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INTRODUCTION

The University of Texas at Austin is proud to be an educational institution that welcomes and supports a diverse and inclusive student body. By removing some of the barriers that students with disabilities experience, we hope to create a learning environment that encourages and challenges all students.

Students with documented disabilities are able to receive reasonable accommodations, appropriate academic adjustments, or auxiliary aids that will enable them to participate in and have the opportunity to benefit from all educational programs and activities of the university. This handbook provides information about the law, the purpose of accommodations, how to register for services, and procedural guidelines. We hope you find it useful. Please feel free to contact SSD at the number below if you have questions or concerns.

Compiled by:
Services for Students with Disabilities
Division of Diversity and Community Engagement
The University of Texas at Austin
1 University Station, A4100
Austin, Texas 78712-0175

512-471-6259 (VOICE)
1-866-329-3986 (VIDEO PHONE)
512-475-7730 (FAX)

www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/

Student Services Building (SSB) 4.104
100 West Dean Keeton Street
Campus Mail Code: A4100
Disability Law

The University of Texas at Austin acts in accordance with several relevant laws:

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

“No otherwise qualified person with a [disability] in the United States shall, solely by reason of a [disability], be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

A **person with a disability** is an individual with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. An individual is considered to be a person with a disability if he/she (1) has a disability, (2) has a history of a disability, or (3) is perceived by others as having a disability.

A **qualified person with a disability** is defined as a person who meets the requisite academic and technical standards required for admission or participation in the post-secondary institution’s programs and activities.

Under the provisions of Section 504, The University of Texas at Austin may not:

- Limit the admission of otherwise qualified students with disabilities.
- Make pre-admission inquiries as to whether an applicant has a disability.
- 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 other students.
- Measure student achievement using modes that adversely discriminate against a student with a disability.
- Establish rules and policies that have the effect of limiting participation of students with disabilities in educational programs or activities.
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 is civil rights legislation that extends the antidiscrimination legislation of Section 504 to all institutions of higher education whether or not they receive federal financial assistance. The purpose of this act is to provide a clear and comprehensive mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities. This statute became effective for public entities on January 26, 1992. It provides comprehensive civil rights protection to individuals with disabilities in the areas of employment, state and local governments, public accommodations, and telecommunications.

Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act

On August 7, 1998, Congress amended Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act to include proper access to electronic and information technology. This requires agencies that develop, procure, maintain, or use electronic and information technology to ensure that the materials are accessible. Therefore, the university must make university-maintained Web site and video materials accessible (i.e. Web sites should allow for the use of speech output systems for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, and videos must be captioned for individuals who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing and audio described for individuals who are blind/low vision).

ADA Amendments Act of 2008

This new law, which clarifies the intent of the ADA, was signed September 25, 2008 and went into effect on January 1, 2009. This law expands the definition of “major life activities”, and specifies that one should not consider mitigating measures (i.e., medication, prosthetics, assistive technology, etc.) when determining eligibility for accommodations.
Facility Access

The ADA requires existing facilities of some agencies to be accessible. The University of Texas at Austin has a compliance plan to make all existing facilities accessible to people with disabilities where access is readily achievable and not an undue burden. For new construction or renovations, the university must be in compliance with the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS), which are administered and monitored by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR). The TAS guidelines have been certified by the United States Department of Justice as conforming to the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG).

On-line Resources

The following Web sites have further information on Section 504, Section 508, the ADA, or facility access:

www.section508.gov

Office of Civil Rights information on Section 504 and the ADA:

Department of Justice information on the ADA:
www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm

Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation information on Texas Accessibility Standards:
www.license.state.tx.us/AB/tas/abtas.htm
Services for Students with Disabilities

Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) is an office within the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (DDCE). The office is located on the fourth floor of the Student Services Building (SSB). The mission statement reflects the area’s core purpose and values:

Based in the philosophy that all students should be assured equal access and opportunity, Services for Students with Disabilities works to eliminate physical, instructional, and attitudinal barriers by providing reasonable accommodations and fostering awareness within the university community.

Any of the following staff members can answer questions and/or refer you to the most appropriate person.
For more information, please call 512-471-6259
Voice Phone: 1-866-329-3986
e-mail: ssd@uts.cc.utexas.edu
or visit our Web site at: www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/

**Director** As manager of the area, this person supervises staff within SSD, oversees the coordination of services, serves as the liaison to the university ADA and Section 504 Coordinator, and represents the office on the University Accessibility Committee. This individual reports to an associate vice president of the division.

**Assistant Director** This individual manages the day-to-day functioning of the area in the director’s absence and coordinates several office-wide initiatives. In addition, this staff member serves as a co-coordinator of services for students who have learning, attentional, autism spectrum disorders (ASD), or psychological disabilities. The assistant director also coordinates support group services and provides supervision for graduate student trainees.
Assistant Director for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services
This individual coordinates sign language interpreters, captioning services, transcribing services, and outreach initiatives for the university deaf and hard of hearing community. In addition, this staff member works with students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Disability Services Coordinators
- One staff member works closely with students who have mobility disabilities, visual disabilities, or medical conditions, such as asthma, cancer, diabetes, etc.
- One staff member co-coordinates services for students who have learning disabilities, ADHD, or psychological disabilities.
- Two staff members coordinate recorded textbooks and Braille services, exam administration, and assistive technology services in the Assistive Technology Equipment Center (ATEC).

Administrative Associate and Assistant These individuals work in the front desk reception area and provide administrative support, including producing the individualized accommodation letters for students.

Registering with SSD

Steps Students Should Take

1. Send any available documentation of the student’s disability and, if applicable, a history of previous academic accommodations to SSD at least 24 hours in advance of the appointment. Documentation guidelines can be found on the SSD Web site at:

   www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/doc.php

2. Call SSD at 512-471-6259 (VP: 866-329-3986), or come in person to the Student Services Building, Suite 4.104 and request an initial intake appointment.
3. When making an initial appointment, students should briefly describe the nature of their disability so that the appointment can be scheduled with the disability services coordinator most familiar with their type of disability. The types of disabilities SSD regularly works with include:

- Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders
- Autism spectrum disorders
- Learning disabilities
- Psychological disabilities
- Mobility disabilities
- Visual disabilities
- Hearing disabilities
- Traumatic brain injuries
- Medical disabilities (diabetes, cancer, asthma, AIDS, lupus, etc.)

4. Arrive five to ten minutes prior to the scheduled appointment at the Student Services Building, Suite 4.104 to fill out paperwork.

5. Meet with the assigned coordinator to discuss what services are available from SSD and other university offices as well as what academic, programmatic, and/or physical accommodations might be appropriate.

**Documentation of Disabilities**

Since each student has different needs for accommodations, the university requires students to provide documentation that includes a specific diagnosis and a description of the functional limitations the student will likely experience in the academic setting. Documentation guidelines exist for each disability group and are located online at:


In general, all documentation must be current, comprehensive, and have been conducted by a qualified professional. The cost of obtaining such documentation is the responsibility of the student; however, SSD can assist with referrals to lower cost clinicians and possible sources of funding. All documentation will go through the same review process regardless of the testing and diagnostic
source. Students will be informed whether or not their documentation is sufficient and/or of the need for additional information upon meeting with an SSD coordinator.

A student with a Certification of Deafness or a Certification of Blindness from the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) will be eligible for services. However, additional documentation from an appropriately licensed professional may be required in situations in which the disability or appropriate accommodations are not readily apparent.

**Determination of Accommodations**

Once students have provided SSD with their documentation, the assigned coordinator will determine whether or not it is sufficient for accommodations. If additional information is necessary, the coordinator will explain what is needed to the student or, when appropriate, to the provider of the documentation. When the documentation is complete and the student has completed an intake interview, the coordinator and the student will review the services and accommodations that SSD will approve. Accommodations are approved on a case-by-case basis based on the documentation, the student’s history, and specific functional limitations. The student will then sign the Acceptance of Services Form to indicate his/her acceptance of the services. This form also allows SSD to release disability-related information to University of Texas faculty and staff as it applies to academic policies, procedures, and accommodations.

**Appointments After Being Registered with SSD**

If a student needs to meet with his/her assigned coordinator after registering with SSD, the student should try to schedule an appointment in advance to ensure that the coordinator will be available. Call **512-471-6259** to make an appointment. Disability services coordinators are available for walk-in appointments between 9 a.m.– 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, but, if available, will see students before or after this time frame. Walk-in appointments are typically limited to 15 minutes.
Maintenance of Records

If a prospective student sends documentation to SSD and does not complete the process to determine eligibility for services, the documentation will be stored for at least one year from the last contact.

A file is considered **active** when the documentation is sufficient, the student has completed an intake interview, and signed the Acceptance of Services Form. If any of these elements are missing, the file will be considered **pending**. Students are not eligible to begin using accommodations until their file is active.

Once a file has been designated as active, it will retain that status as long as the student is enrolled in the university, unless accommodations were approved provisionally. University student records are checked after the twelfth class day during each long semester to determine current student enrollment status. The file will be moved to **inactive** if the student is not enrolled for one long semester. Students who re-enroll after missing one long semester must notify SSD that they have returned in order to **reactivate** their files. The files of students who return to the university after one long semester will be reevaluated to determine if circumstances have changed, necessitating additional documentation. Files will be stored for five years from the date they are designated as inactive.

Information contained in students’ files is considered part of their educational record and is protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (the Buckley Amendment). Information may be released from the files in only three circumstances:

1. Court order
2. With the student’s written permission
3. Internally within the university for a legitimate educational reason

SSD staff members will work with each student to determine appropriate services and accommodations based on the individual student’s functional limitations in an academic environment and the types of university classes
and activities in which the student will be participating. Students maintain the right to deny the use of a service for which they are eligible or to reject an accommodation that has been determined to be appropriate.

The University of Texas at Austin is a decentralized campus with each academic college or school providing services and programs for students enrolled in that college or school. In addition, there are a variety of offices in many different locations offering student support services. Access and accommodations for students with disabilities are university-wide responsibilities, not just the responsibility of SSD. Therefore, various services for students with disabilities are located in the most appropriate campus offices, with SSD staff serving as both a resource and referral agency.

Services and Accommodations

Accommodation Letters for Professors

Students requesting academic accommodations in the classroom must provide a letter prepared by SSD verifying the need for accommodations to each of their instructors. (In the School of Law, letters should be taken to the director of student services, who will make the accommodation arrangements.) A sample accommodation letter is located at the end of this handbook.

*The student’s file must be in active status prior to the preparation of these letters.*

1. The student must complete an Accommodation Letter Request form and turn it in to SSD. Forms are available in the SSD office, or the form may be submitted directly from the SSD Web site at:

www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/accommodation_ltr_request.php

or faxed to 512-475-7730.

*Information needed to complete the form includes:*

- Student name and EID
- Unique number
- Course name and number
- Instructor’s full name
2. It is the student’s responsibility to pick up the letters at SSD. The student will be emailed when the letters are ready for pick up. **SSD does not mail faculty letters. It is the student’s responsibility to complete the form every semester. Students must present a photo ID when picking up letters.**

3. The student should arrange to meet with professors during office hours or schedule an appointment to deliver the letters and discuss the accommodations that will be necessary in each class. It is important that the student provide accommodation letters to instructors at the beginning of each semester and, if approved for testing accommodations, far in advance of the first exam. When giving the instructor the letter, the student should discuss with the instructor how the accommodations best fit within the curriculum of the course. If necessary, an SSD coordinator is available to work with the student and instructor. **Note:** After receiving an accommodation letter, instructors have up to one week to provide the approved accommodations. This is to allow time for any administrative planning that may need to occur. Thus, students should request, pick up and deliver accommodation letters well in advance of class exams. **In addition, students should remind instructors at least one week prior to each exam if they will need testing accommodations.**

4. Failure to follow these steps may hinder the provision of accommodations.

5. These letters contain confidential material and should be handled and filed accordingly.

**Important Notes:**
- Instructors are under no obligation to provide accommodations for a student who does not identify him/herself as a student with a disability.
- The student is responsible for requesting new letters at the beginning of each semester.
- SSD will not be able to process forms with incomplete information.
- If a student needs to request a modification to his/her accommodations, the student must meet with his/her SSD coordinator to discuss the change.
Classroom Accommodations

Changes are not made in the level or type of information students are expected to learn, nor are changes made in the scoring of assignments, nor can accommodations be applied retroactively. All students are expected to make satisfactory progress in class as defined by the instructor.

Access to Overheads or PowerPoint® Presentations
Students with disabilities may request that an instructor make course materials displayed on overhead projectors or PowerPoint slides available for review. Instructors are not required to create new materials. Instead, instructors might post the materials using Blackboard™ software, make copies of the materials and distribute these copies to students or place copies of the material on reserve in a library. Students will work with instructor(s) to determine an appropriate time frame for viewing materials.

Adaptive Equipment
It may be appropriate for a student to use special equipment in the classroom or in the preparation of class assignments. The university provides some adaptive equipment for general student use. SSD staff will work with the student and faculty member to determine when it is appropriate for such equipment to be used in the completion of class assignments.

Alternative Text
Students may require course materials in alternate formats. Common alternate formats include enlarged texts, recorded texts, electronic texts or brailed course materials. SSD works with the student and the professor to provide an appropriate format for the student. Because alternative text production is sometimes a time-consuming process, an SSD staff member may ask an instructor for information about course materials several weeks (or months) in advance.
SSD also offers the training and resources necessary for students to convert their own materials. SSD maintains an assistive technology lab (ATEC) that is available to registered students and the UT community.

- If a student is approved for access to course material in an alternate format, he/she will meet with the assistive technology lab manager who coordinates these services to discuss the procedures for requesting accessible text materials.

- Students must submit an alternate format request form each semester. Because of the high demand at the start of each semester, students are strongly encouraged to submit their requests as early as possible. It is best to submit requests prior to the start of the semester.

- SSD maintains an institutional membership with Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D) and will order texts from RFB&D when available. Only books required for class may be ordered using the institutional membership. Students who wish to order books for personal use must have an individual membership, in which case they are no longer eligible to receive books through SSD’s institutional membership. SSD can assist students who are interested in applying for an individual membership with RFB&D.

- If textbooks are not available through RFB&D, SSD will attempt to provide the material in one of several formats, including scanned word documents or MP3 files.

**Braille**

While most course materials can be made available to students with visual impairments in electronic or audio formats, it may be necessary to provide key passages, handouts or diagrams in Braille. SSD can provide limited brailling services and/or refer a student to appropriate resources.
**Copy of Class Notes**

Students who need note-taking assistance may approach an SSD coordinator for suggestions regarding how to acquire a copy of course notes. While students may ask a professor or TA for a copy of the instructor’s notes, the note-taking accommodation ensures that a student will receive a copy of notes from a fellow student volunteer. If a student approved for note-taking accommodations and the instructor are experiencing difficulty obtaining notes, it is the student’s responsibility to contact an SSD coordinator. Students may acquire notes in a variety of ways including:

1. Asking an instructor to make an anonymous request for a note taker. The note taker provides the notes to the instructor who then gives them to the student requesting the notes. This method allows a student using this accommodation to remain anonymous.

2. Students may ask a fellow classmate for a copy of his/her notes directly. Students may share notes by using carbonless (NCR) paper provided by SSD, by making photocopies, or by exchanging notes electronically.

3. In some courses, the instructor and/or course participants may post notes on course software such as Blackboard.

4. Students with documented hearing disabilities that require class summaries or transcripts should contact the assistant director for deaf and hard of hearing services in the SSD office.

5. If absent, the student will need to make arrangements for missed assignments and notes as any other student would.

**Course Substitutions**

All students must be qualified to participate in his/her program of academic study with or without reasonable accommodations. Therefore, students with disabilities are not excused from course prerequisites, GPA requirements, or degree requirements. However, in limited circumstances it may be appropriate to allow for a substitution of an academic requirement. Such accommodations
are made only when it is clear that the student’s disability makes completion of the requirement impossible and that such an accommodation does not damage the integrity of the academic program.

Student requests for course substitution recommendations from SSD are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The SSD staff is responsible for reviewing the student’s request, assessing the relevant documentation and information, and making a recommendation to the appropriate college or school. The final decision rests with the dean of the student’s academic college or school. Students have the option of appealing directly to the dean of their academic college or school for a course substitution; however, it is important to note that they will often be referred to SSD to obtain a recommendation. Because the process of securing a course substitution recommendation from SSD can be lengthy, students are advised to begin this process far in advance of anticipated graduation or other academic-related deadlines.

**Missing Class Due to a Disability**

Students with disabilities may be more prone to missing class due to medication concerns, chronic illness, transportation issues, mobility difficulties or other disability related circumstances. Students registered with SSD should provide documentation supporting the request of flexibility with course attendance. SSD coordinators will meet with students to discuss the potential implications of missing class (i.e., missed notes, greater difficulty in understanding the material); flexibility does not mean that attendance policies do not apply.

The instructor and the student determine the specifics of a flexible attendance policy, using the Attendance Clarification Form provided by SSD as a guide. If the student or instructor wishes, the student’s SSD coordinator can serve as an additional resource to discuss this form and/or options related to accommodation issues.

It is important to note that there may be courses in which class participation and attendance are essential (e.g., labs, theatre, music, practica, etc.). In these instances, students should discuss options with their SSD coordinator.
Permission to Leave or Move About in Class
For some students with disabilities, sitting for long periods of time or remaining in the same position for the duration of a class period can exacerbate symptoms of the disability. Similarly, some students may need to leave class for brief periods to attend to medications or other medical needs. SSD encourages these students to move around or leave class in the least disruptive manner possible. Students should discuss seating arrangements and the timing of breaks with their instructors.

Permission to Record Classes
Students with disabilities may request permission to record class lectures and discussions. Recording class materials in audio or video format is allowed when the student provides notification of the accommodation to the instructor. The student must provide his/her own recording device and may discuss with the instructor the best placement of the recording device. SSD can serve as a resource for questions regarding the recording accommodation.

Physical Accommodations
The University of Texas at Austin has made a number of physical changes in recent years to make the campus more accessible; however, there are still several older buildings on campus that have not been renovated and are inaccessible to students with certain physical disabilities.

The university is obligated to make classes and programs accessible and will make reasonable accommodations to do so. Examples of appropriate physical accommodations include changing the location of the room in which the class is held, removing fixed seating to allow wheelchair access, asking a professor whose office is not accessible to meet with the student in another setting, etc. SSD staff will work with the student, Facilities Services, the academic department, and any other parties to make such reasonable and appropriate accommodations. Students should notify SSD immediately of any physical barrier to their participation in a class or program so staff may arrange for modifications.
**Preferential Seating**
Students with disabilities may request an instructor’s assistance in obtaining appropriate classroom seating. While reasons for accessible seating vary widely, common disability-related requests include seating near the front of the room, seating near the board or overhead projector, seating near an interpreter or microphone, seating near (or away) from windows, seating near the door and seating on the entry-level of a multi-level classroom. SSD staff can assist with any modifications to classroom furniture that are necessary due to an accessible seating request.

**Use of a Laptop for Taking Notes**
Students who, because of a disability, have difficulty taking notes by hand may request permission to use a laptop in class. Laptops allow for greater speed in taking notes and thus may allow a student to keep pace with others in the class.

**Course Load Accommodations**

**Course Load Reduction**
A course load reduction (CLR) is generally defined as being registered for fewer than twelve (12) hours for undergraduate students, and fewer than nine (9) for graduate students in a given semester. However, individual colleges and/or programs may maintain different standards [i.e. fourteen (14) hours for engineering majors]. CLRs are approved on a semester-by-semester basis, and must be requested by the student. Students are encouraged to arrange this accommodation early in the registration process. The student must complete the University’s Medical Withdrawal/Course Load Reduction Application if requesting this accommodation after the 12th class day for the fall or spring sessions, or after the 4th class day for summer sessions. Students approved for CLR will not be penalized by part-time status in policy and program areas under university control; however, auxiliary services (e.g., federal financial aid, personal insurance, non-university sponsored scholarships, etc.) may be affected. Requests made after the established university deadlines for dropping a course will be accepted only under extreme circumstances (e.g., hospitalization, significant change in status, etc.) and students must
follow university procedures to receive proper approval to drop the course. University deadlines cannot be altered. SSD coordinators are available for consultation regarding this process.

- If approved prior to the 12th class day in the spring and fall or 4th class day in the summer, the student must deliver letters from SSD each semester to departments that monitor a student’s full-time status. Examples of such departments include, but are not limited to, the Office of the Registrar, academic departments, the Division of Housing and Food Service, and Student Financial Services.

- Documentation submitted by the student to SSD should clearly state or explain how the disability precludes the student from participating in the standard number of hours required to maintain full-time status. When the academic impact of the disability is not clear, the student may be required to attempt a full-time course load with accommodations.

- Academic advising (scheduling classes to lessen the impact of the disability) may be preferable to a reduced course load.

**Priority Registration**
Students are encouraged to use priority registration as a way to plan their schedules to allow access to accommodations, such as extended test time, additional time to move between classes, coordination of a class schedule with medical needs, advance planning for interpreting and/or captioning services, etc. Students can register online at:

http://registrar.utexas.edu/students/registration/index.html

- Graduate students register on the first day of registration according to their last name as listed in the course schedule.

- All advising and other bars must be lifted prior to the priority registration date. If the student’s major requires advising, the student must meet with an advisor within the academic department to have his/her advising bar cleared prior to registering for classes. Students who are unsure if this applies to you should contact their college.
• Priority registration for undergraduate students is listed in the course schedule as the first “Open” group of students on the first day of registration. The first day of registration is always a Monday and the time is always 2 p.m. – midnight.

• After registering, students who wish to change their schedules will do so during regular “add/drop” times.

• All students are responsible for completing the registration process during their appropriate time. Any student who misses his/her registration time must wait until the next open registration period. SSD staff cannot register for or change the registration access time for students who fail to register on time.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Accommodations for Students

The University of Texas at Austin will cover the cost or provide interpreting and/or captioning services for classes, related academic requirements, and non-academic out-of-class activities that are sponsored by the university.

Students requesting sign language interpreters, Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART), or TypeWell services will meet with the assistant director for deaf and hard of hearing services to discuss his/her needs and to sign an agreement acknowledging familiarity with related policies.

Students using interpreting, CART or TypeWell services are encouraged to register during the priority registration period and to submit requests for services to the assistant director for deaf and hard of hearing services as soon as possible after registration.

All non-classroom requests (including meetings with professors or group meetings with other students for projects or assignments) also should be made as far in advance as possible, but at least three business days in advance. Students can request interpreters, CART, or TypeWell services online at: www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/interpreter_request_student.php.
Last-minute requests cannot be guaranteed, although attempts will always be made to secure services. Tests taken outside of regular class time will be treated as a special request. Students should submit requests for review sessions and final exams as far in advance as possible.

Students using interpreter, CART, or TypeWell services should notify SSD at least 24 hours in advance if they will not be in class. If a student misses class three times without 24 hours advance notification, the student must meet with the assistant director for deaf and hard of hearing services to continue to receive services. Interpreters, CART and TypeWell captioners will wait five minutes for each half-hour of class time. If the student has not shown up after the waiting time has elapsed, the interpreter or captioner will leave. If the interpreter or captioner does not show up for class, the student should wait ten minutes, then contact the SSD office. A replacement will be sent if one is available.

**Student Responsibilities:**
- Students are encouraged to meet with their professors before classes to discuss the use of interpreting, TypeWell, or captioning services, and any logistical needs.
- It is recommended that students introduce their service provider to the professor on the first day of class, and to any other appropriate persons during special request events.
- Students are responsible for all information presented in class. The service provider is not responsible for retaining or repeating information the student missed.
- The student is responsible for informing SSD of any changes in a regularly scheduled assignment.
Service Provider Ethics:
• The service provider is there to serve the class (professor, Deaf/HH student, and other students) by providing communication access.
• Service providers do not participate in class.
• Service providers cannot answer student’s questions. If the Deaf/HH student has a question, he/she should raise his/her hand. The service provider will voice if requested.
• Students should not socialize with the service providers while they are on the job.
• Service providers will keep all information confidential.
• The university is not responsible for any interpreting or captioning services other than those approved by SSD.

Captioning Videos
Students should check with their professors during the first week of classes whether any videos will be shown in class and whether the videos are accessible (e.g., closed-captioned, open-captioned, or subtitled). If the video is not accessible, students should contact the assistant director for deaf and hard of hearing services immediately to allow ample time for the video to be captioned through an outside vendor (approximately 3-4 weeks is needed to accomplish this task).

Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) Services
Students who do not use sign language and cannot access information presented orally may need CART services. This involves a court reporter transcribing a lecture into written language that is then displayed on a laptop computer screen for the student. The court reporter may be in the classroom or at a remote location.
**Personal FM System**
If approved by the assistant director for deaf and hard of hearing services, SSD has several FM systems available on loan. The student must:

- Make an appointment with the Speech & Hearing Center for an FM fitting
- Sign the Loaner Amplification Form at the Speech & Hearing Center
- Bring the FM system back to the Speech & Hearing Center at the end of the semester
- Contact the Speech & Hearing Center if experiencing any problems with the FM system

**Sign Language Interpreter Services**
Sign language interpreting provides the facilitation of communication between people who are Deaf or hard of hearing and individuals who are hearing. All interpreters employed with The University of Texas at Austin are state or nationally certified. To insure the quality of interpreting services, a team of two interpreters is assigned for anything one hour or more in length.

**TypeWell® Services**
TypeWell is a method of providing realtime communication access to Deaf and hard of hearing students through the use of a speech to text transcription service. It uses a spelling-based abbreviation system and provides a meaning for meaning transcript. This can be done onsite or remotely with the use of equipment provided by SSD.

**Exam Accommodations**
**Extended Time on Exams**
Students with disabilities may require additional time for taking tests and completing work in class. Unless efficiency or speed is the essential skill that is being assessed, students may be allowed additional time for all exams, in-class quizzes, in-class writing assignments and labs. Based on the documentation submitted to SSD, extended time is typically approved in increments of either
one and one half or double the allotted time. The extended time accommodation does not apply to take home exams. Extended time ensures that a student’s performance is reflective of his/her mastery of material rather than the speed at which a student performs. Because there is not a centralized testing center at the university, SSD relies on instructors to provide testing spaces that allow for students to use extended time. Common spaces include an empty classroom, a study room in a library, a conference room or an instructor’s office. Students should work with the instructor in advance of the test to make proper arrangements.

Readers for Exams
Some students with disabilities may require exam questions to be read to them. Often, SSD employs a variety of computer software programs that can “read” the exam aloud to a student. If necessary, an SSD employee will read the exam to a student.

Reduced Distraction Environment
Students with disabilities may be approved for and request a separate “reduced distraction” testing space. This space may be a conference room, unused classroom, or instructor’s office. This accommodation is not a guarantee of a “distraction free” testing space, but rather a quieter space where students have fewer distractions from fellow test-takers and are thus better able to maintain focus. Because there is not a centralized testing center at the university, SSD relies on instructors to provide a testing space that will provide students with a reduced distraction environment. Students should work with the instructor in advance of the test to make proper arrangements.

Use of a Calculator for Exams
This accommodation allows students to use a calculator as long as the calculator is unable to perform the functions that are being tested. This accommodation typically allows for the use of a four-function calculator so that students who understand the concepts will not be penalized for errors in basic calculations. Instructors will approve the calculator to be used prior to exams.
Use of a Computer for Essay Exams
Some students with disabilities will be approved for and request a computer for essay exams. Using a computer allows these students the opportunity to avoid physical fatigue and/or to provide legible, better-organized answers to essays. Students making such a request may use a computer in the SSD office or a personal computer that is pre-approved by the instructor. Computers in the SSD office allow for word processing and assistive technology programs without Internet access. First preference for SSD computers is awarded to students who need assistive technology assistance.

Use of Spell Check for Exams
This accommodation allows students to use a dictionary or spell check device during exams so that they will not be penalized for basic spelling and grammar errors when they are otherwise able to provide accurate responses to the questions asked.

Important Notes for Exam Accommodations:
• Students should meet with each instructor and provide the accommodation letter from SSD outlining the accommodations approved. Discuss with the instructor the type of accommodations needed.
• In the School of Law, individual professors do not administer tests, so testing accommodations must be made through the Student Affairs Office.
• Students should remind instructors at least one week prior to each test of approved accommodations they plan on utilizing.
• If the accommodation arranged by the faculty member is not appropriate or if a faculty member refuses to provide an approved accommodation, the student should refuse to take the test and notify his/her coordinator immediately.
• If a student wishes to reschedule an exam scheduled to take place in SSD, written or verbal permission from the instructor must be given to SSD staff. Instructors should contact the testing coordinator by phone at 512-471-6259 or e-mail ssd@uts.cc.utexas.edu.
• If a student misses an exam, it is his or her responsibility to talk with the professor regarding the absence.

• If testing in SSD, complete the SSD Testing Information Form with the instructor and contact SSD one week prior to each test to make arrangements. Testing at SSD is generally reserved for students requiring assistive technology, scribes, or readers. The faculty member and the SSD testing coordinator will arrange the delivery and return of the test. The student will be allowed to bring only those materials that the instructor has approved ahead of time into the testing room.

Other Accommodations
The accommodations listed above include typical accommodations approved by SSD staff. However, there are times when a student’s documentation supports a more individualized accommodation. These accommodations are determined and approved by the SSD coordinator.

Adaptive Technology Rooms
The university has a variety of adaptive equipment available for use by students with hearing, visual, learning or mobility impairments. These items are located in two primary locations: the Student Services Building (SSB) and the Perry Castaneda Library (PCL). Several colleges on campus also have special equipment available for use. All can be used free of charge. For information on hours, contact the specific facility.

The Assistive Technology Equipment Center (ATEC) is located in the Student Services Building. ATEC is a computer lab with both PC and Mac workstations with a variety of adaptive software, one CCTV and scanners. For information and hours call 512-232-2842.

The Assistive Technology Suite is located in the PCL 3.106, and is available to university students, faculty and staff on a first come, first served basis. For assistance, contact the reference department at 512-495-4654 or 512-495-4259.
Library Service Accommodations
The staff of the General Libraries of the university is available to accommodate students with disabilities who need assistance. Students should request assistance at the Information Desk in the library. The General Libraries also allow individual students who need distraction-free study space to use group study rooms, will permit students to check out materials by proxy and, when possible, will modify regulations applicable to use and removal of reserve materials. In order to receive these accommodations, students must provide verification to SSD of the disabling condition that necessitates these services. SSD will then work with the students and library staff to make the appropriate arrangements.

Personal Attendants
SSD does not provide students with personal attendants nor has access to appropriate referrals. The student may look for services listed in the Austin phone directory.

Grievance Procedures
If a student believes he/she has been discriminated against or harassed on the basis of disability, he/she has two options: informal resolution or formal complaint. The incident should be reported as soon as possible. No person is required to report discrimination to the alleged offender.

Informal Resolution
Informal resolution may be an appropriate choice when the conduct involved is not of a serious or repetitive nature and disciplinary action is not required to remedy the situation. It is most appropriate when attitudinal or behavioral conduct is involved. Informal resolution is an opportunity to have an educational moment. No formal investigation is involved in the informal resolution process. The steps involved in informal resolution are as follows:
1. A request for informal resolution must be made within 90 calendar days of the date of the alleged incident.

2. Students may make the request to the director of Services for Students with Disabilities or to the director of Equal Opportunity Services. Students may discuss the issue with his/her assigned SSD coordinator to begin an informal resolution process.

3. The SSD coordinator will help determine whether the issue can be resolved informally and which office is most appropriate to be involved. If the student’s concern is about his/her SSD coordinator, the director of SSD or Equal Opportunity Services is the most appropriate first contact.

4. A request for informal resolution will not extend the 90-day time limit for filing a formal complaint.

5. An informal resolution meeting is not to be considered a precondition for the filing of a written complaint.

**NOTE:** This is not the official statement of university policies and procedures regarding discrimination or harassment based on disability. The official policy is outlined in the Handbook of Operating Procedures Policy Number 4.B.1, which may be found at [www.utexas.edu/policies/hoppm/04.B.01.html](http://www.utexas.edu/policies/hoppm/04.B.01.html)

### Formal Complaint
A complaint alleging discrimination or harassment must be submitted in writing to Equal Opportunity Services. A written complaint must be filed **within ninety (90) calendar days** of the occurrence of the alleged violation. In the case of a currently enrolled student, if the last day for filing a complaint falls prior to the end of the academic semester in which the alleged violation occurred, then the complaint may be filed within thirty (30) calendar days after the end of that semester.
Complaints **against students** should be filed with Student Judicial Services in the **Office of the Dean of Students**.

Complaints **against non-students** should be filed with **Equal Opportunity Services**, which will investigate such complaints.

A copy of the formal complaint form may be found on the EOS Web site at [www.utexas.edu/eos](http://www.utexas.edu/eos).

**The complaint should include the following information:**

1. Name and UT Identification Number of the person submitting the complaint (complainant)

2. Contact information, including address, telephone, e-mail

3. Name of person(s) directly responsible for alleged violation(s)

4. Date(s) and place(s) of alleged violation(s)

5. Nature of alleged violation(s) as defined in the policy

6. Detailed description of the specific conduct that is the basis of the alleged violation(s)

7. Copies of documents pertaining to the alleged violation(s)

8. Names of any witnesses to alleged violation(s)

9. Action requested to resolve the situation

10. Complainant’s signature and date of filing

11. Any other relevant information
The following communications do not constitute a complaint and will not be investigated or resolved through the complaint resolution process:

- Oral allegations
- E-mail correspondence
- Courtesy copies of correspondence or a complaint filed with others
- Inquiries that seek advice or information only
- Pre-complaint consultations and informal resolution activities

**Complaints Filed with Agencies Outside the University**

The filing of a discrimination or harassment complaint under this policy does not excuse the complainant from meeting the time limits of outside agencies.

**Additional Information**

For more information, consult with Services for Students with Disabilities at 512-471-6259 (VP: 1-866-329-3986) or the director of Equal Opportunity Services at 512-471-1849.

**Misrepresentation of Diagnosis**

Any misrepresentation of facts, including misleading or inaccurate information regarding a diagnosis or a recommended accommodation, for the purpose of gaining an academic advantage is a scholastic dishonesty violation that subjects the person to disciplinary penalty, including suspension from the University. (See Sections 11-802(B) and (c) (13) of the *Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities*.)
Confidentiality Guidelines

1. SSD respects the confidential nature of disability-related information. The University of Texas at Austin and SSD have an obligation to maintain the confidentiality of such documentation.

2. Access by university personnel to disability-related information housed in SSD is on a need-to-know basis and only for the purpose of assuring appropriate accommodations. Instructors are regularly apprised of the confidential nature of disability-related information shared with them. Accommodation letters prepared by SSD for instructors do not give specific diagnoses. Instead, the letters explain that the student has provided appropriate documentation of a disability and lists the approved academic accommodations for that student.

3. On a legitimate, educational need-to-know basis, SSD staff may discuss the impact or impairments caused by the disability and the corresponding accommodations approved with appropriate individuals on campus. Circumstances may include housing arrangements, academic accommodations, instructional strategies and resources or other circumstances specific to the individual.

4. The University of Texas at Austin and SSD are prohibited by law from releasing any disability-related records or personally identifying information to any entity outside the university including documentation provided to Services for Students with Disabilities by the student unless the student provides written permission or there is a court order. The university’s policy regarding student records may be found on the Web at www.utexas.edu/student/registrar/.

5. The student may request or approve the release of such information to persons or agencies outside the university by signing a Release of Information Form.
Sample Accommodation Letter

DIVISION OF DIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

Services for Students with Disabilities • 1 University Station A4100 • Austin, TX 78712-0175 • www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd
(512) 471-6259 • Fax (512) 475-7730 • VP (866) 329-3986

CONFIDENTIAL

(Date)

(Instructor’s Name)

(Department)

(Campus mail code)

Reference: (Student’s name)

Dear (Instructor’s name):

(Student’s name) has presented the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office with documentation of a disability. SSD staff reviewed the documentation and deemed them to meet existing guidelines. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the ADA Amendments Act require that the University of Texas at Austin provide reasonable accommodations to otherwise qualified students with disabilities. The University relies on faculty members to work with the student to provide the approved accommodations, including those for testing. (Student’s first name) will work with you directly to implement the following accommodations, which have been authorized as reasonable accommodations by professionals in SSD for the semester.

• Copy of the class notes from a volunteer in the class using carbonless paper provided by SSD and assistance from the professor anonymously requesting a volunteer
• Attendance may be an issue; the Attendance Clarification Form must be completed, signed and returned to SSD to be officially recognized, and will be in effect as of the date of the instructor’s signature. The student’s administrator (listed in the last paragraph of the Accommodation Letter) can serve as an additional resource to discuss this form.
• Twice the allotted time for taking tests and completing work in class unless speed is the factor being tested. This does not apply to take home exams.

Although most accommodations can be provided by you with the cooperation of your department, please feel free to contact (Student’s name) coordinator, (Coordinator’s name), at 471-6259 if you have any questions regarding this student’s accommodations. Details of a student’s disability are confidential. Please do not ask the student questions related to their condition or diagnosis. You may wish to access additional resources by visiting the Faculty and Staff section of our Web site at http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/for_facstaff.php.

Sincerely,

Krista Schutz-Hampton, M.A.
Director, SSD
Helpful Phone Numbers

The area code for all numbers listed below is 512.

Assistive Technology Equipment Center (ATEC) .......... 232-2842
Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL) ....................... 232-5050
Capitol Metro ..................................................... 389-7475
Career Exploration Center ....................................... 471-1217
Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC) .............. 471-3515
CMHC 24 Hour Help Line ........................................... 471-2255
Dept. of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) 800-628-5115
DARS Services for the Blind or Visually Impaired ........... 471-6693
DARS Services for the Deaf or Hard of Hearing .......... 407-3250
.......................................................... (TTY) 407-3251
Dean of Students (DOS) ......................................... 471-1201
Division of Housing and Food Services ....................... 471-3136
Emergency Services (DOS) ....................................... 471-5017
Instructional Assessment and Evaluation ....................... 471-3032
Office of Student Financial Services ......................... 475-6282
Parking and Transportation ........................................ 471-7275
Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic ......................... 323-9390
Recreational Sports .............................................. 471-3116
Speech and Hearing Center ................................. (Voice/TTY) 471-3841
Student Microcomputer Facility .................. 471-9336
Students with Disabilities Agency (Student Government) 471-3166
Texas Academic Skills Program (TASP) .................... 471-8277
Texas State Library, Talking Books Program .............. 463-5458
Union Underground ............................................. 475-6670
Undergraduate Writing Center ............................ 471-6222
UT Learning Center ............................................ 471-3614
University Health Services ..................................... 471-4955
University Police Department .................................. 471-4441

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