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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.

Services for Students with Disabilities
The University of Texas at Austin
Student Services Building (SSB 4.206)
100 W. Dean Keeton St, Stop A4100
Austin, TX  78712-1093

PHONE: 512-471-6259   FAX: 512-475-7730
VIDEO PHONE: 512-410-6644
WEB: http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/
FACEBOOK: UT-Austin's Services for Students with Disabilities
https://www.facebook.com/UTAustinServicesForStudentsWithDisabilities
TWITTER: @UT_SSDisability
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 they (1) have a disability, (2) have 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.

Services for Students with Disabilities
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 website and video materials accessible (i.e. websites 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).

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.

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).

Online Resources
The following websites 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/abtas.htm
Service for Students with Disabilities (SSD) is a department within the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (DDCE). SSD 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.

**Executive Director**
As manager of the department, 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 the senior associate vice president of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement.

**Associate Director**
This individual manages the day-to day functioning of the department in the director’s absence and coordinates several office wide initiatives. 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.
Assistant Director
The Assistant Director develops and coordinates SSD outreach and assessment. This staff member also maintains a caseload of students with medical, mobility and visual disabilities.

Disability Services Coordinators
Disabilities Services Coordinators conduct intake appointments and provide follow up with students on an as needed basis. Disabilities Services Coordinators maintain caseloads based on types of disabilities including ADHD, Learning Disabilities, Psychological Disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Brain Injuries and Medical Conditions.

Testing and Assistive Technology Staff
Two staff members coordinate alternative text services, exam administration, and assistive technology services in the Assistive Technology Education Center (ATEC).

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

SSD CONTACT INFORMATION:
PHONE: 512-471-6259    FAX: 512-475-7730
VIDEO PHONE: 512-410-6644
WEB: http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/
EMAIL: ssd@austin.utexas.edu
Registering with SSD

Steps Students Should Take

1. Send documentation of the student’s disability and, if applicable, a history of previous academic accommodations to SSD. Be sure to include the student’s EID and contact information so we can inform you when your documentation arrives. Documentation guidelines can be found on the SSD website at: http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/forms-and-documents/

2. Call SSD at 512-471-6259, or come in person to the Student Services Building, Suite 4.206 to 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
   • Deaf/Hard of Hearing
   • 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 4.206 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: http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/forms-and-documents/

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 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 whether additional information is required 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. Additional documentation from an appropriately licensed professional may be required depending on the accommodations being requested.

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 determine reasonable accommodations. 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 their 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 their 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. Walk-in appointments are limited to 15 minutes.

**Maintenance of Records**

*If a student sends documentation to SSD and does not follow up to request or coordinate services or accommodations, 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** status if the student is not enrolled for one long semester (fall or spring). 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 updated or additional documentation. Per UT’s Record Retention Policy, files will be stored for five years from the date the student is last enrolled at UT. After that time the student’s entire SSD file will be destroyed.

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 request their accommodation letters online. The request may be submitted directly from the SSD website at:

http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/using-accommodations/

Information needed to complete the request includes:
- Student name and EID
- Course name, number, and unique number
- Instructor’s full (first and last) name. Students can choose to pick up hard copies of their Accommodation Letters at the SSD office or download their Accommodation Letters from the SSD Web Portal to print themselves.

2. The student will be notified via email when the letters are ready. SSD does not mail faculty letters. It is the student’s responsibility to complete the form at the beginning of every semester. Students must present a photo ID when picking up letters.

3. The student should arrange to meet with instructors during their office hours or schedule an appointment to deliver the accommodation letters to instructors and to discuss how the accommodations best fit within the curriculum of the course.

Note: It is not reasonable to alter fundamental course requirements. It is important that the student provide accommodation letters to instructors at the beginning of each semester. If the student is approved
for testing accommodations, it is the student’s responsibility to remind the instructor of their accommodations and make arrangements for accommodations at least one week before each exam. If a student registers with SSD later in the semester, accommodation letters should be delivered and discussed within a week of registering with SSD. Accommodation letters become effective on the date the letter is delivered to the instructor and are not retroactive. If necessary, an SSD coordinator is available to work with the student and instructor to clarify accommodations.

**Discussing your Accommodations**

Although it may seem intimidating to approach instructors to discuss accommodations, there are several things the student should keep in mind:

- It is part of an instructor’s job to ensure their class is accessible. The Accommodation Letter helps the instructor understand what accommodations are necessary to make sure students have equal access to their course. Students have a right to use accommodations and should not feel guilty or ashamed about discussing their accommodations with their instructor.

- If you encounter an instructor who is not familiar with the accommodation process, please encourage the instructor to contact SSD to answers any questions they may have about providing accommodations.

- You do not have to disclose your disability. If you are asked why you need accommodations, you should explain that the specific details of your disability are confidential and are kept on file at the SSD office. If the instructor continues to ask for personal details, encourage them to contact your SSD coordinator.

- It is helpful to think about how you will present your letters in advance. Below is an example of the type of thing you might say:

  “Hi, I’m (NAME) and a student in your GOV 201 class. I wanted to talk to you about the accommodations I am approved for because of my disability and discuss how they will apply in your class.”
• It may feel a bit uncomfortable until you are used to having these conversations, but it is important to develop your self-advocacy skills as they can help you manage your disability in your education and career.

**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.

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**Important Notes:**

• Failure to follow these steps may hinder the provision of accommodations.
• These letters contain confidential material and should be handled and filed accordingly.
• Instructors are under no obligation to provide accommodations for a student who does not identify as a student with a disability with an Accommodation Letter from SSD.
• 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 their accommodations, the student must meet with their SSD coordinator to discuss the change.

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**Classroom Accommodations**

Accommodations cannot change the level or type of information students are expected to learn. Accommodations do not change grading standards and are not retroactive. 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 Canvas™ 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 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.

Copy of Class Notes
Students can request a volunteer notetaker and download notes from the SSD Web Portal. Students need to login and request a notetaker for each class for which they will need notes. If a notetaker is unavailable, the student should ask the instructor to make an announcement in class requesting a notetaker. Notetakers can complete an application which is available on the SSD website. Once a notetaker is assigned, students will receive an email when new notes are uploaded after each class.

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

Students with documented hearing disabilities who want unedited transcripts from captioning should contact the associate director who coordinates Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services in SSD.

If absent, the student will need to make arrangements for missed assignments and notes as any other student would. Notes are not provided for classes that are missed.

Course Substitutions
All students must be qualified to participate in their 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 or change the fundamental requirements 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 who have concerns about their attendance due to their disability should make sure this need is documented and then discuss the potential implications of missing class (i.e., missed notes, greater difficulty in understanding the material) with their instructor.

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 are 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 their 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 an instructor 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. Some classes may have a laptop ban in effect; a student’s SSD coordinator can assist in discussing with instructors the use of a laptop as an accommodation in such classes.

SSD Services

Alternative Text
Students may require course materials in alternate formats. Students approved for alternative text should contact the ATEC Lab Manager and include a picture of the receipt and the book list with the full title, ISBN, author and publisher. Books will be converted into accessible pdfs. If you need an alternative format such as a word document or braille, please include this information when you submit your request.

SSD works with publishers to get digital formats of the texts so that the books do not have to be unbound and scanned by hand. If SSD is unable to get a digital format from the publisher, the student will be contacted to bring in the physical copy of the book/course packet to scan.

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.

Braille
While most course materials can be made available 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 may need to work with an off campus provider for complex requests.

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 be considered to have full 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 deadline for dropping a course will be accepted only under extreme circumstances (e.g., hospitalization, significant change in status, etc.) and students must provide specific, time-sensitive documentation stating why this deadline could not be met.

Students must also 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, University Housing and Dining, and Office of Financial Aid.

- 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.

- Students should consult with their academic advisor how to best schedule their classes to lessen the impact of their disability. Scheduling classes in this way 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:

https://registrar.utexas.edu/students/registration

• Graduate students do not need priority registration as they 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 their advising bar cleared prior to registering for classes. Students who are unsure if this applies to them 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 their 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.

Accommodations for Deaf and Hard of Hearing 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 associate director for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services to discuss their 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 associate director for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services as soon as possible after registration.

Requests for interpreting, CART or TypeWell services for classes must be made a MINIMUM of two weeks in advance.

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:

http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/deafhh/

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 associate 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 instructors 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 instructor 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 (instructor, 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, they should raise their 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 instructors 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 have their instructor contact the associate director for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services immediately to allow ample time for the video to be captioned (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 associate 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 and Hearing Center for an FM fitting
• Sign the loaner amplification form at the Speech and Hearing Center
• Bring the FM system back to the Speech and Hearing Center at the end of the semester
• Contact the Speech and 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.

Testing Accommodations
In most cases, testing accommodations should be provided by the instructor. If the instructor does not have the available resources (time, space, etc.) to provide the approved testing accommodations students may reserve space in the SSD office to take their test/exam. Tests must be reserved by using the SSD Web Portal to submit a request. Once the test reservation has been submitted students are responsible for getting approval from the instructor to take a test at SSD. Tests must be
reserved at least two weeks in advance and all test reservations for the semester must be submitted by the mid-semester deadline.

**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 their 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.

**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.

**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.
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 the use of 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 instructor is not appropriate or if an instructor refuses to provide an approved
accommodation, the student should refuse to take the test and notify their SSD coordinator immediately.

• Students needing to test at SSD can log in to the SSD Web Portal to submit a request to take an exam at SSD. Requests must be submitted at least 2 weeks before the exam. Students will receive an email to print and take to their professor. The professor will fill out the bottom of the form and sign. If your professor allows the use of notes, texts, calculators or other materials on the exam, make sure they include this on the form. SSD will not allow those materials without explicit, written permission. Return the completed form to SSD 1 week before the date of the exam to finalize your reservation.

• 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 email ssd@austin.utexas.edu.

• If a student misses an exam, it is the student’s responsibility to talk with the instructor regarding the absence and the consequences for missing the exam.

Additional Resources
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 disabilities. These items are located in two primary locations: the Student Services Building (SSB) and the Perry Castañeda 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 Education Center (ATEC) is located in the Student Services Building (SSB). ATEC is a computer lab with both PC and Mac work-stations with a variety of adaptive software, one CCTV and scanners. The ATEC is open for use during SSD’s regular business hours of 8 a.m.–5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The assistive technology suite is located in PCL 4.104, and is available to university students, faculty and staff on a first-come, first-served basis. For assistance, contact the reference department at 512-495-4250.

**Library Services**

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 reference 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 disability that necessitates these services. SSD will then work with the students and library staff to make the appropriate arrangements.

**Personal Services**

UT does not provide personal services relating to individual academic activities and/or activities of daily living such as personal attendants, individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or other devices or services of a personal nature. SSD Staff may be able to provide referrals for community resources for these needs.

**Grievance Procedures**

*If a student believes they have been discriminated against or harassed on the basis of disability, they have 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.*

28 Services for Students with Disabilities
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. Students are also permitted to raise a concern within 30 days after the beginning of the long semester.

2. Students may make the request to the executive director of Services for Students with Disabilities or to the university’s ADA coordinator. Students may discuss the issue with their 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 their SSD coordinator, the executive director of SSD 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 3-3020 which may be found at: http://www.policies.utexas.edu/policies/nondiscrimination-policy.
Formal Complaint

A complaint alleging discrimination or harassment on the basis of disability must be submitted in writing to the university’s ADA coordinator. 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 the university’s Office for Inclusion and Equity, who will investigate such complaints.

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, email
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
- Email 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. Students may file an external complaint with the Office of Civil Rights, US Department of Education.

### Additional Information

For more information, consult with Services for Students with Disabilities or contact the ADA coordinator.

**SSD:** 512-471-6259  **VIDEO PHONE:** 512-410-6644

**ADA COORDINATOR:** 512-232-2910

### 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 appendix C, chapter 11, sections 11-402(b) and (f) 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 informed that disability-related information is confidential. Accommodation letters prepared by SSD for instructors do not disclose 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.
CONFIDENTIAL

(Date)

Reference: (Student’s name, EID, Course Name and Section)

Dear (Instructor’s name):

(Student’s name) has a documented disability and is currently registered with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) for the Spring 2015 semester. The following accommodations have been determined to be reasonable due to this student’s specific disability(ies) in accordance with University policies and federal guidelines. (Student’s first name) will work with you directly to determine how the following accommodations will apply in your course and to ensure that they do not alter the essential requirements of the course.

**Classroom Accommodations:**

- A copy of class notes from a volunteer in the class with the option of assistance from the professor to anonymously request a volunteer. Permission for the volunteer to use a laptop, SSD’s copier or carbonless paper provided by SSD.
- Permission to discuss possibility of flexibility with attendance. Final determination will be made by instructor based on the structure of the course and by using the included Attendance Clarification Form. This form must be completed, signed by both student and instructor, and then returned to SSD in order to be officially recognized.

**Testing Accommodations:**

- One and one half 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.

Faculty and departments are responsible for providing access to classroom and testing accommodations listed above. For more information about providing classroom and testing accommodations listed above, please visit the Faculty and Staff section of our Web site at [http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/facultystaff/](http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/facultystaff/). If you believe that any of these accommodations will compromise the academic integrity or alter the essential requirements of your course please feel free to contact (Student’s name) coordinator, (Coordinator’s name), at 512-471-6259.

Conversations with students should focus on the provision of accommodations and the impact on coursework rather than on specific details of the student’s diagnosis or disability(ies). Please do not ask the student questions related to their condition or diagnosis as these are confidential. SSD works in partnership with faculty and staff to ensure students with disabilities have equal access to the University of Texas at Austin. We appreciate your efforts in providing an accessible educational experience for this student.

Sincerely,

Kelli Bradley, LMSW, MBA
Executive Director, Services for Students with Disabilities
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 ......................................................................................... 474-1200
Center for Strategic Advising and Career Counseling ...................... 232-8400
CMHC 24-Hour Help Line ...................................................................... 471-2255
Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC) ................................. 471-3515
Dean of Students (DOS) ........................................................................ 471-5017
Texas Workforce Commission (Vocational Rehabilitation) .............. 800-628-5115
University Housing and Dining .............................................................. 471-3136
ITS Help Desk ......................................................................................... 475-9400
Learning Ally .......................................................................................... 323-9390
Office of Financial Aid ........................................................................... 475-6282
Parking and Transportation ................................................................. 471-7275
Recreational Sports ............................................................................... 471-3116
Sanger Learning Center ......................................................................... 232-8400
Speech and Hearing Center ................................................................. (Voice/TTY) 471-3841
Student Emergency Services (SES) .................................................... 471-5017
Students with Disabilities Agency (Student Government) .............. 471-3166
Texas State Library, Talking Book Program ....................................... 463-5458
Undergraduate Writing Center ............................................................ 471-6222
Union Underground ............................................................................. 475-6670
University Health Services .................................................................. 471-4955
University Police Department ............................................................. 471-4441

The University of Texas at Austin
Division of Diversity and Community Engagement

Services for Students with Disabilities is a unit within the
Division of Diversity and Community Engagement at The University of Texas at Austin

On the cover: Members of the 2012 Longhorn College Bowl Team. The team participated in the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) College Bowl.