

<b>The University of North Texas at Dallas Policy Manual</b>	Chapter 7.000
<b>7.004 Disability Accommodation for Students</b>	<b>Student Affairs, Education &amp; Funding</b>

**Policy Statement.** The University of North Texas at Dallas is committed to providing equal educational access for qualified students with disabilities in accordance with state and federal laws including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. To provide equality of access for students with disabilities, accommodations and auxiliary aids and services will be provided to the extent necessary to comply with state and federal law.

**Application of Policy.** This policy applies to all students.

**Definitions.**

1. **Accommodations Coordinator.** “Accommodation Coordinator” means the official within the Office of Student Life and Success who is initially responsible for the coordination of requests for student accommodations.
2. **Disabled.** “Disabled” means having a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more or a person's major life activities.
3. **Qualified Student with a Disability.** “Qualified Student with a Disability” means a disabled student who meets the academic and technical standards required for admission and participation in the educational program and activities.
4. **Accommodations.** “Accommodations” mean modifications to a course, program or educational requirements of a program or course as are necessary and appropriate so that such requirements do not discriminate or have the effect of discriminating against a student on the basis of a disability. Academic requirements that are essential to the course, to a student's program of instruction, or which relate directly to licensing requirements will not be regarded as discriminatory. Modifications may include but are not limited to: extended time for exams, reduced distractions in testing environments, degree modifications and relocation of classrooms to accessible locations.
5. **Auxiliary Aids and Services.** “Auxiliary Aids and Services” mean accommodations that assist students with disabilities in the educational setting. Auxiliary aids and services may include but are not limited to digital textbooks, note-takers, sign language interpreters, enlarged text and real-time closed captioning. Devices or services of a personal nature such as personal attendants, individually prescribed devices, or readers for personal use or study are not provided.

## **Procedures and Responsibilities.**

### **Student Resources.**

1. The Accommodations Coordinator in the Office of Student Life and Success. The official within the Office of Student Life and Success who is responsible for determining and coordinating appropriate accommodations and/or auxiliary aids and services for qualified prospective, newly admitted or currently enrolled students.
2. ADA Compliance Officer. The Director of Student Life and Success is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act for qualified students with a disability. Non-academic issues including access to facilities and non-academic events should be directed to the ADA Compliance Officer in the Office for Human Resources.

### **Student Eligibility.**

1. Students are eligible for accommodation and/or auxiliary aids and services if they have a documented disability and the Accommodations Coordinator has met with the student and determined that the functional limitations of the disability require such accommodation and/or auxiliary aids and services.
  - a. Newly accepted and currently enrolled students are responsible for initiating a disability-related request for accommodation or auxiliary aids and services with the Accommodations Coordinator prior to the time when the accommodation or auxiliary aids or service will be needed.
  - b. Prospective students may request reasonable accommodation (for testing, campus tours or orientation) at any time during the application process by submitting an oral or written request to the Accommodations Coordinator on forms developed for this purpose.
2. Students must provide timely relevant and complete written documentation of a disability for which accommodation is requested, including:
  - a. A diagnostic statement from an appropriate professional identifying the disability, date of the current diagnostic evaluation and the date of the original diagnosis.
  - b. A description of the current functional impact of the disability.
  - c. Treatments, medications, assistive devices or services currently prescribed.
  - d. The relevant credentials of the diagnosing professional(s) such as medical specialty and professional licensure.

3. The Accommodations Coordinator has the discretion to determine what type of documentation is necessary to establish the present level of the student's disability and its impact on the student's needs in the UNTD setting. Any costs related to this initial documentation will be the responsibility of the student.
4. The Accommodations Coordinator may determine the need for a second professional opinion concerning the nature or severity of a student's disability. Costs related to obtaining a second opinion will be assumed by UNTD to the extent not otherwise covered by student insurance.

### **Determination and Notification.**

1. Determination. The Accommodations Coordinator will determine whether accommodation or auxiliary aids or services are appropriate following an individual assessment of a student's written documentation and a personal meeting with the student. Among the factors to be considered in determining appropriate accommodations, auxiliary aids and services are:
  - a. The nature of the student's disability.
  - b. Accommodations, auxiliary aids and/or services that have worked for the student in the past.
  - c. Whether the requested accommodation, auxiliary aids and/or services will allow the student to effectively access and participate in the course or academic program.
  - d. Whether the requested accommodation, auxiliary aids and/or services will alter the essential requirements of the course or program.
2. The University is not required to alter or modify a course or academic program to the extent that it changes the fundamental nature of that course or program. Decisions regarding accommodation, auxiliary aids and/or services may require consultation with UNT faculty and/or administrators to consider the fundamental nature of a course or academic program.
3. Notification. The Accommodations Coordinator will provide a student with written notice regarding the determination and any approved accommodations, or auxiliary aids and/or services within seven (7) business days of receiving the request for accommodation. If a student's request requires additional consideration beyond the seven (7) day timeframe, the Accommodations Coordinator will provide the student with written notice of the status of the request and the proposed date for a final determination.

## **Implementation of Accommodations and/or Auxiliary Aids and Services.**

1. Accommodations and/or auxiliary aids and services provided directly through the Office of Student Life and Success. Certain accommodations and/or auxiliary aids or services may be approved and provided directly through the Office of Student Life and Success.
2. Accommodations and/or auxiliary aids and services requiring cooperation of faculty. Certain accommodations and/or use of auxiliary aids and services may require cooperation from a faculty members who teaches a class in which a student is enrolled.
  - a. As early as possible in a semester, a student who has been approved for accommodation and/or use of auxiliary aids and services should seek a confidential meeting with faculty members to:
    - i. Provide the notice from the Accommodations Coordinator approving the accommodation and/or use of auxiliary aids or services; and,
    - ii. Make arrangements for implementation of the approved accommodation and/or use of auxiliary aids and services.
  - b. The faculty member may not disclose the student's disability to any other student or faculty member without the consent of the student.
  - c. Faculty members may not deny an approved accommodation without consulting the Accommodations Coordinator to consider alternate means to accommodate a student's disability.
3. Modification of academic requirements.
  - a. A student with a documented disability may request a modification of certain generally applicable academic requirements by submitting a request to the Accommodations Coordinator as early as possible once the need is identified. The student must provide current documentation related to the disability and a statement specifically describing the requested modification and the basis for the request.
  - b. The Accommodations Coordinator will verify that the disability is documented by current information that is consistent with the university requirements for documentation of a disability.
  - c. The Accommodations Coordinator will forward the complete set of student documents to the appropriate academic decision maker within seven (7) business days of receiving the complete request from the student. The time frame may be extended if the Accommodations Coordinator finds just cause.

- d. The appropriate academic decision maker will perform an individualized assessment of the student's request to consider:
  - i. The nature of the student's disability and the relationship to the requested modification.
  - ii. Whether the requested modification will provide the student with an equal educational opportunity; and
  - iii. Whether the requested modification would alter the essential requirements or standards, or would change the fundamental nature of the program.
- e. The academic decision maker will provide written notice of a decision to the student within ten (10) business days of receiving the request. The deadline may be extended for just cause. If the request is denied, the notice will include the reasons for the decision.
- f. A student who disagrees with a decision on the modification of academic requirements may appeal in writing to the Associate Provost for Academic Excellence within ten (10) business days of the decision. The appeal should include:
  - i. The original request and all supporting documentation,
  - ii. A copy of the notice of the decision issued by the academic decision maker,
  - iii. A statement of the basis for disagreement with the decision which must be made on grounds other than general dissatisfaction with the decision.
- g. The Associate Provost for Academic Excellence will consider:
  - i. Whether the proper criteria and facts were considered by the academic decision maker or whether improper or extraneous facts or criteria were considered that substantially affected the decision maker to the detriment of the student.
  - ii. Whether any procedural irregularities substantially affected the outcome of the decision to the detriment of the student.
  - iii. Given the proper facts, criteria and procedure, was the decision one which a person in the position of the academic decision maker might reasonably have made.
- h. The Associate Provost for Academic Excellence will issue a decision and notify the student within ten (10) business days of receiving the request.

- i. The process for appeal of a decision for modification of academic requirements will supplant all other appeal procedures provided in this policy or any other grievance procedure related to request for accommodations.

**Dispute Resolution.**

1. A student requesting an accommodation and/or use of auxiliary aids or services may seek dispute resolution in accordance with the procedures below if the student either:
  - a. disagrees with a decision of the Accommodations Coordinator, or;
  - b. is dissatisfied with the final accommodation,
2. Informal Resolution. Within seven (7) business days of receiving notice from the Accommodations Coordinator, or of any perceived failure to provide approved accommodation, a student may seek informal dispute resolution through the Accommodations Coordinator. If the Accommodations Coordinator cannot reach agreement with the student to resolve the concerns informally, the Accommodations Coordinator will take the steps described below to submit the matter for further review by the Associate Provost for Student Success.
3. Formal Resolution. The Associate Provost for Student Success will review all written materials submitted by the Accommodations Coordinator and will interview, as necessary under the circumstances, the student, the Accommodations Coordinator, any faculty member involved and any other person deemed relevant to the issue. The Associate Provost for Student Success will issue a decision within seven (7) business days of receiving notice from the Accommodations Coordinator and will distribute notice of the decision to the affected parties. The decision of the Associate Provost for Student Success will be final.

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