

# Welcome to Disability Services for Students!

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The Community College of Rhode Island, New England's largest, public community college, has been a leader in education and training for over 40 years. The college is committed to creating an educational environment which is supportive, accepting and accessible to all students, including students with disabilities.

## ***Mission of Disability Services for Students***

The Disability Services for Students office at CCRI recognizes disability as a form of cultural diversity and works to foster an inclusive environment for all students in the higher education community through education, awareness, and accessibility.

This mission is accomplished by:

- Recommending and coordinating reasonable accommodations in a variety of domains (exam, course, and program).
- Encouraging student development through self-advocacy and personal decision making.
- Supporting a commitment to academic success and student retention.
- Providing training and information to faculty and administration that uphold the inclusion of persons with disabilities.

## ***About Disability Services for Students***

The Disability Services for Students (DSS) office is part of the College Opportunity and Support Programs unit within the Division of Student Affairs. DSS Coordinators and support staff are available on each of CCRI's four main campuses to meet with students and to help provide the necessary and reasonable accommodations that students need to be successful. In addition, the DSS office serves as an information resource to faculty, providing awareness and guidance for how to best ensure the inclusion of students with disabilities without compromising academic standards. The DSS office works to dispel negative and limiting stereotypes and promotes a campus environment that is sensitive, accepting and responsive to the needs and contributions of all CCRI students.

# Disability Accommodations and Services

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## ***What Is A Disability?***

Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, a person may be considered “disabled” if she or he:

- Has a physical or mental condition that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
- Has a record of such a physical or mental condition; and/or
- Is regarded as having such an impairment.

“Major life activities” can include caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working.

## ***What Is A Reasonable Accommodation?***

Reasonable accommodations are adjustments to the learning environment that allow qualified students with documented disabilities to have equal access to the college’s programs, facilities, and activities. However, accommodations do not change the core elements of a course or program or provide an undue advantage to the student using them. Rather, by modifying the non-essential elements of a course or program, accommodations provide students with disabilities the opportunity to learn by removing barriers. The College may deny requested accommodations that reduce academic standards, alter the fundamental nature of the course or program, are unreasonably expensive or impossible to administer.

## ***What Types Of Accommodations Are Available?***

Accommodations are highly individualized and are determined on a case-by-case basis. Examples of accommodations available to students with disabilities may include, but are not limited to program accommodations, classroom and course accommodations, testing accommodations and use of adaptive equipment. More detailed information and examples of accommodations available at CCRI are outlined in the Types of Accommodations section of this handbook.

## ***Who is Eligible for Accommodations?***

Students with disabilities who have current and complete documentation of their disability from a licensed physician, psychologist, or other appropriately qualified specialist may be eligible for accommodations. Students with special circumstances can call us to discuss their situation. Accommodations will *not* be provided without appropriate supporting documentation.

### ***When Should Students Request Accommodations?***

The sooner, the better! Students should make an appointment with a DSS Coordinator to discuss their needs *before* the beginning of each semester. We recommend that students make their requests for accommodations *at least four weeks in advance* of when the accommodations are needed, such as during the summer or intersession. All accommodations and services must be requested with reasonable advance notice.

Academic success is more likely if ALL accommodations and services are in place within the first two weeks of the semester. . . Please *Plan Ahead!*

### ***How Is College Different From High School for Students with Disabilities?***

Unlike elementary and secondary school, college offers access rather than entitlement to academic programs. This means that students with disabilities are not automatically entitled to a college education in the way they are entitled to a secondary education. However, the law does guarantee students an opportunity to pursue a college education by providing equal access to academic programs through reasonable accommodations granted by the college. Students with disabilities must still complete academic requirements with the same degree of mastery as students without disabilities. Therefore, students with disabilities can expect a more equal chance to do the same work as their peers, i.e., a more level playing field on which to compete. Remember, college students are considered adults, responsible for their own actions and decision making. Unlike high school, students must seek out and advocate for themselves and the services they need. DSS staff are ready to help and encourage, but students must take the responsibility for making it happen.

### ***What If A Student Doesn't Want Any Accommodations?***

Students rightly want to feel that the work they do in college is of equal value to that of their classmates. They often express discomfort at feeling like they are getting some advantage others may not have. While the Americans with Disabilities Act protects the civil rights of qualified students with disabilities, it also affirms their right to refuse any accommodation. Moreover, as adults, students are in control of their academic career and civil rights, and can make their own choices. If a student does not request accommodations and performs poorly without them, they must then live with the consequences of unsatisfactory academic performance. Since college courses cover more material, move faster, and are generally more difficult than high school classes, it often makes sense to make use of reasonable accommodations early in a student's academic career. Later, when a student is more accustomed to the demands of the college's academic environment, accommodations may not be needed as often.

# How to Obtain Academic Accommodations

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The process of implementing reasonable accommodations is a shared responsibility that requires ongoing communication and teamwork between the student, DSS and the faculty. In order to receive accommodations, students should follow the following process:

- Self-Identify with DSS and submit appropriate documentation of disability
- Request Reasonable Accommodations for each class or situation
- Actively participate in the process of receiving and using accommodations once granted

## ***Self-Identify With DSS and Submit Documentation of Disability***

The process for obtaining disability-related support services begins as soon as a student meets with a DSS Coordinator. DSS Coordinators are available for appointments throughout the year, even when classes are not in session.

During the appointment, the student should disclose their disability and discuss their specific needs. The DSS Coordinator will help the student identify the various support services they may need and will review the policies and procedures necessary to obtain the accommodations and related support services that the student is requesting.

If the documentation of disability supports the need for accommodations, the DSS Coordinator will generate an individualized Request for Accommodations letter for each course in which the student needs accommodations (see sample request for accommodations letters in the back of this handbook). The Request for Accommodations letter will contain recommendations for reasonable accommodations to minimize the impact of a disability. The letter will *not* identify the nature of the student's disability.

## ***Request Reasonable Accommodations***

After meeting with the DSS Coordinator, the student should contact her/his professor(s), provide him or her with the Request for Accommodation(s) letter, and discuss the accommodations needed in each class and how the accommodation(s) will be implemented. The student and professor should each sign and date the Request for Accommodations letter and the student should then return the original, signed letter to the DSS office. The accommodation is now in place.

The professor may keep a copy of the Request for Accommodations letter for his/her records. NOTE: DSS will *not* send accommodation request letters directly to professors. Students are responsible for presenting the request letter to their professors.

The student should remind the professor in a timely manner of the accommodation(s) that require their active participation. For example, when a test is announced, the student should remind the professor of the accommodation(s) needed and agreed upon.

If the instructor does not believe that the proposed accommodation is appropriate, the student and instructor should discuss the issue(s). If the problem cannot be resolved between the student and the instructor, either one or both should contact DSS for assistance.

Let DSS know immediately of any problems or concerns!

Normally students who need physical accessibility accommodations and/or use of sign language interpreters should request accommodations as soon as possible but *no less than four weeks* before the beginning of the semester. Students seeking testing or other classroom accommodations should register with DSS as soon as possible and at least within the first two weeks of the semester. Students must meet with the DSS Coordinator each semester that accommodations will be requested.

### ***What Should Students Do If They Do Not Receive The Accommodations They Request?***

CCRI faculty and staff are interested in ensuring the academic success of *all* students, including students with disabilities. Occasionally, because of overwork, oversight, or lack of information, a faculty member may appear uncooperative in arranging accommodations. When this happens, usually polite persistence brings a favorable outcome. It is best to talk to professors outside of class, preferably during their office hours. Students should make sure that professors receive Request for Accommodation letters as early in the semester as possible. DSS staff can assist in this process if needed, but again it is the student's responsibility to discuss accommodations with their professors.

### ***At any point during the semester...***

A DSS Coordinator is available to meet with students to discuss study skills, time management, and other concerns or issues that may arise. Regular meetings are available for students who could benefit from extra support.

# Documentation Guidelines

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Prior to receiving any disability-related service or accommodation, students **must** present recent documentation (generally less than three years old) that clearly demonstrates the nature of their disability and the appropriateness of the accommodation requested.

## ***General Guidelines For Documentation:***

All documentation should be typed on letterhead, be dated, signed and include the following information:

- The name, title and professional credentials of the impartial qualified evaluator.
- Verification of the disability.
- How the condition substantially limits major life functions.
- A list of current treatments or services used to minimize the impact of the condition.
- Specific recommendations for accommodations and an explanation as to why each accommodation is recommended.

## ***Guidelines for Documentation of Specific Disabilities:***

In addition to the general guidelines, the documentation for specific disabilities should include the following:

### ***Hearing Disabilities***

*Qualifications of the Evaluator:* A licensed audiologist, certified by the American Speech Language Hearing Association, or a licensed medical doctor with certification in otology, or otolaryngology, will be viewed as qualified to substantiate hearing disabilities.

*Substantiation of the Disability:* The documentation will include an audiogram containing verification (for both ears) of hearing sensitivity by pure-tone frequency, speech thresholds, and discrimination.

*Recommendations for Accommodations:* The report or letter should include specific recommendations for accommodations and an explanation as to the need for each accommodation.

### ***Vision Disabilities***

*Qualifications of the Evaluator:* An Ophthalmologist, Optometrist, or a licensed medical specialist with expertise in the assessment and diagnosis of visual impairments will be viewed as qualified to substantiate vision disabilities.

Substantiation of the Disability: The documentation will include an ocular assessment describing visual acuity and field of vision.

Recommendations for Accommodations: The report or letter should include specific recommendations for accommodations and an explanation as to the need for each accommodation.

### ***Physical Disabilities***

Qualifications of the Evaluator: A licensed physician, a licensed physical therapist will be viewed as qualified to substantiate physical disabilities.

Substantiation of the Disability: The documentation will include an assessment of the functionally limiting manifestation of the condition(s) for which accommodations are being requested and a prognosis as to the expected duration of the limitation.

Recommendations for Accommodations: The report or letter should include specific recommendations for accommodations and an explanation as to the need for each accommodation.

### ***Learning Disabilities***

Qualifications of the Evaluator: Clinical or educational psychologists, school psychologists, neuropsychologists, learning disabilities specialists and medical doctors who have experience or training in the assessment of learning problems will be viewed as qualified to substantiate learning disabilities.

Substantiation of the Disability: The documentation will include a diagnostic interview, assessment of aptitude, test scores and clinical summary. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) developed pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or a plan developed pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 **does not** substantiate a disability; however, such documents may be included with the diagnostic report. Testing should include at least one test from each of the three domains, aptitude, achievement and information processing. Appendix A provides a listing of acceptable tests within each domain.

Recommendations for Accommodations: The report or letter should include specific recommendations for accommodations and an explanation as to the need for each accommodation.

### ***Psychiatric Disabilities***

Qualifications of the Evaluator: A licensed psychologist or neuropsychologist, licensed psychiatrist, neuropsychiatrist, licensed clinical social workers, or relevantly trained medical doctor will be viewed as qualified to substantiate psychiatric disabilities.

Substantiation of the Disability: The documentation will include the DSM-IV diagnosis and summary of present symptoms, summary of assessment procedures and instruments, as well as evaluation results and standardized score if available.

Recommendations for Accommodations: The report or letter should include specific recommendations for accommodations and an explanation as to the need for each accommodation.

### ***Attention Deficit Disorders (ADHD/ADD)***

Qualifications of the Evaluator: Clinical psychologists, neuropsychologists, psychiatrists, neurologists and medical doctors trained in differential diagnosis of psychiatric disorders.

Substantiation of the Disability: The documentation will include a complete diagnostic report including identification of DSM-IV criteria, a specific diagnosis and interpretive summary including past and present symptoms. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) developed pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or a plan developed pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ***does not*** substantiate a disability; however, such documents may be included with the diagnostic report.

Recommendations for Accommodations: The report or letter should include specific recommendations for accommodations and an explanation as to the need for each accommodation.

### ***Chronic and Temporary Health Conditions***

While temporary health conditions do not qualify for protection under the law, CCRI will nevertheless attempt to assist students who need temporary accommodations.

Qualifications of the Evaluator: a licensed physician or practitioner with expertise in the condition.

Substantiation of the Disability: The documentation will include an assessment of the functionally limiting manifestation of the condition(s) for which accommodations are being requested. For temporary conditions, the expected duration of the condition should be included.

Recommendations for Accommodations: The report or letter should include specific recommendations for accommodations and an explanation as to the need for each accommodation.



### ***Grace Period***

On a case-by-case basis, students with:

- No documentation or certification of disability
- Outdated documentation (normally more than three years old)
- Insufficient or inadequate documentation (only I.E.P. or other)

may be granted a 30-day grace period to obtain an evaluation or certification of disability. If at the end of the 30 days the student has not provided proper documentation of the disability, accommodations may cease until the student provides the necessary documentation.

### ***Student's Right to Privacy: Confidential Records***

All personal information (including documentation of disability) other than public records is considered confidential information.

DSS assumes the responsibility to maintain confidentiality of the documentation of disability and will not release any part of the documentation without the student's informed and written consent. If accommodations are not clearly identified in the documentation, the DSS Coordinator will, with consent, seek clarification and more information if necessary. In some circumstances, in order to reasonably accommodate a student with a disability, it is necessary to share certain otherwise confidential information with persons on or off campus. This will not be done, absent extraordinary circumstances, without the student's permission.

Third parties do not have access to personally identifiable records or information pertaining to students without the written consent of the student who specifies that the records be released. *NOTE: Parents are considered third parties.*

Detailed guidelines for the release and disclosure of information from the student records are available from the Office of Enrollment Services. These guidelines comply with the legal requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 as amended.

Please see the Community College of Rhode Island Student Handbook, policy on Confidentiality and Review of Records for details.

# Types of Accommodations

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As noted earlier in this handbook, accommodations are highly individualized and are granted on a case-by-case basis only after discussion with a DSS Coordinator. Listed on the following pages are examples of accommodations typically used by CCRI students.

## Classroom and Course Accommodations

### **Accessible Classrooms/Room Changes**

Most of the classrooms at CCRI are fully accessible. However, students who find that a classroom is inaccessible should contact DSS as soon as possible. With the help of the Office of Enrollment Services, DSS can determine the accessibility of classrooms and request a room change if necessary.

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### **Permission to Tape Lectures**

Based on current documentation, students may be eligible to tape record their classes to supplement their written notes. Students are encouraged to provide their own tape recorders. However, in cases where this is a financial hardship, Disability Services for Students will provide tape recorders for classroom use to eligible students. Students are responsible for supplying their own cassette tapes. All tape recorders are primarily for campus use. Some instructors will require students to sign an agreement to ensure that the taped lecture material is not disseminated. The student is responsible for discussing the accommodation with the professor.

Students who wish to borrow tape recorders will be asked to sign for the use of this equipment. Equipment will be loaned to the student upon request and will be returned at the end of the semester unless otherwise specified. If the equipment is not returned as specified, the College *may* regard the equipment as stolen property. Such misconduct is subject to disciplinary action and will be handled through the Dean of Students' Office and/or Campus Police.

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### **Note Taker Requests**

Based on current documentation, students may be eligible for note taking assistance. At the beginning of the semester the student should make the instructor aware of the need for a note taker via the Request for Accommodations letter. The instructor will be asked to make an anonymous announcement to the class to inquire if anyone is willing to share notes with another student and that any volunteers should meet with the instructor after class. DSS will provide note taking paper free of charge. If the student

decides to identify themselves to the note taker, they can meet after class to obtain the notes. If the student does not want to be identified, the note taker can drop off copies of the notes in the DSS Office. Copies of notes can be made in the DSS Office at no charge.

### **Excused (verified) Absences**

In rare cases, a student's documented disability may support the need for excused absences upon verification. This does not mean unlimited absences. In such cases, professors are asked not to penalize students due to an inability to attend class. The student remains responsible for all material presented during his/her absence, and the student must comply with all course requirements. The student must not disrupt the class activity if it becomes necessary to leave. The student is responsible for providing DSS with appropriate documentation supporting the need for attendance flexibility.

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### **Regular Meetings with Professor**

In rare cases, a student's documentation will demonstrate his/her need to regularly review progress with the professor. The student and professor are asked to arrange a mutually acceptable meeting schedule; weekly or biweekly meetings during professor's scheduled office hours are recommended. The student is responsible for attending all previously scheduled meetings and for notifying the professor in advance when a conflict arises.

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### **Reader/Audio Taping Services**

Reasonable accommodations in course materials are available to eligible students whose documented disability requires auditory presentation of text material. These services are provided *as a supplement* to existing adaptive equipment such as the Kurzweil 1000 and 3000 scan and read software, and/or external electronic resources such as Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic or electronic books. Students requesting scanned texts and materials will be trained on this adaptive equipment so as to be as autonomous as possible during their studies (see section on Adaptive Equipment).

When textbooks are needed in auditory format, DSS will ask that all potential sources of obtaining the text in alternate format be exhausted before agreeing to scan the text (e.g. Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic, EBooks, materials from the publisher, etc.)

When required texts are not available through other electronic sources, DSS will scan the required textbook into electronic format. Because scanning is a time-consuming process, a minimum of two weeks advance notice for scanned texts is required before taped texts can be delivered in electronic format. Students are responsible for purchasing their textbooks and providing them to DSS for scanning. Students are also

responsible for providing DSS with computer disks (CDs) on which to copy scanned material.

Students are reminded that text reader software is available at various locations throughout the campus. For perusing class handouts students are asked to use adaptive equipment in the DSS accommodation labs.

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### **Special Furniture**

Students who are unable to use existing desks in the classrooms may request alternative seating arrangements. A special chair or table and chair may be provided.

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### **Sign Language Interpreters**

Students who are deaf or have hearing loss may request a sign language interpreter.

**Advance requests:** In order to maximize the probability of securing a sign language interpreter for needed courses, students are strongly encouraged to work closely with the sign language interpreter coordinator in developing a course schedule. In all cases, students are required to give DSS at least two weeks notice whenever an interpreter is needed. *Greater advance notice is strongly suggested!*

The College will make a good faith effort to fill interpreter requests while working within the constraints of available personnel. If an interpreter cannot be found, the student may drop the course (with refund) and DSS will attempt to find another time the course is being offered with the possibility of engaging an interpreter.

**Hiring and Payment:** Disability Services for Students is responsible for the hiring and payment of sign language interpreters in all College courses or course-related activities. When other college related activities are scheduled (student entertainment, administrative interviews/appointments, theater productions, invited lectures, etc.), the coordinating department or organization will be the responsible party for hiring and payment of sign language interpreters.

**Cancellation:** Students and interpreters are asked to exchange contact information in the event of an emergency resulting in their inability to attend class. The College has to pay the interpreter even if the student does not attend class.

Except in cases of sudden illness or accident, **students must give 36 hours advance notice** to Disability Services for Students (or to the responsible organization) when they are unable to attend a class or activity for which interpreter services have been requested. This will allow services (and payment for services) to be canceled in a timely manner.

After two unexcused student absences (without notification), the services will be suspended until the student meets with the sign language interpreter coordinator. The meeting will be held to review the use/misuse of the service. . A third unexcused absence will result in termination of interpreter services for that class. However, if interpreter services are terminated due to student non-compliance, alternative measures (e.g. peer note takers) will continue to ensure accessibility to the course material.

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### **Assistive Listening Devices**

Assistive listening systems (e.g Phonic Ear) are available for use by students who are registered with DSS. Most users will be hard of hearing or deaf students, however, students with auditory processing learning disabilities and attention deficit hyperactivity disorders may also benefit from these systems.

Students who wish to borrow Assistive Listening Systems will be asked to read and sign a loan contract form. Equipment will be loaned to the student upon formal request and must be returned by the designated date. Students may borrow equipment on a semester basis unless otherwise designated.

The student will be responsible for discussing the use of personal listening systems with the instructor. As a support to student discussion, the procedure is briefly described, as follows, in a supplement to the accommodation letter presented to the professor:

*The professor is asked to wear a small clip-on lapel microphone with a radio transmitter (belt or pocket) during each lecture. When questions or comments occur in class that are not picked up by the lapel mic, the professor is asked to repeat the question or comment for the students' benefit. Small seminars may use a pass-around mic or table mic. This equipment allows the student full access to the lecture.*

Assistive Listening Systems are primarily for campus use. If a student needs to use portable equipment for an off-campus college event, special permission must be obtained from Disability Services for Students.

If the equipment is not returned as specified in the contract, the College *may* regard the equipment as stolen property. Such misconduct is subject to disciplinary action and will be handled through the Dean of Students' Office and/or Campus Police.

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### **CART (Computer Assisted Real-Time) Reporters**

Deaf and Hard of Hearing students with appropriate documentation may qualify for the services of a CART reporter by virtue of:

- enrollment in College course or
- participation in an academically related activity, or
- participation in a college-related student event.

**Advance requests:** In order to maximize the probability of securing a CART reporter for needed courses, students are strongly encouraged to work closely with the sign language interpreter coordinator in developing a course schedule. In all cases, students are required to give DSS **at least two weeks** notice whenever an interpreter is needed. ***Greater advance notice is strongly recommended!***

College personnel will make a good faith effort to CART requests while working within the constraints of available personnel. If a CART reporter cannot be found, the student may drop the course (with refund) and DSS will attempt to find another time the course is being offered with the possibility of engaging an interpreter.

**Hiring and Payment:** Disability Services for Students is responsible for the hiring and payment for CART reporters in all College courses or course-related activities. When other college related activities are scheduled (student entertainment, administrative interviews/appointments, theater productions, invited lectures, etc.), the coordinating department or organization will be the responsible party for hiring and payment of CART reporters.

**Cancellation:** Except in cases of sudden illness or accident, students **must give 36 hours advance** notice to Disability Services for Students (or to the responsible organization) when they are unable to attend a class or activity for which CART reporter services have been requested. This will allow services (and payment for services) to be canceled in a timely manner.

After two unexcused student absences (without notification), the services will be suspended until the student meets with the sign language interpreter coordinator. The meeting will be held to review the use/misuse of the service. . A third unexcused absence will result in termination of interpreter services for that class. However, if interpreter services are terminated due to student non-compliance, alternative measures (e.g. peer notetakers) will continue to ensure accessibility to the course material.

## Testing Accommodations

Testing or exam accommodations refer to accommodations to enhance equal access to examinations, but are specifically *not program accommodations or classroom/course accommodations*. Assessment of student performance, including course examinations and other measures of student performance will be provided with appropriate accommodations to ensure that the assessment accurately measures the student's performance in the course, rather than reflecting the impact of the student's disability. Testing accommodations, however, cannot alter or negate the fundamental aspect of what is being tested (e.g. use of a spell checker on an examination that specifically designed to assess spelling accuracy would not be appropriate).

Faculty are encouraged to provide testing accommodations directly. In the event that a professor cannot effectively provide the needed accommodation, alternate arrangements can be made with DSS.

Students and faculty are encouraged to maintain on-going conversations regarding the necessary accommodations. If problems arise which cannot be resolved between the student and the faculty member, both the faculty and the student are encouraged to contact DSS for assistance. The student should contact/re-contact the professor not less than *one week before each exam* to remind them of requested test modifications.

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### **Extended time on Exams**

Based on proper documentation, some students may be eligible for extended time on quizzes and exams. Extended time does not mean unlimited time and the generally accepted standard is a 50% extension, that is, an extension of time and one-half. On occasion the student's documentation may warrant longer extensions and it would be so noted. The professor and student are asked to arrange a mutually acceptable starting time and length of time for the exam.

When DSS is proctoring an examination on behalf of a professor, the professor is responsible for providing the examination to DSS office in advance. In order to protect the integrity of an examination, DSS will not allow students to pick up and return their own examinations to professors. The student is expected to show up on time to take the examination and will be allotted up to the full amount of time previously agreed upon to complete it. Students who show up late to take an examination will have that amount of time deducted from their allocated time and their professors will be informed of their tardiness.

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### **Distraction-Reduced/Separate Location**

Based upon proper documentation, some students may be eligible to take their examination in an environment with reduced visual and/or auditory distractions. Please keep in mind that a separate testing location will only help to reduce distractions. A distraction-free environment is not guaranteed.

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### **Use of Computers during Exams**

In some circumstances, students may be permitted to use a computer to type an exam. The professor has the right to determine if functions other than basic word processing (i.e. spell and grammar check) will be available to the student.

### **Use of Calculator during Exams/Class**

The use of a calculator may be allowed as an accommodation for certain documented disabilities if it does not interfere with an essential component of the course. For certain

documented disabilities, calculators may be considered an appropriate accommodation. However, for some basic math courses designed to teach and test knowledge of mathematical operations (i.e. percent, division, addition) a calculator would be in conflict with the central/essential function of the course and would not be appropriate.

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### **Alternate exam format**

(i.e. essay format instead of multiple choice; or vice versa). The professor and student are asked to determine the most appropriate format taking into consideration the content of the course and the student's specific learning needs.

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### **Exam presented in large print**

A specific font size will be recommended from the student's documentation in consultation with the student. Professors are asked to make a special printing of the exam in the requested font size (this assumes use of word-processing capability). It is also appropriate to use the print enlargers, and/or adaptive computer equipment available in the DSS accommodation labs. Please contact the DSS office on your campus for more information.

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### **Avoid use of scantron forms**

In certain cases, use of scantron forms is not appropriate because of the nature of the student's disability. The student should be allowed to respond directly on the test instrument, and that student's test should be scored separately from the larger group.

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### **Exam presented orally**

When possible, the professor and/or department are asked to record and present the exam. Recording equipment is available through the DSS office. If the exam is to be presented by DSS, the office must be provided a copy of the exam *NO LESS THAN 5 DAYS IN ADVANCE*, with any special instructions. The exam will be scanned using scan and read software and presented to the student orally. The exam will be returned by date agreed upon with the professor.

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### **Readers for Exams**

Some students may have documentation indicating the need for auditory access to quizzes and exams. When this need cannot be accommodated through the use of



assistive technology, a reader may be utilized. The reader is only allowed to read exam material and is not available to clarify questions. The professor retains the right to provide clarifications or interpretations of exam questions if necessary. The professor may directly assist the student or may appoint another qualified individual to do so. Due to the specialized nature of course content and examinations, DSS staff are not considered qualified to provide clarifications and/or interpretations of exam questions.

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### **Scribes on Exams**

Some students may be eligible for physical assistance in the writing of an exam. When this need cannot be accommodated through the use of assistive technology, a scribe may be utilized. The scribe will write only what is instructed by the student. The student is solely responsible for proper spelling and grammar.

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### **Use of visual cues during performance exams or quizzes**

In certain cases, a student's documentation may warrant use of visual cues, such as formulas, which are specifically NOT answers, during an exam. For example, a. Basic formulas only on note cards, b. Use of music during performance. The professor retains the right to review any cues used by the student and to direct how these cues should be used. Cases of academic dishonesty will be treated as a disciplinary matter (please refer to the student handbook).

## **Program Accommodations**

### ***Reduced Courseload with Full-Time Status***

Students with disabilities may be eligible for a special status that, if approved, allows them to take a reduced course load while maintaining full-time status. Students who are approved for reduced loads with full-time status are entitled to many of the rights, privileges, benefits, and responsibilities of a full-time student for various programs and services including verification of registration status for insurance purposes, academic honors (i.e. Dean's list), participation in intercollegiate athletics (pending review and approval by the NJCAA), etc. However, for financial aid and billing purposes, the reduced course load will result in an adjustment to tuition, fees and financial aid based on the actual number of credit hours for which the student is registered.

Requests for reduced course loads must be made on a semester-by-semester basis, and all requests must be submitted prior to the end of the add/drop period. Requests for reduced course loads must be submitted to the DSS Coordinator with the appropriate supporting documentation. This documentation must meet the guidelines specified in

Documentation Guidelines section of this handbook and should enumerate why the reduced course load is an appropriate accommodation for the student and his/her disability.

Students applying for a reduced course load with full-time status will generally be approved for nine credit hours per semester, with no less than six credit hours per semester. The DSS Coordinator will use the above-mentioned documentation to determine the appropriate reduced load for each individual student. A student cannot drop below this level without placing their full-time status in jeopardy.

In some cases, the nature of a student's program of study will require that courses be taken concurrently and less than full-time enrollment results in a fundamental alteration of the curriculum and/or is impossible to implement. In these circumstances, every attempt will be made to provide program flexibility while maintaining the standards established by accrediting and licensing bodies.

The Coordinator will forward recommendations for reduced course loads to Office of Enrollment Services for final approval.

## Other Accommodations

All recommendations for accommodations are made on a case-by-case basis. Students requesting other accommodations should meet with the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities to determine if the accommodation is reasonable and substantiated.

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### Assistive Technology

Students with documented disabilities may be eligible to use the Assistive Technology available in various locations on each campus. Students wanting to use assistive technology must be trained on the use of the various pieces of equipment before access is granted.

Assistive Technology includes, but is not limited to, use of the following items:

- Specialized computer hardware and software (JAWS, Magic Eyes, Kurzweil 1000 & 3000, Dragon Naturally Speaking)
- Closed circuit T.V.
- Braille typewriter and/or printer
- Assistive Listening Equipment

The Disability Services for Students Office must have documentation of disability on file for all users of adaptive equipment, whether consumers are registered students or public citizens.

***First time equipment users:***

All first-time users of adaptive equipment must participate in training to ensure proper use of the equipment. These students should notify the Disability Services for Students Office no less than two weeks before the equipment is needed. The two week time period is necessary in order to schedule training, allow the student time to become proficient in equipment use and to ensure staff availability for guidance and support during the training period. Adaptive equipment will only be available for use when the student has completed the necessary training and demonstrated competency in using the equipment.

***Previous equipment users:***

Students who have completed the equipment training and who have demonstrated responsibility and competency in its use must notify Disability Services for Students Office one week in advance of the need for the equipment. The request must identify the specific equipment being requested and the anticipated time, frequency and place of use.

***Public citizens' use of adaptive equipment/software in the CCRI library:***

Consumers as public citizens are eligible to use the CCRI Library which is considered a public library. Consumers who require use of the accessible computers in the library for on-line catalogue systems must demonstrate competence in the use of the adaptive software and equipment or participate in training for first time users as outlined above.

**Equipment Failure**

Students should report the non-operation of automatic doors, chair lifts, elevators, etc. to the DSS Office.

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**Snow Removal**

Although the College will work diligently to adequately remove snow from the campus, there are times when a student may feel that the snow removal is inadequate. Students should report their concerns to the DSS Office and the office will forward the information to the appropriate department.

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**Accessible Parking**

Students requiring accessible parking should register their vehicles with Campus Police and provide proof of a state handicapped parking plate. Students with temporary disabilities should provide a doctor's letter stating the nature of the temporary disability, the need for accessible parking and the expected duration of the need. DSS will inform

Campus Police of the students' need. The student should then work out appropriate parking arrangements with Campus Police.

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### **Evacuation Procedures for Individuals with Disabilities**

Students who have a condition that may inhibit their ability to leave a campus facility easily and promptly, should self-identify with Campus Police. Whenever reasonably possible, and without endangering the health and safety of others or themselves, campus police officers will assist those individuals with mobility concerns in an emergency. When the intensity of the situation, i.e., fire, is such that it is not feasible for campus personnel to assist individuals with disabilities out of danger, then trained response teams can use the data provided to find and rescue anyone left behind.

Do not use the elevators in the case of fire or evacuation emergency. Individuals needing assistance should egress to the designated safe areas on their campus. If this is not possible, they should remain in the hallway outside of their classrooms unless they are in imminent danger. In those cases individuals should remain in their classrooms with the door shut. Information about safe areas and evacuation policies is readily available in the Campus Police offices.

# Rights and Responsibilities

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Every student with a documented disability has the following rights:

- Reasonable access to courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities available through the College.
- Reasonable and appropriate accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids determined on a case-by-case basis.
- Appropriate confidentiality pertaining to his/her disability.

Every student with a disability has the responsibility to:

- Meet the College's qualifications and essential technical, academic, and institutional standards.
- Identify in advance the need for accommodation.
- Provide complete and appropriate documentation as described in the Documentation Guidelines section.
- Follow specific procedures for obtaining reasonable and appropriate accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids.

## Appeal Procedures

Upon rare occasion, agreement about reasonable accommodation cannot be reached. In such cases, the following steps should be followed:

- The student or College member should contact the DSS Coordinator on their campus. The DSS Coordinator will attempt to facilitate a mutually acceptable accommodation agreement.
- If no acceptable agreement can be reached, the request for reconsideration will be forwarded to the Assistant Dean, College Support Programs for review and resolution.
- If no acceptable agreement is reached at this level, the issue will be submitted to the Associate Dean, College Opportunity and Support Programs and/or the Vice-President for Student Affairs. The Associate Dean and/or Vice President will review the information received, request additional information if necessary, and make a final decision. The Vice President will transmit a decision to the student, the College member and the Assistant Dean, College Support Programs.
- Should the resolution prove unsatisfactory, the student or college member may contact the College's ADA/504 Coordinator.