

ABILITY SERVICES AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY AT GALVESTON

WHAT FACULTY SHOULD KNOW

REQUESTING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR A DISABILITY

Students who would like to request special accommodations due to a mental or physical disability are encouraged to visit our webpage:

<https://www.tamug.edu/Counsel/Disabilities.html>,

make an Accommodation Meeting appointment via SimplePractice:

<https://counselingcareerabilityservices.clientsecure.me>,

or students may also visit the Office of Counseling, Career & Ability Services and meet with Dr. Little, Access Coordinator of Ability Services.

The student will provide documentation to the Access Coordinator who will bring it to the Accommodation Review Committee. The documentation must be comprehensive and completed by a medical/mental health professional. It is due at least 30 days prior to the need of services. This allows for at least 2 weeks for disability committee to meet and up to 2 weeks for professors to setup the accommodation(s).

The Accommodation Review Committee (made up of staff & faculty) will meet and review the requests with the assistance of the Access Coordinator. They will approve or deny the requests and make appropriate referrals as needed.

It is the student's responsibility to meet with professors regarding their accommodations. Most students receive a signed letter from Dr. D. Little. Some students in Engineering programs under the umbrella of College Station will have documentation processed by an Access Coordinator there. Authentic letters will not have an addendum. An authentic letter includes detailed accommodations that have been approved for individual students, the semester(s) that accommodations are approved for, and a signature, which is on TAMUG letterhead. Students must reapply for accommodations every semester after the initial unless otherwise instructed in writing (Spring & Summer or Summer & Fall are approved on their letters).

Reasonable Accommodations

Use of interpreters, scribes, readers, and/or note takers.

Permission to audio and/or video tape classes.

Enlarged copies of notes, required readings, handouts and exam questions.

Extended time on exams.*

Quiet, distraction-free environment for taking exams (this can be in the professor's office or the testing center. A concrete plan should be made when student presents accommodation letter to professor).

Reasonable Accommodations Cont.

Use of aids, such as calculators (specific “simple” or other calculators can be approved) or desk references, during exams.

Use of computers in class or access to computers for writing assignments and exams.

Recorded or oral versions of exams.

Preferential seating in the classroom (a person with vision problems may request to sit in the front of class whereas a person with PTSD may prefer to sit in the rear of class).

An accessible website following the guidelines of Section 508 (this includes syllabus, videos, and anything presented online or in a class).

Please note, this is not an exhaustive list.

* It is not appropriate to have a student that is approved for extra time to begin an exam with the class and then move to another location for the extra time or for a professor to announce to the class that Kelly needs to go to the testing center for the exam. This is not only very distracting for the student but it also breach's student confidentiality. Further, if a student takes an exam apart from the class, make sure to give any verbal instructions or hints that will be given to the rest of the class to the student receiving accommodations. This can be done either verbally beforehand, or in writing, which can be included with the test.

USING THE TESTING CENTER

Faculty, please remember that the Testing Center is available for students with disabilities that have approved accommodations. The Testing Center does not have a large enough capacity for disability students and students making up tests, especially during Covid-19 restrictions. Therefore, please make other arrangements for students making up tests. The current Testing Center office hours are **M - Th 8 am to 6 pm, F 8 am to 5 pm and virtually by appointment (subject to change for holidays & as needed)**. Arrangements for exams at the testing center should be taken into account. For example, a 2-hour exam should be scheduled no later than 2 hours prior to closing (assuming that the student is not approved for extra time) during the work week, no matter what day or time the class exam is scheduled for. Last, if you will be offering hints for a class during an exam, please make the same hints available for your students that take their exams in the testing center.

The Testing Center should be utilized for students that are qualified for extra time and/or a quiet testing area, in the case that the professor is not able to provide a distraction free area for the student to test without being moved from one location to another. The Testing Center is supervised. Students must sign in, check in their back packs, cell phones and other personal items that are not permitted in the Testing Room. No materials that are not approved by professors will be permitted in the testing center. All students take their exams/tests while being recorded.

All students are recorded!

Exams can be hand delivered or emailed to testingservices@tamug.edu.

DISABILITY DOES NOT EQUATE TO INABILITY TO ACHIEVE

People with disabilities have the same right as everyone else to make decisions for their own lives and to be active members of society.

There is no definitive classification system for disability, however some general categories include:

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|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| physical impairments | neurological conditions |
| medical conditions | vision impairments |
| intellectual disabilities | hearing impairments |
| learning disabilities | mobility impairments |
| mental health conditions | pregnancy related physical disability |
| PTSD | |

Remember that a disability is not always visible or singular, for example, an individual who has cerebral palsy may also experience a mental health condition such as anxiety, or someone with vision impairment may also have a learning disability.

All interactions students have with the disability access coordinator and counselors will be kept confidential unless the students specify in writing to whom that private information can be released.

Disability is a normal part of human diversity. Disability may be permanent, temporary or fluctuating and may have a minimal or substantial impact on a person's life. Disability may impact mobility, learning or communication and can result from accident, illness, or genetic conditions. Therefore, assistance (assistive care) with hearing aids, guide dogs, wheel chairs, power points, quiet testing, and/or other devices and services are provided to assist with access, and reasonable accommodations, for disabled students. College accommodations are requested by students to assist them with fair access to education. Acceptable documentation of a diagnosed disability is evaluated by a committee before accommodations are approved. Professors should not ask a student for proof of a disability and should keep all information about an accommodated student confidential.

Arrangements for accommodations should NOT be made in front of anyone except the student making the request.

Students that are approved for accommodations must provide their professors with accommodation letters that are created by the access coordinator each semester. Faculty should take no more than 2 weeks to setup the accommodation.

If faculty have questions about the letters, their authenticity, or about students presenting for class with animals that are not clearly marked as "service animals" *, please call the Counseling, Career & Ability Services Office access coordinator listed below.

* When it is not obvious what service the animal provides, only limited inquiries are allowed. Faculty and staff may ask two questions: (1) is the dog a "service animal" that is required because of a disability? and (2) what work or task has the dog been trained to do? Staff cannot ask about the person's disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training card documentation for the dog, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task. If the dog is disruptive (barking, snarling, walking around, and etc.) or is not potty trained then it is most likely not a service animal and the student can be asked to take the animal out of the class so long as the student is invited to return to class without the animal. A puppy (or any other animal) cannot be a service animal and do not belong in classrooms.

LAWS & GUIDES PERTAINING TO DISABILITIES

In 1998, Congress amended the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to require Federal agencies to make their electronic and information technology (EIT) accessible to people with disabilities. The law ([29 U.S.C. § 794 \(d\)](#)) applies to all Federal agencies when they develop, procure, maintain, or use electronic and information technology. Under Section 508, agencies must give disabled employees and members of the public access to information that is comparable to access available to others. The United States Access Board [discusses the Section 508 law](#) and its responsibility for developing accessibility standards for EIT to incorporate into regulations that govern Federal procurement practices. [Section 504](#): prohibits federal agencies, programs, or activities from discriminating and requires reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities.

For in-depth information please visit

<https://www.section508.gov/manage/laws-and-policies/>

<https://www.fcc.gov/archived-accessinfo-announcements>

<http://www.ada.gov/effective-comm.htm>

In a nutshell, this means all materials presented by Texas A&M University at Galveston, from the website to the syllabus, need to be accessible to “everyone” whether a person with a disability is in attendance or not. This is important because more of our younger population are reporting disabilities as compared to past populations and many older adults with disabilities are returning to college. Furthermore, people with disabilities not only have varied disabilities but they also have varied learning styles. Utilizing practices, such as captioning, that have been made into law will not only assist disability students, but it will engage all students with varied learning styles. It will give all students equal access. The biggest focus for faculty regarding accommodations, and equal access, is on captioning. If faculty use any videos/multimedia for teaching, faculty should provide accessible (Section 508 compliant) instructional materials in a timely manner and as seamlessly as possible. The A&M University system has recently contracted with Verbit to provide closed captioning services.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN APPROVED HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE ACCOMODATIONS

The Individuals with [Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#), [Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 \(ADA\)](#) and [Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#), dictate legal principles regarding accommodations in education. The following discussion is drawn from these principles.

The main difference between accommodations in the transition from high school to college is that in high school the responsibility of student success, with the standard that every student with a disability “has a right to a high school education” falls, on parents and teachers. Whereas in college a qualified student with a documented and approved disability has the right to “reasonable accommodation” for “equal access to services” provided by a university. Further, the student is responsible for meeting the academic or technical standards of the college. This underscores the fact that higher education is not a right and that every student must qualify for admission and meet the standards designated in order to graduate.

In high school, a student receives free services and an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) is created. Personal services for medical or physical disability are required. School professionals are responsible for identifying students needing accommodations and ensuring that specific types of interventions are provided. Free testing, evaluation, and documentation are available.

Access to higher education is ensured but the student creates personal success by identifying and requesting accommodations for specific types of assistance necessary to be successful. In college, students are responsible for identifying themselves as students with a disability and making the appropriate office aware of any requests and discrepancies. Students are responsible for their own evaluations and providing appropriate documentation in support of any accommodations requested. Confidentiality necessitates students giving permission for disability information, and records, to be discussed or released among professionals and parents. Students are also responsible for notifying professors of approved accommodations.

REFERRING STUDENTS TO THE ACCESS COORDINATOR

Instructors are often the first point of contact for students with disabilities who seek accommodations. Many students who need accommodations do not request them.

You can help students receive the accommodations they may need by doing the following:

In your syllabus, or other introduction paperwork, include the recommended statement about classroom accommodations for students with disabilities:

“ If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact

Dr. Little

Access Coordinator

Schedule online at <https://counselingcareerabilityservices.clientsecure.me>

104 Seibel Building

Counseling, Career & Ability Services,
Texas A&M University at Galveston

409.740.4587, dlittle@tamug.edu

If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, and are enrolled in Galveston and College Station based classes please contact **both** the TAMUG access coordinator (listed above), and

College Station

Disability Resources

Department of Disability Resources,
1224 TAMU

Texas A&M University, College Station,

979.845.1637, <https://disability.tamu.edu/>”

On the first day of class, make an announcement, or give all students a handout, about how they can receive disability services and accommodations. You can also direct them to advising/tutoring/coaching services the **[Center for Academic Learning Support \(CALs\)](#)**. CALs services are scheduled via **[Navigate](#)**.

If students are having difficulty in a course, they can be referred to **[CALs](#)**, **[Counseling](#)** with Dan Kratz, Thomala Walker, Daisy McCloud, Ken Bailey, or Dr. Little (tutoring, time & stress management, among other issues), or **[Career Services](#)** with Jeff English or Ken Bailey.

Direct all requests for accommodations from TAMUG students to:

Dr. Little

Access Coordinator

Counseling, Career & Ability Services, Access Coordinator

Schedule online at <https://counselingcareerabilityservices.clientsecure.me>

104 Seibel Building

Texas A&M University at Galveston

409.740.4587, dlittle@tamug.edu

Please direct all requests for accommodations from students attending College Station based classes (typically Engineering students) to **both** the TAMUG access coordinator (listed above) and:

College Station

Disability Resources

Department of Disability Resources,

1224 TAMU

Texas A&M University, College Station,

979.845.1637, <https://disability.tamu.edu/>

In conclusion, if we all work together using our cumulative skills and directing students with disabilities to established resources, this will facilitate students with disabilities in receiving an equitable learning environment at Texas A&M University!

If you have any questions or concerns related to disability accommodations, please feel free to email, call, or stop by.



Dr. Little

Access Coordinator

Counseling, Career & Ability Services

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