Disability Services

Policies and Procedures Manual

An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer
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Section A
Mission Statement

The Office of Counseling and Disability Services, in the Department of Student Leadership and Development is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all qualified students with disabilities. The staff is responsible for coordinating services for students with disabilities at Savannah State University.

Accommodations and services comply with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the policies of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.

Accommodations are academic adaptations that do not compromise academic standards or the mastery of essential course elements, but provide students with disabilities an equal opportunity to succeed. Accommodations provide equal access to facilities (moving a class from an inaccessible location to an accessible location) and information (academic accommodations).

Academic accommodations include services like note-takers, tape recording class lectures and discussion, extended time for tests, or a reduced course load. These services are designed to use the student’s academic skills to overcome deficits created by the disability.

Section B
Program Accessibility

Disability Services are administered through Student Affairs at Savannah State University, and seeks to assist students with disabilities in gaining equal access to all university programs. Students with disabilities should report any physical and/or academic accessibility problem to the Office of Counseling and Disability Services (CDS).

New students with disabilities entering Savannah State University can access the CDS services by completing and returning the Voluntary Declaration of Disability form, included in the official acceptance package available in the Office of Counseling and Disability Services. When the Office of Counseling and Disability Services receives this form, the student will be contacted and eligibility for services will be assessed.

Students who are currently enrolled at Savannah State University and have academic problems may also seek services by contacting a CDS staff member and arranging an appointment. A diagnostic interview will be scheduled and eligibility for services explored.

The CDS may be accessed by phone (912-356-2285 or 2202), visiting the King-Frazier Complex room 233. You may also contact the CDS by email at the following email address: awej@savstate.edu
Section C
Procedures for Receiving Services

I. New Students

Students contacting the Office of Counseling and Disability Services (CDS) for the first time are given an appointment with a CDS staff member for an interview. The initial session includes:

1. An interview to determine if the student has been tested for learning problems.

   A. If yes, and documentation is within three years (or if the student was tested at age 18 or older):

      1. Provide student with Board of Regents (BOR) criteria and request a copy of documentation.

      2. Students bring documentation to the CDS.

      3. CDS reviews student’s documentation for compliance with BOR criteria and may also submit the documentation to the Regents Center for Learning Disorder (RCLD).

      4. If documentation meets BOR criteria, an accommodation letter is written establishing accommodations.

      5. If the student requests University System accommodations (foreign language or math substitutions, additional semesters in Learning Support, and special accommodation for the Regent’s Test), documentation must be submitted to the RCLD at Georgia Southern University through the CDS.

   B. If yes, but not within three years, or if the student has never been tested:

      1. The student is assisted in the process of obtaining appropriate documentation. The student is provided with standards established by the BOR for outside evaluations and provided with information on obtaining testing from the RCLD at Georgia Southern University.

         a. The student obtains outside documentation and presents it to the CDS then completes steps three, four and five of Section A above.

         b. The student completes a pre-testing packet for the CDS and is evaluated. If a disabling condition is diagnosed by the RCLD, the CDS initiates services.

         c. Each semester students must request and obtain an accommodation letter for the CDS for each instructor.
II. Review of Outside Evaluations

The BOR has endorsed criteria for the evaluation of Learning Disabilities (LD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). (Academic Affairs Handbook, II.)

Students requesting accommodations for LD or ADHD must provide the Office of Counseling and Disability Services (CDS) with a copy of their evaluation. The Coordinator will review the documentation for adherence to Board of Regents criteria. A written response will be given to the student within 10 days and a copy placed in the student’s file.

The Coordinator may forward the evaluation to the Regents Center for Learning Disorders (RCLD) for further review. Students may appeal a negative decision of the CDS for further review. Students may appeal a negative decision of the CDS Coordinator by submitting a written request that the decision be reviewed by the RCLD.

Submission to the RCLD for approval is required for the following modifications.

1. Substitution of the CPC foreign language requirement,
2. Additional semesters in Learning Support, and
3. Regents’ Test or Collegiate Placement Examination (CPE) modifications other than those specified in the Academic Affairs Handbook, II.

III. Evaluation by the Regents Center for Learning Disorders (RCLD)

The Board of Regents (BOR) of the University System of Georgia established three centers for the purpose of providing assessment, resources and research related to students with learning disorders within the University System. The RCLD at Georgia Southern University is the center assigned to assist Savannah State University in obtaining assessments for students who have learning problems due to a disability. Center personnel are available to provide information regarding requests for special accommodations, to review previous documentation, and to provide recommendations regarding how to best maximize students’ functioning in higher education. Dr. Sue Murphy, the Liaison/Associate Director at the RCLD (912-681-0100), is assigned to work with Savannah State University.

When the RCLD receives a completed packet (incomplete packets are returned without processing), with the $500 fee, Ms. Kathy Nadeau will contact the student and schedule an intake interview at the RCLD. After the interview, Ms. Nadeau will schedule the evaluation appointment with the student, notify the Office of Counseling and Disability Services (CDS), and will be the student’s contact regarding pre-testing procedures. Please note: If Rehabilitation Services will be responsible for payment, you must contact them before returning this packet to the RCLD.

The total cost of an evaluation is $500 to be sent with the completed packet. It is the student’s responsibility to keep all appointments. They must notify the RCLD one day prior
to their intake interview appointment if they are unable to keep it. If necessary, the student may reschedule for the next available appointment.

With the student’s permission, the RCLD will notify the CDS about the results approximately one week after the evaluation so that referral concerns can be addressed in a timely manner. If the student is eligible for services, accommodations should be implemented at that time. Approximately two months after the evaluation, a feedback session will be scheduled with the student. Evaluation findings, along with recommendations and suggestions for the student, for the CDS, and for instructors, will be discussed during the feedback and the student will be provided with a written psychoeducational report.

The RCLD is available to assist you in providing appropriate services and accommodations to students with disabilities that affect their ability to succeed in an academic environment. Please feel free to contact the RCLD with questions and concerns.

IV. Accommodations Letter

The Accommodation Letter is used as a means of communication among the student, the Office of Counseling and Disability Services (CDS), and the faculty. Academic and physical accommodations to which a student is entitled are listed in the letter. The process for use of the Accommodation Letter is as follows:

1. The student completes the Voluntary Declaration of Disability and meets with a staff member from the CDS to present documentation of the disabling condition. When that documentation has met all standards established by the Board of Regents, the student is eligible for an Accommodation Letter.

2. Based on the documentation, the CDS staff, along with the student, determines appropriate and individualized accommodations. These accommodations are outlined in the Accommodation Letter.

3. At the beginning of each term, the student requests an Accommodation Letter from the CDS staff. The student then comes to the SCDS office for the letter and the Acknowledgement of Academic Accommodations form.

4. The student is responsible for making sure the professor has received the Accommodation Letter at the beginning of the term, and that the Acknowledgement of Academic Accommodations form has been signed by the professor and returned to the CDS. Faculty members are under no obligation to provide accommodations until an Accommodation Letter is received. Faculty members are not required to respond immediately to accommodation needs. Accommodations should begin within a reasonable period following delivery of the Accommodation Letter.

5. One copy of current term’s Academic Accommodation letter is kept in the student’s confidential file, along with a copy of the Acknowledgement of Academic Accommodations form.
V. Note-Takers

With appropriate documentation, students are eligible to have note-takers assist them in lecture/discussion classes.

Students who are eligible for note-takers must see the coordinator of the CDS during Early Registration. Following registration, a note-taker will be found and the student notified. These services are provided on a first-come, first-served basis. Failure to meet with the coordinator during Early Registration may result in a significant delay in receiving this service.

VI. Role of Note-Taker

The role of the note-taker is to provide the student(s) with classroom notes that are clear, complete, and legible. It is the disabled student’s responsibility to use the notes appropriately, to complete assignments, and to arrange for tutoring he/she may need.

The note-taker may use carbonless paper to take notes (obtained from the CDS), or you can copy your notes free in the Office of Student Affairs (Room 247, King-Frazier Complex).

It is the note-takers responsibility to:

- Keep the student’s identity and the nature of his/her disability confidential
- Attend class regularly and write clear, detailed notes
- Talk with the student on a regular basis regarding any difficulty he/she is having understanding the notes
- If using the copying services, copy notes on the same day
- Seek the assistance of the CDS immediately if having difficulty taking notes or if a scheduling conflict arises
- Inform the CDS if dropping the class or no longer able to be a note-taker
- Meet with the student periodically (bi-weekly) to assess the effectiveness of notes
Your Notes Should Contain:
- Detailed lecture notes with main points, explanations, and examples
- Class discussion including questions, answers, and comments where appropriate
- Notes or points from the black/chalkboard
- Details about all papers, exams, and quizzes
- Information regarding homework assignments

How Do I Know If I am Taking “Good” Notes?
Ask the disabled student:
- Can you read my handwriting?
- Do you understand my notes?
- What suggestions do you have to make to my notes more effective?

Ask yourself:
- Do I use space effectively?
- Do I mark points that the instructor emphasizes?
- Do I define vocabulary?
- Do I use diagrams and illustrations effectively?
- Are my notes complete?
- Do I use dark ink?
- Do I write the date on each page of notes?
- Is my handwriting legible?
- Am I on time for class?
- Do I ask for feedback on my notes?

If you and/or the student with a disability answer “no” to any of these questions, then you must address the problem and correct with help from the CDS if necessary. If the answer to all of these questions is “yes”, then you are definitely taking “good” notes.

VII. BENEFITS OF BEING A NOTE TAKER:
1. Recognition at the Spring Leadership Awards Ceremony in April.
2. Inclusion of this service on your Co-curricular transcript.
3. Ability to earn community service hours.
4. Professional references from CDS.
5. Quarterly tokens of appreciation.

VIII. Course Loads

Students are expected to take a regular course load while attending Savannah State University.

1. Students with medical disabilities whose documentation states that the disability precludes enrollment in a regular course load must petition the CDS for alternate course loads.

2. Students with learning disorders whose documentation states that the disability precludes enrollment in a regular course load must petition the RCLD through the CDS for alternate course loads.
IX.  Test Protocol

The Office of Counseling and Disability Services Disability Services provides test-proctoring services for professors who cannot provide extra time, test isolation, or other accommodations needed in testing.

All students receiving accommodations in testing are given an Exam Proctoring Checklist with each Academic Accommodation letter. It is then the responsibility of the instructor to notify the CDS office, via the Exam Proctoring Checklist, of test proctoring needs.

These standards are adhered to in the provision of this service:

1. Professors will provide the CDS with the exam and the Exam Proctoring Checklist at least 48 hours prior to the exam. Professors should make appointments for final exams at least one week in advance.

2. Professors will complete the Exam Proctoring Checklist for each exam, detailing how exams will be delivered and returned, and listing accommodations.

3. Students will not be allowed to take tests in multiple sessions, unless this is noted on the Exam Proctoring Checklist.

4. If students fail to come in for proctoring, the exam will be returned to the professor or destroyed. The student is responsible for meeting with the faculty member to reschedule the proctoring appointment.

5. Exams are most often administered at the CDS during the same time period that the class is taking the test, unless testing space is unavailable or it is after business hours for the CDS. To avoid unfair advantages, professors should provide the CDS with as much notice as possible.

Services are provided on a first-come, first-served basis.

X. Housing

The CDS works in cooperation with Residential Services and Programs and University Village to assist students with special on-campus housing needs. To apply for accommodations in housing, students should complete the Voluntary Declaration of Disability and submit medical documentation from the appropriate professional to support the need for adaptations in housing. The student will be contacted by the CDS to determine if there is a need for accommodations, or determine what accommodations are needed. If the CDS finds a need, a request for accommodations will be submitted to the director of Residential Services and Programs, Irvin Clark (912-356-2324/2519).

Students may pay additional housing fees for private rooms. Student with special housing needs will be accommodated only if they submit their housing contract with the time limits established by Residential Services and Programs and/or University Village, or if the waiting list for housing is able to serve them.
XI. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

**Student Responsibilities:**

Students must realize that the University experience is very challenging and requires years of dedication and discipline to study, research and reading. Students with specific disabilities are, in addition to the support provided by the University encouraged:

1) To be fully involved and take responsibility for the effectiveness of their accommodation process.

2) To be assertive and seek help from family members and friends in transcribing notes from the audio recorder, preparing daily time to review and seek clarification of work done for the day, develop questions to ask the professor of gaps in your notes or understanding, etcetera.

3) To indicate readily to the counselor any problems, concerns, needs, questions or issues that they may have in relation to their success in the University.

4) To develop a close working relationship with their professors.

**SECTION D**

**DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS**

The Office of Counseling and Disability Services is responsible for maintaining confidential student files. These files include appropriate documentation of the disability, an intake form, a record of contacts with the student, and a record of services provided. To determine appropriate and reasonable accommodations, documentation must be furnished. The following documentation is required for:

*Learning Disabilities* - A psychological or psycho-educational evaluation, not older than three years, must be provided by a licensed professional. The evaluation must meet the Board of Regents criteria for ill eligibility. Additional records from primary or secondary schools may be requested.

*Visual Impairments* - Results of an examination done within the last twelve months from a medical doctor, optometrist, or ophthalmologist documenting the visual disability and the impact on academics.

*Hearing Impairments* - Results of an examination done within the last 12 months from a medical doctor or speech and hearing center documenting the hearing disability and the impact on academics.
Speech/Language Impairments - A report from a Speech/language Pathologist documenting the disability and the impact on academics.

Mobility Impairment - Results of an examination done within the last twelve months from a medical doctor. Report must include the impact of the disability on academics.

Attention Deficit Disorder - A report from a professional, such as a medical doctor or licensed psychologist, must document the disorder. Results must be based on the standards of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Volume Four (DSM-IV) as included in the criteria required by the Board of Regents. Please see Appendix A for a copy of these standards. The report should also address the need for medication.

Traumatic Brain Injury - A psychological, psychoeducational, or medical evaluation done in the last twelve months describing the effects of the injury on cognitive functioning, and the impact of the disability on academics. Traumatic Brain Injury may also be referred to as Acquired Brain Impairment.

Psychological Disabilities - A report done by a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist within the past 12 months documenting the disabling condition and it's impact on academic functioning.

Other Health Impairments - A report done in the last twelve months by an appropriate specialist documenting the disability and describing the impact on the student's academic abilities.

SECTION E: DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

The Office of Counseling and Disability Services coordinates all services for students with disabilities. These services include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Diagnostic Interview: If a student has never been tested for a learning disorder, and is experiencing academic difficulty, a CDS staff member will meet with the student. Upon completion of the diagnostic interview the student will be given a professional opinion concerning the need for an evaluation to be done by a licensed professional.

2. Information on Documentation Guidelines: CDS staff assists students in gaining accommodations for their disability by providing them with Board of Regents standards for documentation.

3. Needs Assessment: Documentation is used to determine a student's eligibility for services as well as to identify other needs that should be addressed. The CDS staff may also refer the student to other resources.

4. Advocacy Services: The CDS acts as an advocate for students with disabilities.

5. Referral and Advocacy: Due to varying services provided from office to office, the CDS assists students who need Department of Rehabilitative Services, including assistance with referrals and appeals.
6. **Vocational/Career Counseling**: Vocational counseling is provided by the CDS Director to students who are unaware of the impact their disability has on the choice of a major, or on the choice of a career.

7. **Adaptive Needs**: Note-takers and books on tape are also available to qualified students. Students with physical disabilities are provided with lab assistants for lab classes.

8. **Test Proctoring**: Since some circumstances make it difficult for faculty members to provide testing accommodations in the classroom, the CDS provides test proctoring services as requested by faculty. Test proctoring guidelines are sent with each Accommodation Letter.

I. **Levels of Service**

Services for students with disabilities are provided on the following levels:

**Active** - This level includes students who have completed all documentation requirements and are currently receiving appropriate academic accommodations.

**Incomplete** - This level includes students who are in the process of gathering documentation, having their documentation reviewed for compliance with Board of Regents standards, or being scheduled for new assessments.

**Inactive** - This level includes students who are not currently attending Savannah State University, or are no longer seeking CDS services.

II. **Student Files: Statement of Confidentiality**

Student files are confidential to the extent allowed by law and are kept in a secured location in the CDS. These files may not be accessed by anyone outside the CDS Office without the written permission of the student, or as allowed by state and federal law.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 protects the privacy of educational records, establishes the rights of students to inspect and review their educational records, and provides guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data.

**SECTION F
FACULTY AND STAFF SUPPORT**
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHING STUDENTS WITH SPECIFIC DISABILITIES

I. LEARNING DISABILITIES

Students with learning disabilities have normal or better intelligence, but they also have severe "information-processing deficits" that make them perform significantly worse in one or more academic areas (reading, writing, math) than might be expected, given their intelligence and performance in other academic areas. Though all learning disabilities are different, students with learning disabilities report some common problems, including slow and inefficient reading; slow essay-writing, with problems in organization and the mechanics of writing; and frequent errors in math calculation.

The following suggestions may be helpful in working with students who have learning disabilities, and also those who have head injuries.

- Students with learning disabilities may take longer to complete exams and may need extended time.
- Students with learning disabilities may also take longer to complete assignments, so it is particularly important to provide a detailed syllabus at the beginning of the class. The syllabus should list all assignments and due-dates.
- If possible, provide frequent opportunities for feedback: for example, weekly quizzes on assigned reading, instructor review of early drafts of essays, error-analysis of tests. If a student's written exams seem far inferior to the student's class work, the two of you can meet during your office hours for a discussion of the exam questions. This discussion will give you a better idea of what the student really knows and how you can help the student produce better exams or other written work.
- Encourage students to contact you in order to clarify assignments. You might suggest that students re-phrase the assignment and send the re-phrased version to you via e-mail. You can then reply via e-mail, confirming that the student has understood the assignment or correcting misunderstandings.
- Well before the beginning of your class, leave a list of required and recommended texts at your department office, and tell the office staff that students with disabilities should be permitted to make copies of the list. (Or put the book-list on your course website.) Some students with learning disabilities will need to order their textbooks from Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic, and receiving the books takes time.
• Be sensitive to students who, for disability-related reasons, may be unable to read aloud or answer questions when called on. If students make you aware of these difficulties, you and the students can discuss other ways they can meaningfully participate in class sessions: for example, volunteering comments or making short presentations.

• Compose exams in a way that makes them accessible for students with learning disabilities:
  • Make sure that exams are clearly written or typed, in large black letters or numbers, with spaces between lines and with double or triple spaces between items. To avoid visual confusion, avoid cramming too many questions or math problems onto one page. Print questions on only one side of the paper.
  • Group similar types of questions together: for example, all true/false, all multiple-choice, all short-answers. Leave several spaces between multiple-choice items.
  • Permit students to circle answers in the test booklet rather than darkening circles on a Scantron sheet.
  • Allow students to use extra paper in preparing answers to essay questions. (Encourage the students to turn in preliminary outlines or scrawled notes with the completed exam bluebooks.)
  • Suggest that math students use graph paper (or lined paper turned sideways) to ensure neatness and avoid confusion when performing math calculations.
II.  Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is characterized by a persistent pattern of frequent and severe inattention, hyperactivity, and/or impulsiveness. People with ADHD have many problems in academic settings. Some of these problems are similar to the problems of people with learning disabilities: slow and inefficient reading, slow essay-writing and frequent errors in math calculation and the mechanics of writing. Other problems are especially characteristic of ADHD; students ADHD often have serious problems with time-management, task-completion, organization, and memory.

For suggestions on working effectively with students who have ADHD, please review our section on learning disabilities (above), as well as the following.

- Students with ADHD generally perform better if given a syllabus with clear explanations of tasks and specific due-dates. As the semester progresses, keep reminding students of impending deadlines: "Remember, the problem sets are due on Friday."
- Whenever possible, start each lecture with a summary of material to be covered, or provide a written outline. If you use broad margins and triple-space, students will be able to take notes directly onto the outline: an aid to organization. At the conclusion of each lecture, review major points.
- Students with ADHD may tend to "drift" mentally during class, especially during long lectures. They are better able to stay tuned-in when the class material is stimulating and the format varied (for example, lecture alternating with presentations and class discussion). If the class goes on for several hours, be sure to permit several breaks.
- Students with ADHD are often distractible, so you should invite them to sit near the front of the class, away from possible sources of distraction (for example, doors, windows, and noisy heaters).
- Avoid making assignments orally, since ADHD students may miss them. Always write assignments on the chalkboard, or (even better) pass them out in written form.
- Provide test-sites that are relatively distraction-free; and when students are taking tests with extended test-time, do not ask them to move from one test-site to another.
- For large projects or long papers, help the student break down the task into its component parts. Set deadlines for each part; for example, there might be deadlines for the proposal of an essay topic, for a research plan, for the completion of research, for pre-writing to find the essay's thesis, for a writing-plan or outline, for a first-draft, and for a final edited manuscript.
III. Mobility Impairments

Mobility impairments can have many causes: for example, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, and spinal cord injury. Students with mobility impairments have varying physical limitations and deal with their limitations in different ways; they may use crutches, braces, or a wheelchair.

Below are some suggestions on working with students who have mobility impairments.

- Students who have upper body limitations may need note-takers, extended exam time, and audiotape recorders or amanuenses to record exam answers. DSP provides note-takers and amanuenses. You'll need to provide exam rooms in which students can dictate into audiotape recorders or confer with amanuenses without disturbing other exam-takers.
- Students with upper body weakness may not be able to raise their hands to participate in class discussion. Establish eye contact with the students and call on them when they indicate that they wish to contribute.
- A wheelchair is part of a student's "personal space." No one should lean on a chair, touch it, or push it unless asked. Whenever you are talking one-to-one with a student in a wheelchair, you yourself should be seated so the student does not have to peer upward at you.
- Please understand that for reasons beyond their control, students with severe mobility impairments may be late to class. Some are unable to quickly move from one location to another due to architectural barriers, inadequate public transportation, or hilly terrain on campus.
- Special seating arrangements may be necessary to meet student needs. Students may require special chairs, lowered tables on which to write, or spaces for wheelchairs. In laboratory courses, students who use wheelchairs may need lower lab tables to accommodate their chairs and allow for the manipulation of tools or other equipment.
- Instructors in courses requiring field trips or internships need to work with students and the Disabled Students' Program to be sure the students' needs are met. For example, students may need assistance with transportation, special seating, or frequent rest-breaks.
- Not all mobility impairments are constant and unchanging; some students experience exacerbations or relapses requiring bed rest or hospitalization. In most cases, students are able to make up the incomplete work, but they may need extra time.
IV. Deaf or Hard of Hearing

For obvious reasons, students who are deaf or hard of hearing face enormous obstacles in an academic setting. It is essential that instructors maintain effective communication with these students, though instructors may sometimes feel awkward working with sign language interpreters or resorting to visual communication techniques (body language, gestures, and facial expressions).

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing are not all alike. Some are extremely adept at reading lips and others are not; some communicate orally and others use sign language, gestures, writing, or a combination of these methods. In class, students who are deaf may have sign language interpreters, or they may rely on real-time captioners (people who immediately type whatever is said so that the spoken utterance can be read on a computer screen). Students who have some usable hearing may use a device to amplify sounds: in class they may rely on hearing aids alone, or they may use an "assistive listening device." When students are using assistive listening devices, instructors may be asked to wear cordless lapel micro transmitters.

Following are suggestions for improving the academic situation of students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

- Always speak directly to the student, not to the student's sign language interpreter.
- During class discussions, ensure that no more than one person speaks at a time. When a class member asks a question, repeat the question before answering.
- Loss of visual contact may mean loss of information for some students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Unless the students are using sign-language interpreters or real-time captioners, be sure that the students have visual contact with you before you begin lecturing. Avoid giving information while handing out papers or writing on a chalkboard.
- Provide seats near the front of the class so students with hearing impairments can get as much from visual and auditory clues as possible.
- Use captioned videos whenever possible. When showing uncaptioned videos, slides, or movies provide an outline or summary in advance. If the classroom must be darkened, be sure that the student's interpreter is clearly visible.
- When reading directly from text, provide an advance copy and pause slightly when interjecting information not in the text.
- When working with the chalkboard or an overhead projection system, pause briefly so that the student may look first at the board/screen, and then at the interpreter, to see what is being said.
V. Speech Impairments

Speech impairments can have many causes: dysfluencies such as stuttering, neurological conditions such as Tourette's Syndrome, surgical removal of the larynx, stroke, traumatic head injury, and degenerative illness. Students with speech impairments may communicate in various ways. Some students speak with their own voices, but slowly and with some lack of clarity; other students write notes, point to communication boards, use electronic speech-synthesizers, or communicate through assistants who interpret their speech to other people. Following are some suggestions on working with students who have speech impairments.

- In communicating with students who have speech impairments, resist the temptation to indicate that you have understood when in fact you have not. Students with speech impairments are accustomed to being asked to repeat a word or phrase, so do not be afraid that you'll offend them if you ask them to "say it again" or to spell words that you can't decipher.

- When students have speech impairments, meet with them early in the semester to discuss their communication styles and how they can best function in your classroom. Will they be able to answer if you call on them? Will they be able to ask questions and make comments during class discussions, or do oral presentations? If not, are there other ways the students can demonstrate competency: for example, by completing an extra essay or project?

- If a communication assistant accompanies the student to class, address your comments and questions to the student rather than the assistant.
SECTION G
PROCEDURAL ISSUES

I. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Students who feel that a decision by a CDS staff member or an instructor does not fully comply with federal disability legislation should follow the appropriate procedure as outlined below:

A. Complaints of ADA Violations by CDS Staff

Students should first meet with the CDS staff member who made the decision and attempt to resolve the problem informally. It is anticipated that most questions will be resolved in this way. If, however, there is no resolution, situations involving staff other than the CDS Coordinator should be appealed to the CDS Coordinator. Cases unresolved at the Coordinator’s level may be appealed to the Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs. The Professional Counselor will assist the student in making an appointment with the Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs and will forward materials relevant to the complaint to the Vice President of Student Affairs. The ADA Compliance Officer will also be notified of the complaint at this time and will receive copies of information related to the complaint.

The Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs will meet with the student in an attempt to resolve the complaint. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, the student will be assisted in appealing to the Vice President for Student Affairs and will forward all relevant materials to the ADA Compliance Officer.

The Vice President for Student Affairs will meet with the student and attempt to resolve the appeal. If the Vice President for Student Affairs and the student are not successful, the student will be referred to the ADA Compliance Office, the President and ultimately to the University System of Georgia Board of Regents.

B. Complaints of ADA Violations by Faculty

Students who feel that a faculty member has violated their rights under federal disability legislation should first meet with the CDS Professional Counselor to register their complaint. If the Professional Counselor feels the incident demands further investigation, an informal inquiry begins by discussing the allegations(s) with that faculty member. It is anticipated that most perceived violations will be resolved at this point, through discussion with the faculty member of the relevant legislation and appropriate methods of accommodating students’ documented disabilities.

The Professional Counselor will inform the student and the faculty member of any agreed-upon actions on the part of all parties, with a copy to the ADA Compliance Officer. Cases unresolved at this level may be appealed to the Department Chair. The CDS Professional Counselor will assist the student in making an appointment with the Chair and will forward materials relevant to the complaint to the Dean of that particular College. The ADA Compliance Officer will also be notified of the complaint at this time and will receive copies of information related to the complaint.
The Chair will meet with the student in an attempt to resolve the complaint. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Chair, the Chair will assist the student in appealing to the Dean and will forward all relevant materials to the Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs with copies to the ADA Compliance Officer.

The Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs will meet with the student and attempt to resolve the appeal: If the Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs and the student are not successful, the student will be referred to the ADA Compliance Office, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the President and ultimately to the University System of Georgia Board of Regents.

II. Student Conduct

Students with disabling conditions are subject to the provisions of the Savannah State University’s Code of Student Ethics. Any behavior that violates these policies is subject to sanctions, up to and including dismissal from the University. The Americans with Disabilities Act does not protect behaviors alleged to be a consequence of the disabling condition.

III. Student Files

Statement of Confidentiality

Student files are confidential to the extent allowed by law and are kept in a secured location in the CDS. These files may not be accessed by anyone outside the CDS without the written permission of the student, or as allowed by state and federal law.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 protects the privacy of educational records, establishes the rights of students to inspect and review their educational records, and provides guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data.

IV. APPENDICES

Sample of Accommodations letters with accommodation options.
MEMORANDUM

TO: Instructor
FROM: Counselor
        Center for Student Development
Subject: JANE DOE, SSN 0099
DATE: August 30, 2005

The above named student is classified as disabled; therefore, Savannah State University is mandated to provide specified academic accommodations by the Regents Center for Learning Disorders at Georgia Southern University. In order to be compliant with the American Disability Act of 1973, please provide the student with the following services and accommodations listed below:

1. Extended time for tests.
2. Permission to utilize word processor with spell check on written assignments and essays.
3. Permission to utilize voice-activated word processor for essays.
4. Assistance with a note-taker if requested (using the notes of classmates).
5. Use of scanner and voice-output computer program for reading.
6. Use of sign language interpreter in the classroom.

I can be reached for additional information at 356.2202. Thanking you in advance for your corporation in this matter.

Thank you,

Counselor
Cc: Student file
Student: John Doe, SSN 1234
Date: August 30, 2005

Dear Faculty Member:

In order to assure faculty awareness of the modifications required for the disabled student, I need your assistance in verifying receipt of information. Please sign and date one of the lines below to indicate that the student has shared this letter with you, which requests accommodations in your course. The student is then responsible for returning the completed signature sheet to me. This form will be maintained in the student’s confidential file.

Please retain the student’s letter, but the information may not be shared with a third party without written consent from the student. If you need any additional information, or if you wish to discuss specific issues regarding the modification(s), please do not hesitate to contact me at 356.2202.

Thank you in advance for your corporation.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Awe, LMSW
Counselor.

________________________________________________________________________
(Faculty Signature)   (Faculty Printed Name)   (Date)

________________________________________________________________________
(Faculty Signature)   (Faculty Printed Name)   (Date)

________________________________________________________________________
(Faculty Signature)   (Faculty Printed Name)   (Date)

________________________________________________________________________
(Faculty Signature)   (Faculty Printed Name)   (Date)