

Classroom Accommodations

Consideration for disability related absences*— This is a reasonable accommodation for students who have a disability/diagnosis which can be unpredictable in nature and sometimes experience disability exacerbations outside of their control (I often use the examples of Crohn's disease, Lupus, or bipolar disorder.)

The student, when experiencing an exacerbation of the disability-related condition, should be granted permission to make up missed quizzes and exams within a reasonable period of time without penalty. The student is to notify the instructor as soon as reasonably possible of their absence. If absences might impact the fundamental learning outcomes of the course, if the class is participation based, or if a student's failure to attend constitute a significant loss to the educational experience or other students in the class please contact Student Accountability & Disability Services to coordinate a meeting.

Consideration for Breaks--This student has a disability that may cause him/her to periodically need to take a break, especially during lengthy class periods. Please be cooperative in allowing the student to take these breaks.

Adaptive Technology**—the student may need the use of a word processor, other computer-based equipment, or other adaptive devices for note taking.

Use of Calculator—if the use of the calculator does not fundamentally alter the nature of the course/test/assessment.

Sign Language Interpreter**—the student may be accompanied by a sign language interpreter and may need to work with the instructor in choosing an ideal location for the interpreter. The student may also use technology to connect remotely to a sign language interpreter (a microphone and receiver will need to be used in these cases.)

Computer Assisted Interpreting/Captioning**—a trained stenographer who will record the class lecture may accompany the student. This information will be relayed with a few second delay to the student via a laptop computer or similar device. The student may also use technology to connect remotely to a captioner (a microphone and receiver will need to be used in these cases.)

Use of Assistive Listening Device**—the student will need to use an assistive listening device that requires the faculty member to wear a small transmitter and lapel microphone. The student will wear a small receiver and ear bud or telecoil that enables only the student to hear the instructor's amplified voice with minimal background noise.

Occasional due date extensions***— The disability covered under this accommodation is episodic/sporadic in nature. When the student experiences an exacerbation of the disability-related condition, the student may be unable to submit or complete an assignment. The student is to notify the instructor as soon as reasonably possible (preferably on or before the due date) to make arrangements for the extension.

If at any time you believe the requested due date extension poses a difficulty in maintaining the credibility of her academic experience, please contact the student and Student Accountability & Disability Services.

Note Taker*—the student may need access to course lecture notes and/or visually presented materials, such as overheads and information written on the chalkboard or white board, either from the instructor or a volunteer classmate.

Recorded Lecture**—the student should be allowed to bring recorder to class and record the class lecture.

Selective Seating—the student may need to sit in front of the class or in another location suited to adapting to his/her disability related needs.

Enlarged Course Materials**—the student will need to have class handouts and other course materials, including text books, in large print (usually Arial 24 font will suffice)

Adaptive Furniture--the student may need the use of adjustable height tables, chairs and/or lab stools to provide an accessible workspace.

Alternate Format course materials**—the student will need course handouts, texts and other materials provided to him/her in enlarged, audio, or electronic format or video or audio material in an accessible (captioned and/ or with description). In some instances, it may take ODS a while to secure materials to convert to alternate format for students. ODS works closely with the UNO bookstore to secure textbooks for this purpose, as well as through Learning Ally, Access Text, BookShare, the publishers, and other resources. Document conversion is not a quick process and may take a while, even when the student requests materials in advance. ODS asks for some faculty consideration of these consideration when there are delays in providing the reading materials/audio-visual content to the student in a timely manner.

Alternate Format course presentations—based on the disability documentation, it is requested that you consider alternate options for any oral presentations required as part of the course work. Options can include, but are not limited to, allowing the student to video his/her presentation and show that to the class or make the oral presentation to you at a separate time in a private location. The student will follow up with you to discuss how to accommodate this request.

Use of Technology for Note Taking—the student is allowed to use a computer or other devices during class to assist the student in taking course notes.

Testing Accommodations

Adaptive Technology—the student may need the use of a word processor, other computer-based equipment, or other adaptive devices for in class papers and for test taking.

Enlarged Test—the student will need to have tests enlarged (usually Arial 24 font will suffice)

Use of Calculator—student should be allowed to use a calculator for testing when the use of the calculator does not fundamentally alter the nature of the course or testing.

Distraction-Reduced Environment—the student will need to take tests in a quiet, uninterrupted, and uncluttered environment.

Extended Testing Time—the student should be allocated time-and-a half, double or triple time.

Black Ink on White Paper—the student will need tests and all other class related materials printed clearly in black ink on white paper only.

Oral Proctor—the student may need someone to rephrase questions without alluding to the answers.

Reader—the student may need someone to read the test to him or her.

Scribe—the student may need someone to record answers for him or her.

Scribe—the student may need someone to record answers on the scantron for him or her.

Audio Format Test—the student may need the test in audio format.

Brailled Test—the student may need test converted into Braille. If the instructor can provide the test electronically in advance of the test, ODS can produce a Braille copy for the student.

Testing Using a Computer—the student may need to use the computer for testing either due to specific technology needs or other disability related needs.

Consideration for Misspellings—the student should not be penalized for misspellings and/or should be allowed to use a Franklin Spell Checker or similar device.

Other accommodations

Request for Course Substitutions/Academic Adjustments

Background Information

Section 504 Regulation at 104 CYR, 104.44 (a) regarding academic adjustments, requires post-secondary institutions to make such modifications to academic requirements as are necessary to ensure that such requirements do not discriminate against qualified students with disabilities. The regulation also states that academic requirements that institutions can demonstrate are essential to programs of instruction being pursued by such students, or to any directly related licensing requirement, will not be regarded as discriminatory. Title II of the ADA at 28 C.F.R. 35.130(b)(7) requires reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disabilities, unless public entities can demonstrate that making modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the services, programs, or activities.

General Information

Students should understand that throughout this process ODS provides consultations to faculty based solely on students' needs and the impact disabilities may have on specific courses. Academic units determine whether a particular course or assignment is fundamental to a degree program. In addition, students should be aware that if they change a program of study, they must submit a new request for an academic modification. Modifications are approved only for specific programs of study and do not follow students when a program of study is changed.

A waiver or substitution for a course, does NOT automatically entitle students to register for classes for which the original course is listed as a prerequisite. Any student seeking to register for a course having prerequisites, for which that student was granted a waiver or substitution due to a disability, must first obtain the permission from both the program in which the student is seeking a degree and the department in which the course is offered.

Student Responsibilities

It is a student's responsibility to initiate the process of requesting academic substitution for his or her program of study. In order to request an academic substitution based on a disability, a student must be registered with ODS. The student should write a letter requesting the substitution sought and this letter should: (a) request the course substitution

(b) Provide documentation outlining the impact on learning in the courses for which the substitution is being requested (for an example, a student who has a diagnosed hearing impairment—the documentation indicates that based on the hearing ranges impacted for this student, the student will not be able to learn the nuances of pronunciation in a foreign language);

(b) state exactly which academic courses or requirements fall under this request; be certain to include advanced courses whose prerequisites include courses affected by the academic modification being requested;

(c) include the following sentence: "I grant the staff of ODS at UNO permission to release disability related information they judge necessary for understanding the academic impact of my disability to individuals in those academics units who will review my request, and to discuss my disability with those individuals in the context of reviewing my request."

A student may include evidence that he/she has made a "good faith effort" to satisfy an academic requirement. Such evidence includes, but is not limited to, documentation of any or all of the following:

- (a) Satisfactory attendance and punctuality in class
- (b) Active participation in class, including a letter of support from a course instructor
- (c) Estimation of time spent outside of class working on course material
- (d) Visits to an instructor during office hours
- (e) Use of services available through UNO's Learning Resource Center or on-campus tutoring
- (f) Use of services available through ODS
- (h) Meetings with private tutors, including letters of support, if applicable
- (i) Satisfactory completion of course assignments, both graded and non-graded

ODS Responsibilities

When a student's request for an academic modification is supported by their documentation, ODS will compose a letter that (a) details the academic impact of the student's disability, and (b) explains the documentation of the student's disability and (c) request consideration for course substitution for this student. This letter will be sent to the appropriate program director, department chair, or dean.

Academic Unit Responsibilities

Reviews of requests should be completed within 60 working days from the receipt date of a student's letter and supporting documentation unless the head of the academic unit responsible determines that there is good cause for an extension.

Generally speaking, the consideration process should include the following elements:

A group of people who are trained, knowledgeable, and experienced in the area must make the decision; The decision makers must include a consideration of alternatives as essential requirements, and; The decision should be a thoughtful, careful, and rational review of the academic program and its requirements. In reviewing the student's request for a substitution, consider what skills, assignments, courses, deadlines, etc., are essential to the degree in question and whether or not the requested adjustments would fundamentally alter the nature of the program. At issue is the balance between providing academic adjustments to students with disabilities to ensure that the requirements of classes/programs do not discriminate, and the University's obligation to ensure that all students meet essential requirements needed to successfully complete programs of study. Modifications can be required if the requested substitution does not lower academic standards, fundamentally alter the nature of the program, or impose an undue burden and if the modification meets the underlying reason for the requirements for which a substitution is being sought.

A letter to the student making the should

- (a) describe the process used to review the student's request, including the names and positions of those who participated in the review;
- (b) in cases where a request is denied, explain the reasoning supporting the view that granting the student's request would fundamentally alter the program in which the modification was requested;
- (c) in cases where a request is approved, state exactly which program course(s) and requirement(s) are covered by this substitution or waiver;
- (d) in cases where a request is approved, explain the scope of the approval-for example, does it apply only to one specialization within a major or to an entire major;
- (e) in cases where a substitution is approved, identify exactly (including course number and title) the course or courses that are acceptable substitutes; and
- (f) in cases where a request is approved, indicate whether or not the student may enroll in more advanced courses in the program that list the original course as a prerequisite.

Note: Because this letter will become a part of the student's academic record at UNO, this letter should refrain from discussing any details concerning this student's disability.

A copy of the letter should be submitted to both the student and to ODS, which will serve as the office of record for these materials.

***Attendance Policy Modification/Consideration for Absences**

Generally, students with this accommodation have disabilities that are episodic or unpredictable in nature which may impact class attendance at times. Along with missing in-class activities, flare-ups or similar episodic occurrences may cause students to miss exams, quizzes, and assignment submission deadlines.

In determining whether an Attendance Policy Modification/Consideration for Absences is a reasonable accommodation, faculty and the Disability Services Office need to consider the following:

Essential components of the course;

The reasons for the attendance policy;

How much interaction there is in class between the instructor and student; How much of the learning is based on in-class participation;

How other students' learning is impacted if any student misses class a lot;

When flexibility in the attendance policy is available for other reasons, such as athletic travel;

Is there a reasonable modification to the attendance policy and what, if so? Is there a limit to the number of classes that can be missed?

The nature of the course assessments (tests and assignments, etc.) relative to the essential components.

IMPORTANT TO NOTE: Students need to understand that even with an Accommodation:

The accommodation is not a license to miss class whenever. For most every class there would be an absence limit that, once exceeded, would make it impossible to satisfy course objectives.

Responsibility for completing class work is always in effect.

Students should notify the instructor in regard to an absence and set a time to discuss briefly the missed materials as needed.

****Auxiliary Aids**

Excerpted from the "ADA Title III Regulation 28 CFR Part 36" <http://www.ada.gov/reg3a.html>

Sec.36.303 Auxiliary aids and services.

- (a) General. A public accommodation shall take those steps that may be necessary to ensure that no individual with a disability is excluded, denied services, segregated or otherwise treated differently than other individuals because of the absence of auxiliary aids and services, unless the public accommodation can demonstrate that taking those steps would fundamentally alter the nature of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations being offered or would result in an undue burden, i.e., significant difficulty or expense.
- (b) Examples. The term "auxiliary aids and services" includes --
 - (1) Qualified interpreters, notetakers, computer-aided transcription services, written materials, telephone handset amplifiers, assistive listening devices, assistive listening systems, telephones compatible with hearing aids, closed caption decoders, open and closed captioning, telecommunications devices for deaf persons (TDD's), videotext displays, or other effective methods of making aurally delivered materials available to individuals with hearing impairments;
 - (2) Qualified readers, taped texts, audio recordings, Brailled materials, large print materials, or other effective methods of making visually delivered materials available to individuals with visual impairments;
 - (3) Acquisition or modification of equipment or devices; and

(4) Other similar services and actions.

Most often, questions arise when a student uses a tape recorder. Faculty may believe recording lectures is an infringement upon their own or other students' academic freedom, or constitutes copyright violation. The instructor may not forbid a student's use of an aid if that prohibition limits the student's participation in the school program. The Section 504 regulation states:

A recipient may not impose upon handicapped students other rules, such as the prohibition of tape recorders in classrooms or of dog guides in campus buildings, that have the effect of limiting the participation of handicapped students in the recipient's education program or activity.

*****Accommodation Guidelines: Occasional due date extensions**

Why would a student need this accommodation?

A student with a disability may need extended time occasionally for individual assignments when the functional limitation imposed by their disability creates a barrier between him/her and the task of meeting certain deadlines. This may be due to the symptoms of the diagnosis, the unpredictable nature of the disability, the effects of medication or the need to use assistive technology to complete a task.

Occasional due date extensions apply to those assignments that the student would complete on his/her own. Discussions and group activities, whether limited to a single meeting or longer project, are not covered under this accommodation. Why the distinction? Modifications to time-bound discussions or group work could fundamentally alter the assignment and/or objectives of the assignment and are therefore not reasonable accommodations as defined in the law.

Students who have been approved for this accommodation are:

Advised to think of extended time as a period of days, not weeks, to be determined collaboratively by each individual faculty member and the student, based on the nature of the assignment.

The accommodation does not guarantee that an incomplete will be approved at the end of the course. Incompletes are academic decisions, not accommodations, and are at the discretion of each individual instructor.

How do we implement this accommodation?

The Office of Disability Services recommends the following steps be taken to implement extended time for individual assignments:

1. Communicate: Communication is key. Students with disabilities are advised to open the lines of communication early in the term in order to discuss an appropriate due date extension the individual assignments. As a faculty member, you may consider adding a note to your learning contract to encourage/remind students to begin this dialogue or you can always begin the conversation with those students whom you know have been approved for academic accommodations. 2. Discuss and agree upon a plan. Accommodations must be meaningful while not lowering standards. You are the chief academic officer of the course or study the student is enrolled in and the most valuable source of information that you have about the course objectives, requirements and assignments. Use your experience and expertise. If 'x' amount of time worked for students with disabilities in previous terms, continue to apply 'x'. If, with a full and honest effort, students with disabilities struggled with 'x', you may want to consider 'y' or 'z'.

You may want to consider the non-disabled peer; knowing how long an assignment should take the average student to complete provides a baseline for determining extended time for individual assignments.

3. Implement the plan and adjust if necessary.

4. Assess: The accommodation and the work that the student submits. The accommodation is meant to provide the student access, not ensure his or her success. If the student submits exemplary work, grade it as you would exemplary work submitted by a non-disabled peer. If a student submits work that is sub-par, grade it as you would sub-par work submitted by a non-disabled peer.

5. Collaborate: Take advantage of college resources. It is okay to refer students with disabilities to the Learning Resource Center, Writing Center or other resources as long as the referrals are based on the quality of their academic work, not merely the presence of a disability.