

Fast Facts for Faculty: Rights and Responsibilities

To Assure Educational Access For Students With Disabilities:

Educational access is the provision of classroom accommodations, auxiliary aids and services to ensure equal educational opportunities for all students regardless of disability. Creating equal educational opportunities is a collaborative effort between the student, the faculty member, and Disability Services (DS).

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 protect students with disabilities from discrimination that may occur as a result of misconceptions, attitudinal barriers, and/or failure of the institution to provide appropriate accommodations and auxiliary aids, or service.

Examples of accommodations and auxiliary aids include, but are not limited to: qualified interpreters, note takers, extra time on tests, and educational materials in alternate format (i.e. Braille, audiotape, electronic format, and enlarged print).

Who Benefits:

- Students with disabilities. A disability includes any physical, mental or learning impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.
- All Faculty and Graduate Teaching Assistants: Instructors are assisted in their responsibility to teach all students in their classes and to provide equal access to education.
- Disability Services: The office provides a system for service coordination in order to better meet student needs.
- Youngstown State University: By providing educational access for all students, the university meets its mandated responsibilities and enhances campus diversity.

Principles of ACCESS:

- **A – Accessibility:** Faculty members play a major role in making their classrooms accessible to all students.
- **C – Communication:** It is imperative that students with disabilities, faculty members, and DS communicate on a regular basis.
- **C – Confidentiality:** All instructors and DS staff must respect a student's right to confidentiality.

- **E – Eligibility** for accommodations: DS is the office designated to determine eligibility for federally mandated academic accommodations and services.
- **S – Student Responsibility:** Students have a responsibility in ensuring they get the necessary services. They must self-identify themselves and provide appropriate, current documentation.
- **S – Support:** Both faculty and DS work together to support students in their legal right to access an education.

Faculty Have The Right To:

- Request verification of a student's eligibility for any requested accommodations. Such verification will be in the form of a letter written by the DS Coordinator and delivered by the student. **DS is the only office designated to review disability documentation and determine eligibility for appropriate documentation.** Faculty are not permitted to view the documentation.
- Expect the student to initiate accommodation requests.
- Be assured that if a student is taking his/her tests at DS, that DS will administer tests in a secure and monitored environment.

Faculty Have The Responsibility To:

- Identify and establish essential functions, abilities, skills, and knowledge of their courses and evaluate students on this basis. Students with disabilities should meet the same course expectations as their peers.
- Provide accommodations only to students who are registered with DS. It is not your responsibility to provide accommodations to students who are not registered with DS.
- Use a syllabus statement and class announcements to invite students to disclose their needs,
- Provide the student with his/her accommodations after receiving the letter from Disability Services. Any concerns about accommodations should be addressed to the Disability Services office.
- Work to ensure that all audio-visual materials used in class are accessible (e.g., that videos shown are captioned for students with hearing impairments and that the VCR equipment used has captioning capabilities or provide the student with a written transcript of the audio portion of the video, that videos will be made with auditory description in some manner for students who are blind, etc.)
- Consider incorporating principles of Universal Design for Learning in their courses.

- Treat and protect all disability-related information as confidential medical information. For example, keep printed items, such as accommodation letters or e mails regarding student disability-related information in a protected location.
- Clearly communicate your testing procedures with the student and with DS. The professor may choose to accommodate the student's testing needs or refer the student to DS to take his/her test.

PLEASE NOTE: Faculty do NOT have the right to ask students if they have a disability. For those students with documented disabilities, faculty do NOT have the right to ask about the nature of the disability. However, if students choose to disclose their disability, this information should be treated as confidential.

STUDENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- Expect all disability-related information to be treated confidentially.
- Receive appropriate accommodations in a timely manner from faculty or DS. Students should have the opportunity to meet privately with their professors to discuss needed accommodations and any other concerns. Please keep in mind that DS is the only office designated to review disability documentation and determine eligibility for appropriate accommodations.
- Appeal decisions regarding accommodations and auxiliary aids.

STUDENTS HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO:

- Provide DS with appropriate documentation regarding their disability.
- Go to the professor's office hours or make an appointment with the professor to facilitate privacy when requesting accommodations.
- Initiate requests for specific accommodations in a timely manner, preferably early in the semester, if not before.
- Follow procedures with faculty and DS in order to get the appropriate accommodations. When arranging for testing accommodations the student must remind the professor that they need special accommodations then follow the professor's directions.
- Inform DS of materials needed in alternate format as soon as possible.
- Notify their professor or DS immediately when an accommodation is not being provided completely or correctly.
- To act as their own advocate. Students should work with a counselor on developing advocacy skills and communicating specific needs and accommodations to their professors.

DISABILITY SERVICES HAS THE RIGHT TO:

- Receive appropriate documentation from the student prior to the services being initiated.
- Expect students and faculty to work cooperatively with DS to facilitate academic accommodations.
- Deny unreasonable academic accommodations, adjustments, and/or auxiliary services. Accommodations can not impose undue hardship to, or fundamentally alter, a program or activity of the college.
- Deny academic accommodations or services if appropriate documentation has not been provided.

DISABILITY SERVICES HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY TO:

- Collect, evaluate, and securely maintain disability documentation, as well as, determine eligibility for services.
- Treat and protect all disability-related information as confidential information.
- Meet with the student privately in an accessible location to discuss disability-related needs.
- Administer exams as directed in a secure and monitored environment.
- Provide appropriate accommodations in collaboration with the instructor and student.
- Provide print materials in accessible format once the faculty member and student identifies them.
- Communicate procedures clearly to the student and the faculty.
- Assist students with disabilities in understanding their strengths and functional limitations. Provide them with the skills to become self-advocates.

