



TEXAS

The University of Texas at Austin

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Student Handbook



The University of Texas at Austin
**Services for Students
with Disabilities**

Student Handbook

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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.

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:

www.ed.gov/policy/rights/guid/ocr/disability.html

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:

<https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/ab/ab.htm>



The University of Texas at Austin Services for Students with Disabilities

Services 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, the executive director supervises staff within SSD, oversees the coordination of services, serves as the liaison to the university ADA and Section 504 coordinator, maintains a caseload of students, 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

The associate director manages the day-to-day functioning of the department in the director's absence, 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 maintains a caseload of students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Assistant Director

The assistant director develops and coordinates SSD outreach and assessment and supervises the Assistive Technology Team. This staff member also maintains a caseload of students with medical, mobility and visual disabilities.

Disabilities 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, 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

Two staff members 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

Getting Started

1. Students should send documentation of their disability(ies) and, if applicable, a history of previous academic accommodations to SSD. Student EID and contact information should be included so the student can be notified once the documentation has been reviewed. Documentation guidelines can be found on the SSD website at: **<http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/forms-and-documents/>**
2. Once students have been notified that their documentation is sufficient, students should call SSD at **512-471-6259**, or come in person to the Student Services Building, Suite 4.206 to request an initial intake appointment.

When making an initial appointment, students should briefly describe the nature of their disability so that the appointment can be scheduled with the disabilities services coordinator most familiar with their type of disability. The types of disabilities SSD regularly works with include:

- ***Attention deficit/Hyperactivity disorders***
- ***Autism***
- ***Deaf/Hard of Hearing***
- ***Learning disabilities***
- ***Medical disabilities (diabetes, cancer, asthma, AIDS, lupus, etc.)***
- ***Mobility disabilities***
- ***Psychological disabilities***
- ***Traumatic brain injuries***
- ***Visual disabilities***

3. Students will receive an email with a link to the Student Information Form that must be completed prior to the Intake appointment. This form will request information about the student's experience with their disability, any prior use of accommodations and information about their need for accommodations at UT.
4. Meet with the assigned disabilities services coordinator to discuss what available services, 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.

A student with a Certification of Deafness or a Certification of Blindness from the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) will be eligible for services. Additional documentation from an appropriately licensed professional may be required depending on the accommodations being requested.

Determination of Accommodations

During the intake appointment, students will discuss their disability-related need for academic accommodations, services and supports. Disabilities services coordinators will use the provided documentation and student's experience in the academic setting to determine what types of accommodations, services or supports are necessary to provide them with equal access to their experience at UT. Accommodations are approved on a case-by-case basis based on the documentation, the student's history, and specific functional limitations. After completing their intake appointment, 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.

Ongoing Follow Up and Support

Students are encouraged to follow up with their disabilities services coordinator on an as-needed basis related to any questions or concerns about access or accommodations. If a student needs to contact their disabilities services coordinator after registering with SSD, they may do so via email, phone, or in person by visiting their coordinator's office hours. Students can also call **(512) 471-6259** to schedule an appointment, which ensures their coordinator will be available.

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 continuously 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 a student's file 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 Instructors

Students requesting academic accommodations in the classroom must deliver an accommodation letter from SSD outlining approved classroom and/or testing 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
2. The student and instructor will be notified via email when the accommodation letters are ready to download from the SSD web portal.

SSD does not automatically issue accommodation letters to students and instructors. It is the student's responsibility to request accommodation letters at the beginning of every semester. Students should communicate with instructors about whether or not the instructor will be viewing the accommodation letters and handouts online via the SSD web portal or if the student should download and print a hard copy to deliver to the instructor.

3. The student is responsible for contacting the instructor to deliver and discuss their accommodation letter, including any associated handouts. The student should specify which accommodations they are requesting to use in each class, and discuss how the accommodations will be provided based on the structure and learning goals of the class. SSD recommends meeting with instructors during office hours or scheduling an appointment to discuss accommodations to allow sufficient time and privacy for discussing accommodations.

Note: It is not reasonable to alter fundamental course requirements. Although there is no deadline to deliver accommodation letters, students who plan to use their accommodations should deliver the accommodation letter early in the semester so instructors have sufficient time to coordinate the necessary accommodations. 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 testing accommodations at least two weeks before **each** exam. If a student registers with SSD later in the

semester, accommodation letters should be delivered and discussed within one 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 for all students. 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 students encounter an instructor who is not familiar with the accommodation process, please encourage the instructor to contact SSD to answer any questions they may have about providing accommodations.
- Students do not have to disclose any details about their disability. If a student is asked about the reason they need accommodations, students should explain that the details of the disability are confidential and kept on file at the SSD office. If the instructor continues to ask for personal details, encourage them to contact the student's SSD coordinator.
- It is helpful to think about how to discuss accommodations with the instructor in advance. Below is an example of what 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 talking about accommodations, but it is important for students to develop their self-advocacy skills, which will benefit them in their education and future career.

Note: After receiving an accommodation letter, instructors may need up to one week to provide the approved accommodations. This is to allow time for any administrative planning that may need to occur.

Important Notes:

- Failure to follow these steps may hinder the provision of accommodations.
- Accommodation 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 accommodation letter requests with incomplete information.
- If a student needs to request an update to their accommodations, the student must meet with their SSD coordinator to discuss the change.

Accommodation Overview

Students have a right to equal access and full participation in all aspects of their university experience. Academic accommodations are put in place to provide students with equal access within their courses, and it is important for students to work closely with instructors to discuss how the approved accommodations will be provided in each class. Accommodations are individualized based on the needs of each student and the essential requirements of their course(s) or degree plan. Accommodations may change how, when or where work is completed but they cannot change the level or type of information students are expected to learn and do not change grading standards. Students must deliver and discuss the accommodation letter before they can expect to receive accommodations and allow the instructor sufficient time to coordinate any logistics regarding the provision of the accommodations. Accommodations are not retroactive so students should discuss their need for accommodations with their instructors early in the semester.

Students who may need accommodations in other parts of their university experience (on campus housing, dining, employment, placement exams, study abroad, student organizations, etc.) should talk with their disabilities services coordinators about the process for requesting these types of accommodations. Students who are not registered with SSD can contact the Walk In coordinator for information.

Listed below are examples of academic accommodations that are commonly approved by SSD coordinators. There are many other types of accommodations that may be approved based on each student's unique circumstances. Students should discuss their need for accommodations during their initial intake appointment or follow up with their disabilities services coordinator if they need to change or update their accommodations at any point during their enrollment at UT.

Classroom Accommodations

Students may be approved for accommodations to allow them equal access to the information, material and interaction that takes place during class. The classroom accommodations listed below are commonly approved classroom accommodations but do not represent an exhaustive list of accommodations. All accommodations are individually approved based on the student's need and supporting documentation.

Notetaking Accommodations

Students with a disability may need additional support with taking notes during class because of the impact of their disability. Students should still take their own notes, if possible, and use the notetaking support to fill in any gaps in their own notes. Different types of notetaking support may be used depending on the student's disability or course structure. Any notes, slides, or audio recording received as part of an accommodation are for a student's personal use only and should not be shared with others in any format (in person or electronically). 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.

Access to Material Shown in Class

Students with disabilities may need an instructor to make course materials shown in class (such as overheads or slides) available for review outside of class. Instructors are not required to create new materials or share their lecture preparation materials. Instead, instructors might post the materials using Canvas™ software, make copies of the materials and distribute these copies to students, allow students to photograph information on the board, or make copies of the material available to view in a library or during office hours. Students will work with instructor(s) to determine an appropriate time frame for viewing materials.

Copy of Class Notes

Students can request a volunteer notetaker and download notes from the SSD web portal. Students should request a notetaker via the SSD web portal 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.

Permission to Record Classes

Recording class lecture in audio 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.

Use of a Laptop for Taking Notes

Students may need 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. Students approved for this accommodation should be allowed to use a laptop even in classes that prohibit the use of technology. A student's SSD coordinator can assist in discussing with instructors the use of a laptop as an accommodation in such classes.

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 or mental health 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.

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.

Missing Class Due to a Disability

Students with disabilities may be more prone to missing class due to medication concerns, chronic illness, mobility difficulties, or other disability-related circumstances. Students should read their syllabus to find out the attendance policy for each class and then use the Attendance Clarification Form (provided by SSD) to discuss with the instructor what additional flexibility can be provided based on the nature and structure of the course. This conversation is critical in helping the student and instructor understand how absences will be handled for the class. The student's SSD coordinator is available to discuss this form and/or options related to accommodation issues. The completed Attendance Clarification Form should be returned to SSD. It is

important to note that there are courses in which class participation and attendance are essential (e.g., labs, theatre, music, practica, etc.) and flexibility with attendance may be limited.

Testing Accommodations

Students may be approved for testing accommodations to allow them equal opportunity to demonstrate their skill and knowledge to their instructors. The testing accommodations listed below are commonly approved accommodations but do not represent an exhaustive list of accommodations. All accommodations are individually approved based on the student's need and supporting documentation.

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. Tests must be reserved by using the SSD student web portal. Once the test reservation has been submitted, students are responsible for getting confirmation of the requested date/time from the instructor. Tests must be reserved at least 2 weeks (10 business days) 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. Students should provide reasonable notice of their need for this accommodation so the instructor has time to make proper arrangements.

Reduced Distraction Environment

Students with disabilities may be approved for a “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 provide reasonable notice of their need for this accommodation so the instructor has time 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 specific calculator to be used prior to exams.

Use of a Computer for Essay Exams

Some students with disabilities will be approved for the use of a computer for essay exams. Using a computer allows the opportunity to avoid physical fatigue and/or to provide legible, better-organized answers to essays. Students approved for this accommodation 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.

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. Students are responsible for providing their own spellcheck tools.

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 and how these will be implemented in each class.
- 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 the approved accommodations they plan on utilizing.
- If the accommodation arranged by the instructor is not appropriate or if an instructor refuses to provide a previously discussed approved accommodation, the student should refuse to take the test and notify their SSD coordinator immediately.
- Students needing to test at SSD should log in to the SSD web portal to submit a request to take an exam at SSD. Requests must be submitted at least 10 business days before the exam. Students must obtain confirmation from their instructor either through a printed and signed confirmation form or online via the SSD instructor portal. Students should discuss with the instructor how confirmation will be provided to SSD. Confirmation must be received at least 5 business days prior to the scheduled exam.
- 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-testing@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.

Accommodations for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students

The University of Texas at Austin will 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 need to 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 instructors or group meetings with other students for projects or assignments) 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. Students should submit requests for review sessions, exams outside of regular class times, and final exams as far in advance as possible.

Students using interpreters, CART, or TypeWell services should notify SSD at least 24 hours in advance if they know they will not be in class. If a student continues to miss class without 24 hours advance notification, services may be suspended. Interpreters, CART and TypeWell captioners will wait five minutes for each half hour of scheduled 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, students should contact SSD immediately.

Student Responsibilities:

- Students are encouraged to meet with their instructors before classes begin to discuss the use of interpreters, TypeWell, CART, and any logistical needs related to communication in class.
- 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 as the law allows.
- The university is not responsible for any interpreting or captioning services other than those approved by SSD.

Captioned 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 Captioning and Transcription Services immediately to allow ample time for the video to be captioned (approximately 3–4 weeks is needed to accomplish this task). SSD's associate director is a resource for both students and instructors who have questions about captioning materials for class.

Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) Services

CART Services involves a court reporter transcribing a lecture into written language that is displayed on the student's laptop. The court reporter may be transcribing the material in the classroom or from a remote location. CART may be approved for students who do not use sign language or in courses with specialized vocabulary or jargon.

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 ensure the quality of interpreting services, a team of two interpreters is assigned for any event 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 an advanced abbreviation software and provides a meaning for meaning transcript.

Additional Accommodations

Accommodations in Online Courses

Accommodations may still be used in online courses, but the type of accommodations that are necessary may be different than what is needed for an in person class. Students should deliver and discuss their accommodation letter with their instructor to determine which accommodations apply to the specific course and how they will be provided. Students should contact their SSD coordinator with any questions or concerns related to accommodations in online courses.

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 admissions requirements, course prerequisites, GPA requirements, or degree requirements. However, in limited circumstances it may be appropriate to allow for an equivalent 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, or change, the fundamental requirements of the academic program. Requests for a course substitution from SSD are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The SSD staff will review the student's request, assess the relevant documentation and information, and make 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.

Physical Accommodations

Physical accessibility at The University of Texas at Austin is always a work in progress and construction and renovations are continually being done to make the campus more accessible. There are still several older buildings and parts of campus that have not been renovated and are inaccessible to students with certain physical disabilities. The university will make reasonable accommodations in order to provide students with equal access and full participation in all programs and services. 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, providing alternate furniture options (chairs, desks, etc.) or asking an instructor whose office is not accessible to meet with the student in another setting. 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.

Placement Exam Accommodations

Students who are taking a placement exam at UT can request reasonable accommodations for the exam. Instructions and required forms are available on the SSD website:

<https://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/placement-exams/>

Students can also ask their disabilities services coordinator for more information. Requests for placement exam accommodations should be made at least 2 weeks prior to the exam.

Housing and Dining Accommodations

Services for Students with Disabilities and University Housing and Dining work together to ensure students with disabilities have an accessible on campus living experience. Students who are living in university housing (residence halls or university apartments) may request reasonable accommodations to allow them equal access to their living environment. Students must have an active housing contract before housing accommodations will be provided. Required forms, timelines and instructions for requesting housing accommodations are on the SSD website:

<https://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/housing/>

SSD Services

Alternative Text

Students who cannot access printed text materials may require course materials in alternate formats. Students approved for alternative text should complete the Alternative Text Book Request Form online which will require a picture/screenshot of the receipt/invoice, the full title of each book, edition, ISBN, author name, publisher name and year published. Students should also specify the format they prefer (accessible PDF, word document or Braille), when making a 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 course materials 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

Braille is a tactile writing system used by people who are blind or visually impaired. Braille can be printed on embossed paper or read using a refreshable braille display. 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

braille services and may need to work with an off campus provider for complex requests.

Course Load Reduction

A course load reduction (CLR) allows a student to maintain full time status while being registered for fewer than twelve (12) hours but at least six (6) for undergraduate students, and fewer than nine (9) but at least six (6) hours for graduate students. However, individual colleges and/or programs may maintain different standards [i.e. fourteen (14) hours for engineering majors]. 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. Students must contact their disabilities services coordinator to request this accommodation each semester. Students may start the semester with less than full time hours (a “proactive” course load reduction) or may drop a course for disability-related reasons prior to the university drop deadline.

Students who need to drop a course for disability-related reasons after the 12th class day for the fall or spring sessions, or after the 4th class day for summer sessions must complete the Medical Withdrawal/ Course Load Reduction Application. Requests made after the established university deadline for dropping a course will be accepted only under extreme circumstances (e.g., hospitalization, significant change in functioning, 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 or extended. SSD coordinators are available for consultation regarding this process.

- Students approved for course load reduction who plan to start the semester with less than full time hours must request full time status letters from SSD for 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.
- Students should consult with their academic advisor about 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.
- 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 university scheduled "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.

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).

The Assistive Technology Education Center (ATEC) is located in the SSD office. ATEC is a computer lab with both PC and Mac work-stations with a variety of adaptive software, 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 a reduced distraction study space to use group study rooms or will permit students to check out materials by proxy. 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

The university does not provide personal services, devices or equipment 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.

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 Conduct and Academic Integrity 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.
6. Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) staff are designated as responsible employees. A responsible employee is a university employee who has the duty to report incidents of sexual misconduct to the Title IX Office. Sexual misconduct includes sex and gender discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating and domestic violence, stalking, sexual exploitation, and any other forms of inappropriate sexual conduct. Information related to incidents of sexual misconduct that is disclosed to SSD in person or via documentation may be reported to the Title IX Office. Disability/ diagnostic information will be kept in accordance with SSD's Confidentiality Guidelines.

Sample Accommodation Letter



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

Services for Students with Disabilities • 100 West Dean Keeton St. • SSB 4.206 • Austin, TX 78712-0175
(512) 471-6259 • Fax (512) 475-7730 • VP (512) 410-6644 • <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>

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, please visit the Faculty and Staff section of our Web site at <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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kelli Bradley'.

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: Participants in UT's Adapted Sports Night,
part of the 2016 Disability Awareness Month.