

The Disability Services Center:

Accommodations and Faculty Rights and Responsibilities

The Coordinator of Disability Services reviewed disability documentation and determined eligibility and appropriate accommodations for 136 and 123 students in, respectively, the 2013 and 2014 fall semesters. Determining reasonable accommodation is a multi-step process and a joint responsibility shared by the Coordinator of Disability Services, students, and instructors. The guidelines below will help you understand the accommodation process and your rights and responsibilities as Ohio Wesleyan faculty members.

What Is the Accommodation Process?

- 1.** Students provide the Disability Services Coordinator with documentation that substantiates their eligibility for reasonable accommodations. Documentation should be submitted before the semester begins or in the first two weeks of classes. However, please understand students can request accommodations at any point in the semester. This documentation is confidential, so instructors should not request to see it.
- 2.** Students are encouraged to meet each semester with the Disability Services Coordinator in the first or second week of classes to request accommodations for their courses and obtain the "Student/Faculty Reasonable Accommodation Plan" to discuss with professors.
- 3.** Students contact instructors and arrange a time to meet during their office hours to discuss accommodation needs. Students who request accommodations without verification should be referred to the Disability Services Center. Students who have not registered with the Disability Services Center cannot receive accommodation unless they are offered to all students in the class.
- 4.** Students and instructors discuss accommodation needs and decide on reasonable accommodations. The agreed upon accommodations may not be the first choice of students or faculty. The Coordinator of Disability Services is available for consultation if questions arise concerning reasonable accommodations or their implementation.
- 5.** Instructors complete the "Student/Faculty Reasonable Accommodation Plan" form with details about the accommodation and how it will be implemented. The form is originally signed by the CDS to confirm recommendations of accommodations. Once faculty and students meet to discuss accommodations and reach an agreement, the student and faculty member both sign this form.
- 6.** Students return the signed top copy of the "Student/Faculty Reasonable Accommodation Plan" to the Disability Services Center. Instructors should keep yellow copies of the "Student/Faculty Reasonable Accommodation Plan" for their records.

Note: If you suspect one of your students may have an undiagnosed learning disability, asking the following questions may help you to understand his or her learning needs without referring to, or asking directly about, a possible disability.

- How did you handle this type of challenge in high school?
- How did you perform in these classes in the past?
- Did you receive any help in high school for any of your classes?
- What type of strategies helped you learn this type of material in the past?
- Are you aware of the support services in the Sagan Academic Resource Center?
- Refer to Departmental Tutoring if applicable (<http://arc.owu.edu/>) Select "Departmental Tutoring Services Outside the ARC" located on the upper left

What Are Faculty Rights and Responsibilities?

Faculty Rights

Faculty members have the right to

- Require students to provide a verification of academic accommodations indicated on the Student/Faculty Reasonable Accommodation Plan forms from the Disability Services Center.
- Deny accommodations requests if students do not provide verification from the Disability Services Center.
- Request that students meet with them to discuss the students' need for reasonable accommodations, academic modifications, and/or auxiliary aids.
- Determine course content and decide the best method for instructing students and assessing their learning.
- Question accommodations that fundamentally alter academic standards or compromise core pedagogical components of a course.
- Deny requests for accommodations, academic modifications, and/or auxiliary aids if they are unreasonable for one or more of the following reasons:
 - a) Posing a direct threat to the health and safety of others
 - b) Constituting a substantial change or alterations to an essential element of a course or program
 - c) Posing undue financial or administrative burden on the university

Faculty Responsibilities

Faculty members have the responsibility to

- Refer students to the Disability Services Center if they mention a disability and the need for accommodations.
- Inform students about OWU's procedures for accommodating students with disabilities (outlined above).

- Meet with students in a timely manner to discuss accommodations and to implement accommodation plans.
- Provide reasonable accommodations and academic adjustments or modifications, which may not be the students' or faculty members' first or preferred choice.
- Provide students with equal access to educational programs and opportunities.
- Submit course textbook orders in a timely manner for materials to be reproduced in alternative formats; Provide students with a list of course texts on request (for the purpose identified above).
- Maintain confidentiality by protecting students' anonymity and keeping disability information and materials in a secure place.
- Contact the Coordinator of Disability Services if questions or concerns arise regarding the appropriateness or implementation of accommodations.
- Include a statement in your course syllabus to encourage students to disclose their disability and accommodation needs and to inform them about the procedure for requesting academic accommodations. The wording of a syllabus statement may vary from one course to the next but each should inform students about three primary responsibilities: **1)** Registering with the Disability Services Center; **2)** Meeting with you to discuss accommodation needs; and **3)** Requesting accommodation needs in a timely manner.

Sample Syllabus Statement

If you have a disability that may impact your work in this course, please register with the Disability Services Center as soon as possible, if you have not done so already, and then meet with me in my office as soon as possible to discuss your accommodation needs. The Disability Services Center is located in the Sagan Academic Resource Center, Corns 316 (740-368-3925).

Please contact the Coordinator of Disability Services if you have questions or concerns about the accommodation process or a student who has discussed disability-related needs with you.

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