. Impairment may be due to paralysis, loss of limbs, arthritis, etc.

requiring wheelchairs, crutches, splints, etc. for activities such as walking, climbing stairs, and/or hand/arm movement.

***Preadmission Inquiry***

Institutions may not make preadmission inquiry as to whether an applicant for admissions has a disability. Confidential inquiries may be made after the candidate is admitted to determine if accommodations are needed.

***Psychological/ Psychiatric Disorder***

Conditions or disorders (other than learning disabilities) having a diagnosis of the DSM that are mild or moderate in nature, or in clinical remission, that may require ongoing therapy to enable the individual to meet the demands of college life.

***Reasonable Accommodation***

Academic adjustments (accommodation) or physical adjustments necessary to make a facility or activity accessible to qualified individuals with disabilities. Once the individual is determined otherwise qualified, the known physical or mental limitation is to be accommodated unless it can be shown that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship.

***Speech Impairments***

Speech impairments refers to disorders that impair an individual's ability to verbally communicate. This could include the ability to speak, the inability to maintain a flow or rhythm of speech (e.g., dysfluency or stuttering), or the inability to pronounce certain sounds. Hearing impairments, neurological disorders, or physical impairments such as cleft palate can cause speech impairments.

***Telecommunications Relay System***

These are services (usually maintained by telephone companies) that will relay information verbally for those individuals whose communication must rely on electronic transmission due to a functional limitation; i.e., speech or hearing limitation.

***Traumatic Brain Injury***

This term refers to an acquired injury to the brain that manifests limitations in any of the other disability categories as well as cognitive impairments.

***Visual Impairment***

A visual impairment is an impairment of sight that cannot be corrected by glasses or contact lenses. This includes individuals with low vision as well as people who are legally blind.