

GUIDE TO DISABILITY SERVICES



Student Services

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Preface

The purpose of this manual is to provide relevant information about disabilities services and support provided through Lawson State Community College. The Counseling unit of the Student Services division acts as the service arm of the college, in facilitating accommodations and services for students with disabilities. Through the eligibility determination procedures described herein, the counseling services strives to develop and implement special accommodations tailored to the individual student's needs and learning characteristics. Furthermore, the role of self - advocacy is fostered and supported by the college, therefore students are encouraged to actively participate in the process of securing services. Administrators, faculty, and staff are committed to the delivery of quality services and support for students with documented disabilities. A professional counseling staff is available to provide career, personal, and psychological counseling as well as academic advising to students with disabilities. In addition, the LSCC staff is committed to providing training and technical assistance for faculty, staff, students and the community involved in the provision of services and/ or educational experiences to college students who have disabilities. The counseling staff is committed to working collaboratively with the faculty and staff of the college to help students minimize the effects of their disabilities through the implementation of a wide range of accommodations in the learning environment.

The policies and procedures contained in this document represent the college's effort to adhere to the federal disability laws, which guarantee access and participation of all qualified students, regardless of their individual strengths and abilities. It is our intent to provide an environment in which all students learn and realize their potential.

Recognition and respect are extended to the LSCC faculty and staff for their continued commitment to students of all abilities.

Important Note

Any information described in the *Guide to Disability Services* is subject to change. Counseling Services will inform students of policy and procedure changes via U.S. Mail, college email, college website, posted notification, and seminars. Please keep your current address updated to avoid missing pertinent information from the college.

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Information for Prospective Students

The Student Services staff welcomes you to Lawson State Community College. Our Counselors are committed to facilitating reasonable and appropriate academic accommodations to college students with disabilities. The information in this booklet is designed to help you get accommodations and special services while you are a student at Lawson State Community College.

Registration for Accommodations/Disability Services

Lawson State Community College is committed to providing a quality environment to support and assist its students throughout the academic process. In compliance with *Section 504* of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* and the *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990*, special services and accommodations are given on an individual basis once supporting documentation is provided. It is the responsibility of a student to notify the college of a disability that requires assistance. Requests for accommodations should be made prior to enrollment. The steps are as follows:

- a. Contact Renay Herndon (Bessemer Campus, Student Services Center, Room 183) or Janice Williams (B'ham Campus, Leon Kennedy Student Center, Room 221).
- b. Provide documentation that is appropriate and meets the guidelines according to Alabama State Board Policy.
- c. Participate in Interview with counseling staff.
- d. Assist with the selection of accommodations.

Registration for disability services is a separate process from applying for admission to Lawson State Community College. Mailing addresses for disability counselors is as follows:

Ms. Renay Herndon
1100 9th Avenue S.W.
Bessemer Alabama 35022
(205) 929-3419

Mrs. Janice Williams
3060 Wilson Road
Birmingham, Alabama 35221
(205) 929-6383

E-mail requests for information regarding Disability Services to: rherndon@lawsonstate.edu or jwilliams@lawsonstate.edu. For Web access go to: www.lawsonstate.edu

Admission

The Admissions Office handles all applications for admission to Lawson State Community College. Admission standards are described in the College Catalog/Student Handbook and must be met by all students, regardless of disability. Applications for admission are available from the admissions Office. Accommodations for placement testing will be provided for those students who contact Renay Herndon at (205) 929-3419 or Janice Williams at (205) 929-6383. Appropriate documentation is required to receive accommodation services.

Financial Aid

Lawson State Community College's financial aid packages (federal Pell Grant, work study, supplemental grants, and scholarships) enable students from all economic backgrounds to attend Lawson State Community College. Financial aid is awarded based on need and merit, and students who wish to receive aid must reapply each year. If an individual with disabilities needs

assistance in applying for financial aid, he/she should contact Renay Herndon at (205) 929-3419 or Janice Williams at (205) 929-6383.

New Student Orientation

New Student Orientation is important to the success of all students; therefore all new students are expected to attend the sessions conducted by Student Services. Students who anticipate a need for accommodations during the orientation process should contact Renay Herndon, Bessemer Campus, at (205) 929-3419 or Janice Williams, Birmingham Campus, at (205) 929-6383.

Legal/Laws

American with Disabilities ACT (Laws governing disability services)

Rehabilitation Act of 1973

American with Disabilities ACT (ADA) of 1990

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states:

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

Under the provisions of Section 504, Lawson State Community College may not:

- Limit the admission of otherwise qualified students with disabilities.
- Make pre-admission inquiries as to whether an applicant is disabled.
- Exclude an otherwise qualified student with a disability from any course of study.
- Provide less financial assistance to students with disabilities than is provided to non-disability student.
- Counsel students with disabilities into more restrictive career paths than are recommended to non-disability.
- Measure students achievements using modes which adversely discriminate against a student with a disability; or
- Establish rules and policies that have the effect of limiting participation of students with disabilities in educational programs or activities.

American with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990:

This is a national mandate to end discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, state and local government services, public accommodations and commercial facilities, and telecommunications.

- Title I: nondiscrimination in employment activities.
- Title II: state and local government entities and programs must be made accessible, as well as public transportation systems.
- Title III: programs, goods, and services provided to the public by private entities must be accessible by persons with disabilities.

- Title IV: telecommunication services must be accessible to persons with hearing or speech impairments
- Title V: miscellaneous provisions.

Disabled: A person with a disability is an individual with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits on or more major life activities. An individual is considered to be a person with a disability if he/she:

- Has a disability
- Has a history of a disability
- Is perceived by others as having a disability

LSCC Services for Students with Disabilities

Lawson State Community College is committed to serving college students with disabilities. All programs across the campus are available to provide a broad diversity of services designated to the needs of college students with disabilities.

Reminders

- Students with disabilities should remember that registration for disability services is separate from gaining admission to Lawson State Community College.
- If you are applying to Lawson State Community College and you have a disability, it is recommended that you do not submit disability documentation to the admissions office. Admissions decisions are made without regard to disability status.

ACCESSIBILITY AND MOBILITY SERVICES

Mobility Orientation

Mobility orientation is provided to students that need and request the services. Students should contact the disability counselor as early as possible to make arrangements for mobility orientation to campus.

Students with mobility impairments who require assistance from offices/personnel housed on the second floor of the Administration Building on the Birmingham Campus should report to the Office of Student Financial Services, Room 104, for such assistance. Signage indicating such is visibly posted at each entrance and in the hallway of the building.

Students with disabilities receive appropriate accommodations relative to their specific disability. Though the Academic Building has no elevator, students are not excluded from a requested course offering, program or activity because it is not offered in an accessible location. The college relocates classes, programs and activities as necessary to accommodate students with mobility challenges.

Guide Dogs/Service Animals

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, (ADA), service animals are permitted on the college campus and in its facilities. Technically speaking, a service animal means any

guide dog, signal dog or other animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including but not limited to guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing, providing minimal rescue or protection work, pulling a wheelchair or fetching dropped items. Therapy or companion animals are not service animals and are not covered under the ADA. To be permitted on campus, a guide dog must be specifically trained to perform a service function. Furthermore, the animal should wear a harness, cape, identification tag or other gear that readily identifies its working status. Guide dogs whose behavior poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others may be excluded regardless of training or certification.

Parking

Accessible parking areas are available to students who are certified for disability parking by their home state.

Library Media Center (Access and Assistance)

Library staff may be contacted during business hours to ensure access to library collections and services. Special services include research assistance, telephone, and reference, retrieval of materials, photocopying assistance, library orientation, special check-out arrangements, and extended loan periods for reserved materials.

- Up-to-date reference and resource materials
- Computers and Internet access
- Virtual library system

Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS)

ADRS exists to enable individuals with disabilities to reach their potential. ADRS provides necessary diagnostic medical, educational, technology, Independent living, vocational counseling, and employment services to eligible individuals with disabilities to assist them in entering into employment. They do not provide comprehensive psychological services. For more information contact ADRS at (205) 290-4400, or 1-800-441-7607.

ACCOMMODATIONS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Priority Registration

Priority registration is provided for students who have identified themselves as a person having a disability. The student is responsible for regular advisement through his/her academic advisor and/or the disability services counselor. After consultation with the academic advisor, the student must have the registration form approved by the disability services counselor.

Disability Services

- Screening of disability documentation.
- Determination of appropriate accommodations.
- Communication with faculty and/or staff regarding student needs.
- Referral to other available campus and/or community resources.
- Disseminate information regarding federal requirements and college policy regarding Section 504.

- Works to resolve issues regarding accommodations for students.
- Serves as resource for students needing guidance in regards to receiving appropriate and reasonable academic modifications.

Counseling Services

- Provides personal, career, and psychological counseling to students with disabilities.
- Provide academic and career advisement to students with disabilities.
- Conducts appropriate pre/post assessment counseling.
- Encourages participation in campus and student activities.

Student Support Services

Student Support Services is a federally funded program that provides academic assistance and cultural and educational enrichment to eligible students who qualify, including students with disabilities. Services provided include:

- Tutoring.
- Peer and Faculty Mentors.
- Study and Test Taking seminars and workshops.
- Academic counseling and advisement.

Student Success Center

- Individualized study corrals.
- Computerized study assistance.
- One-on-one academic assistance.
- Access to training equipment, videos, and other resources.
- Study group rooms.

LSCC Eligibility Determination Guidelines

Legal Mandates: The fundamental principles of nondiscrimination and accommodation in academic programs were set forth in the implementing regulations of Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended in 1992 and more recently with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Regulations for Section 504 make it clear that:

- Persons with disabilities have opportunities to participate in or benefit from services equal to those provided to persons without a disability; this included extracurricular activities such as sports and clubs.
- Program, including educational programs, must be made accessible
- Auxiliary aids, services, and program modifications must be provided so that persons with a disability can participate in education; (e.g. the provision of a reader or tape recorder for a student with a visual disability or an interpreter for a student with a hearing disability).

Qualified Recipients of Services

In order to receive disability services, an individual must have a documented disability that meets the definition as stated in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA (1990).

An individual with a disability must have documentation which supports at least one of the following conditions:

- A physical or mental condition that limits one or more major life activity.
- A record of such condition; or regarded as having such a condition.

Identification of Student Recipients

- The student is responsible for disclosing information about the disability to the disability counselor.
- The student is responsible for supplying written documentation of the disabling condition to the disability counselor.
- Documentation is required in order to activate a special needs file, develop an academic plan, and provide disability related services.

Students who choose not to self-identify when they enter LSCC do not forfeit their right to identify themselves and to request accommodation later. However, the college is not obligated to provide accommodations and services for students with disabilities until they are registered with the disability counselor and make known their need for accommodations.

Appropriate Documentation

A written report must be submitted by a qualified provider that clearly diagnoses a disability and/or records showing the history of a disability. Medical doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists, counselors and school psychologists are among the professionals who routinely evaluate, diagnose and treat disabilities. The report must include the following:

- Clearly stated diagnosis and name/title of evaluator
- Defined level of functioning and any limitations
- Supporting documentation (i.e. test data, history, observation, etc.)
- Current treatment, medication, letter/report (1-3 years), dated and signed

Accommodations

Determining reasonable accommodations

Providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities requires an individual assessment of need and is a problem solving process. Specific accommodations depend upon the nature and requirements of a particular course or activity and the skills and functional abilities of a particular student. Modifications and adjustments to course content and evaluation criteria that do not alter the fundamental nature of the course can generally be arranged.

Academic Accommodations

The counselor responsible for disability services determines reasonable academic adjustments for students, taking into consideration recommendations from the physician, psychologist, or other clinician that diagnosed the student's disability. Consideration is also given accommodations that previously have been used in educational settings with the student. In addition, the disability counselor consults with faculty to assist in tailoring reasonable accommodation to individual course requirements. Although some persons may have similar diagnoses, each person is treated as an individual since accommodations must be tailored to

individual needs. If you are registered with disability services, please make an appointment with Ms. Herndon or Mrs. Williams as soon as possible to discuss any course accommodations that may be necessary. Students who may need course adaptations because of a disability are encouraged to make an appointment to see Ms. Herndon or Mrs. Williams during the pre-registration period.

Accommodation Letters

It is the student's responsibility to deliver accommodation letters to each instructor in whose course the student is requesting accommodations, and to discuss with those instructors methods for providing the requested academic adjustments. Instructors are not obligated to provide accommodations until they have received accommodation letters. If a student delivers an accommodation letter to his/her instructor only within a few days of an assignment or exam, the instructor may not be able to arrange an optimal adjustment. Instructors are required to contact the disability counselor if there are concerns regarding requested accommodations.

Providing Reasonable Accommodations

An academic accommodation is essentially a problem-solving process. The task is to determine the necessary adjustments that will enable students with disabilities to have access to the same programs and services available to students without disabilities and to have their academic performance evaluated without the limiting effects of their disability. The objective of such adjustments is to accommodate the functional limitations of the student's disability while maintaining the integrity of college courses and programs.

Providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a collaborative process between the student and his/her instructor. For example, extended time for exams should be arranged to match both the student's and the instructor's schedules. A student might start a test before the rest of the class, finish a test after the rest of the class, or take a test in two halves at two different times. The accommodation strategy should be appropriate and efficient for both the student and the instructor. Federal law requires that students with disabilities receive services in the most integrated setting possible, unless separated services are the only method of providing appropriate accommodations.

The Student Assessment Center is available by appointment and the disability counselor will provide testing assistance under special circumstances.

Confidentiality

Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 states that any information regarding a disability gained through medical, psychological, educational, other professional reports, and student self-reports is considered confidential.

- Neither the disability nor the use of accommodations is noted on the transcript or diploma.
- Information can be released only with written authorization from the student (FERPA).
- Students requesting special services must sign a release form, which allows the

disclosure of information.

- Information can be shared without written permission in the event of medical emergency, behavior which endangers the safety of the student or others, an official court order, or report of child abuse.
- Students have access to the contents of the file and will be allowed to view material with either the Dean of Students or Counselor present.
- Students are not allowed copies of file materials obtained from another source (psychological reports, medical records, etc) without written permission from the other source.
- A Statement of Confidentiality is discussed with the student, signed, witnessed, and placed in the student's file.

Institutional Obligations

Lawson State Community College as a public institution of higher education, which receives federal financial assistance, is legally bound to prohibit discrimination in the recruitment process, the admissions process, and the education of students with disabilities. Students with documented disabilities are entitled to receive appropriate modifications, accommodations, or auxiliary aids that will enable them to participate in and have the opportunity to benefit from all educational programs and activities provided on the campus of LSCC.

Student Grievance Process/Conflict Resolution

When a qualified student with a disability requests accommodations, the college has a legal obligation to make an effort to provide effective and reasonable accommodations. However, the college is not required to make adjustments that impose an undue financial or administrative burden on the institution, or fundamentally alter the nature of the college program, service, or activity. The obligation to reasonably accommodate students with disabilities does not require reduction of academic standards or course requirements, nor does it require acceptance of behaviors that pose a direct threat or disrupt the learning or teaching environment. If a particular requested accommodation is judged to be inappropriate, the college is obligated to consider other reasonable accommodations.

Questions and concerns regarding accommodations and services for students with disabilities should be directed initially to the disabilities counselor. If the necessary assistance cannot be provided, or information or suggestions that resolve issues involving accommodations, a meeting with the faculty member, the disability counselor, and the student will be scheduled. If an agreement is not reached at this meeting, the Dean of Students will schedule a meeting with all parties involved. If there remains no resolution, the final step in the grievance process involves the dissenting party filing a formal grievance. During the grievance process, the student is entitled to receive accommodations recommended by the disability services counselor.

The process for filing an official grievance is outlined in the *Lawson State Community College Catalog/Student Handbook*.

Consideration and Responsibilities

Responsibilities of Students

Students with disabilities are responsible for informing the college about the disability and the need for reasonable accommodation. This should be done prior to or upon enrollment at the college. Students must furnish adequate documentation of their disabilities from medical or other appropriate professionals in order to substantiate the need for services. The student will:

- Identify as a student with a disability in order to access accommodations and services available.
- Provide a schedule at the beginning of the semester to the Disability Counselor for the development of the faculty notification letter.
- Meet with the faculty to present letters and discuss arrangements for accommodations.
- Notify in a timely manner of the need for services or change in service requirements.
- Adhere to all academic requirements and policies
- Up-date file when appropriate (i.e., when enrollment is not continuous).

Responsibilities of faculty

Faculty plays a major role in the implementation of accommodations to students with disabilities. Faculty members should have input and should assist with determining reasonable accommodations. However, according to federal law, faculty may not refuse to provide required accommodations, question whether the disability exists when accommodations have been authorized by the disability services counselor, or ask to examine documentation when it is not academically related. Faculty will:

- Work collaboratively with disability services counselor to provide authorized accommodations and support services.
- Provide accommodations in a fair and timely manner.
- Meet with the student as quickly as possible upon notification of special needs. Students should initiate this meeting, but faculty may take the initiative when students are reluctant to self-advocate.
- Contact the disability services counselor with questions or suggestions regarding the appropriateness of a required accommodation. (Faculty must continue to provide accommodation until it is set aside or modified).
- Refer students to the disability services counselor when an accommodation is requested. Provide temporary services until paperwork is complete, as recommended by the disability services counselor.

Responsibilities of Disability Services Counselor

Registration for assistance with disability services is a separate process from applying for admission to Lawson State Community College. The Disability Services Counselor will:

- Screen and evaluate documentation

- Determine appropriate accommodations
- Communicate with faculty and/or staff regarding student needs
- Make referrals to other available campus and/or community resources

The college has an obligation and a responsibility to maintain confidentiality of evaluation information and does not release disability documentation without the student’s informed and written consent.

General Guidelines for Instructors

- Students should be viewed on the basis of ability, not disability
- Avoid fostering dependence in students with disabilities
- Interact with students with disabilities in the same manner as other students
- Respect the privacy of students with disabilities; avoid mentioning accommodations in front of others
- Do not view accommodations as “special treatment”, but as methods to limit the negative effects of disabilities on students
- When in doubt about if and how to assist students with disabilities, ask them! If your offer of assistance is declined, do not insist on “helping”

Students with disabilities do not need sympathy; they need academic accommodations to meet the expectations of an academic environment.

Faculty may impose “standards of conduct” for classroom behavior that all students are expected to meet. Such standards of conduct should be designed to prevent significant disruption in the teaching/learning process and provide a more effective classroom learning environment for all students.

Activities, Clubs, and Organization

As an equal opportunity educational institution, Lawson State Community College is committed to making all programs, activities, clubs, organizations, and services accessible to students with disabilities. It is the responsibility of staff, faculty, and administrators to notify the disability counselor when reasonable adjustments need to be made to include students with disabilities. It is the responsibility of staff, faculty, and administrators to assure that students with disabilities are included, encouraged, and supported regarding participation.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to become actively involved with campus organizations. One of the goals of the disability services is to assist students with developing self-advocacy skills and becoming active members of the college community.

Criteria for Disability Documentation

Alabama College System institutions do NOT provide disability documentation for students. It is the student’s responsibility to provide appropriate documentation to the college office responsible for handling the request and to request accommodations. Appropriate

documentation is defined as that which meets the following criteria.

Health Condition, Mobility, Hearing, Speech, or Visual Impairment

A letter or report from treating physician, orthopedic specialist, audiologist, speech pathologist, or ophthalmologist (as appropriate), including:

- Clearly stated diagnosis.
- Defined levels of functioning and any limitations.
- Current treatment and medication.
- Current letter/report (within 1 year), dated and signed.

Psychological Disorder

A letter or report from mental health professional (psychologist, neuropsychologist, licensed professional counselor), including:

- Clearly stated diagnosis (DSM-IV criteria).
- Defined levels of functioning and any limitations.
- Current treatment and medication.
- Current letter/report (within 1 year), dated and signed.

Traumatic Brain injury (TBI)

A comprehensive evaluation report by a rehabilitation counselor, speech-language pathologist, orthopedic specialist, and/or neuropsychologist (or other specialist as appropriate), including:

- Assessment of cognitive abilities, including processing speed and memory.
- Analysis of educational achievement skills and limitations (reading comprehension, written language, spelling, and mathematical abilities).
- Defined levels of functioning and limitations in all affected areas (communications, vision, hearing, mobility, psychological, seizures, etc.).
- Current treatment and medication.
- Current letter/report (post-rehabilitation and within 1 year), dated and signed.

Note: High School IEP, 504 Plan, and/or a letter from a physician or other professional will not be sufficient to document a learning disability.

Learning Disabilities (LD)

A comprehensive evaluation report from a clinical psychologist, psychiatrist, neuropsychologist, school psychologist, learning disability specialist, or diagnostician, including:

- Clear statement of presenting problem; diagnostic interview
- Educational history documenting the impact of the learning disability
- Alternative explanations and diagnoses are ruled out
- Relevant test data with standard scores are provided to support conclusions, including a least: WSIA-R; Woodcock-Johnson Psycho educational Battery-Revised, including Written Language; Woodcock-Johnson Cognitive Processing Battery to substantiate any processing problems
- Clearly stated diagnosis of a learning disability based upon DSM-IV criteria
- Defined levels of functioning and any limitations, supported by evaluation data
- Current report (within 3 years of enrollment date), dated and signed

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

A comprehensive evaluation report from a physician, psychiatrist, clinical psychologist, neurologist, or neuropsychologist, including:

- Clear statement of presenting problem; diagnostic interview
- Evidence of early and current impairment in a least two different environments (comprehensive history)
- Alternative explanations and diagnoses are ruled out
- Relevant test data with standard scores are provided to support conclusions, including at least: WAIS-R, Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery-Revised, including Written Language; Behavioral Assessment Instruments for ADD/ADHD norm on adults
- Clearly stated diagnosis of ADD based upon DSM-IV criteria
- Defined levels of functioning and any limitations, supported by evaluation data
- Current report (within 3 years of enrollment date), dated and signed

Note: High School IEP, 504 Plan, and/or a letter from a physician or other professional will not be sufficient to document ADD or ADHD. Medication cannot be used to imply a diagnosis.

Commonly Asked Questions

Can I ask a student if he/she has a Disability?

No. However, it is the college's responsibility to notify students of services available for students with disabilities. You should inform all students of services and/or programs available at the college for students who need accommodations due to a disability, and how to access those services.

Do I have the right to know what type of disability a student has when they ask for an accommodation?

No. A student does not have to inform the faculty or staff member about their disability, but only the needed accommodations. If you have a question regarding the need for the accommodation, then you may contact the Disability Services Counselor. The counselor will have documentation regarding the student's disability on file. They cannot give details about the disability, unless the student has signed a written consent form, but can inform you if the student has a documented disability and if the accommodation requested is appropriate. The student may disclose their disability to you. You are then obligated to maintain confidentiality regarding the student's disability. It is important to remember that the confidential nature of disability-related information has been an overarching principle of nondiscrimination since Section 504.

What can I do if I disagree with the academic accommodation requested?

If you disagree with the academic accommodation requested, you should discuss your disagreement with the Disability Services Counselor, but you should continue to provide the accommodation. An instructor may not forbid a student's use of an aid if that prohibition limits the student's participation in the school program.

Often faculty members are concerned with the use of a tape recorder, in their classroom because it may infringe on their freedom of speech or potential copyrighted material. The instructor may ask the student to sign an agreement that states that they will only use the recordings for their personal use. It is important to remember that under the ADA if appropriate accommodations are not provided to the student You, as well as the institution can be held liable for monetary damages.

Does the student receive “special privileges” under this legislation?

Providing accommodations should not be regarded as giving students “special privileges,” but rather as equalizing the impact of the student’s disability to the greatest extent possible. Institutions are not mandated to make changes in requirements that would result in a major or substantial change in essential elements of the curriculum. The institution has the right to set academic standards, but the institution must prove that a requested accommodation would create a substantial change. The burden of proof lies with the institution.

Does the student with a disability need to ask for accommodations in a certain time frame before classes?

Yes. Most institutions require that the student indicate the need for an accommodation within a reasonable advance time. This is not always possible, but it is important to provide the accommodation as soon as possible.

What can I do to make the classroom environment open to students with disabilities?

It is important to remember that people with disabilities are just that-people first. Here are a few easy-to-remember tips:

1. Make a general announcement regarding the availability of accommodations at the beginning of class. Most institutions require a statement on all syllabi regarding requests for accommodations. Inform students of the services provided at your college and how to contact the person responsible for assisting students with disabilities.
2. Ask questions. The student is the best source of information.
3. Not everyone who has a disability is the same. It is important to look at the person first and not lump everyone together in the same category. This is also important when addressing accommodations. For example, not all students with learning disabilities need extended time, not all people with visual impairments need Braille, etc. Everyone is an individual with individual needs.

How do I know what type of academic accommodation a student needs?

It is up to the student and the disability counselor to determine what type of accommodation is needed based on appropriate documentation. If you question the accommodation, contact the counselor. There is no one type of accommodation for all students with disabilities. Each accommodation must be decided on a case-by-case basis. Some common accommodations are:

Taped textbooks/Lectures	Interpreters	Note takers
Readers	Cassette Recorders	Student Tutors
Alternate Testing Arrangements	Assessment & Referral to Outside Agencies	Extended Test Time
Accessible Facilities	Computer Adaptive Equipment	Large Print Materials
Parking Permits	Counseling	Career Planning