

Wallace State Community College

Americans with Disabilities Accommodations Office

Policies and Procedures for Students

It is the official policy of Wallace State Community College that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, disability, gender, religion, creed, national origin, or age be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program, activity, or employment.

American's With Disabilities Accommodations

Wallace State Community College is committed to making its academic programs and

services accessible to qualified students who have disabilities. It is a goal of Wallace State to provide students who have disabilities equal opportunities to develop and demonstrate their academic skills, while maintaining the academic integrity of the College programs. Consistent with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008, it is the policy of Wallace State College that no qualified person with a disability shall be subjected to discrimination because of that disability under any program or activity conducted or sponsored by the College.

The Admissions Office handles all applications for admission. Admission standards are described in the College catalog and must be met by all students, regardless of disability. The College offers orientation sessions for entering students. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the Director of Special Populations before or during new student orientation (Lion's Pride). Students who need accommodations during Lions' Pride should contact the Director of Special Populations upon receiving materials concerning the new student orientation. The Director of Special Populations can be reached at 256-352-8052.

Colleges are not required to alter essential academic requirements. Requirements, which can be demonstrated as essential to a course or program of study or to any directly related licensing requirement, are not regarded as discriminatory. Specifically, the law says that a college "shall make such modifications to its academic requirements as are necessary to ensure that such requirements do not discriminate or have the effect of discriminating, on the basis of handicap, against a qualified handicapped applicant or student... Modifications may include changes in the length of time permitted for the completion of degree requirements, substitution of specific courses required for the completion of degree requirements, and adaptation of the manner in which specific courses are conducted." 34 CFR Section 1-04.44 (a).

When to self-identify as a student with a disability is a decision for the student. However, prospective students are encouraged to contact the Director of Special Populations for information regarding services and facilities and to discuss questions pertinent to admission. If accommodations are needed for **placement testing**, all documentation must be on file in the ADA Office.

The Director of Special Populations office serves as the central contact point for students with disabilities. The goal of the ADA Office is to provide a physically and educationally accessible College environment that ensures an individual is viewed on the basis of ability, not disability. The Director of Special Populations works individually with students to determine appropriate and reasonable academic accommodations, and to have students' academic performance evaluated without the limiting effects of a disability.

A Disability as Defined by the ADA

An individual who:

- a) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activity (caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, talking, seeing, hearing, and learning).
- b) has a record of such an impairment; or
- c) is regarded as having such an impairment.

ESTABLISHING SERVICES WITH THE ADA OFFICE

Your first step in requesting services will be to arrange an appointment with the Director of Special Populations. It is advisable to make an initial appointment before the semester begins. The Director of Special Populations' telephone number is (256) 352-8052. If accommodations are needed to take the placement test, the student must schedule the appointment at least one week prior to the date of the placement test. Documentation should be brought to this interview if it has not already been received.

What to bring to your first initial appointment? Students who are seeking accommodations and services on the basis of a disability are required to submit documentation to verify their eligibility for services. Typically, a licensed psychologist, physician, or other appropriate professional provides the evaluation, diagnosis, and recommended accommodations in a detailed report. The Director of Special Populations is responsible for determining the nature of an individual's disability. The Director of Special Populations maintains the right to reject documentation that does not verify a student's disability or delineate reasonable accommodations.

Documentation accepted by the Director of Special Populations is valid as long as a student is continuously enrolled at the College. However, if there is a break in the student's enrollment, he/she may need to present updated documentation to receive services. Disability-related information received to support requests for accommodations are treated as confidential and shared only on a need-to-know-basis. The information may not be released to an outside third party without the written consent of the individual.

Accommodations Process

Adherence to the following procedures ensures the best possible service the institution can provide.

The Director of Special Populations meets individually with a student to discuss accommodations and assist the student in completing required forms. The Director determines reasonable academic accommodations for a student, taking into consideration recommendations from the physician, psychologist or other professional who diagnosed the student's disability. Accommodations previously used in educational settings with the student will be taken into consideration. Although some students may have similar diagnoses, each student is treated as an individual because accommodations must be tailored to individual needs.

The Director of Special Populations recommends reasonable accommodations by preparing a letter addressed to the instructor of each class for which the student requests accommodations.

An instructor is not obliged to provide accommodations to a student with a disability until he/she receives the Director of Special Populations' accommodation letter from the student. In addition, it is the student's responsibility to discuss scheduling and details of the requested accommodations with his/her instructor(s). If a student delivers an accommodation letter to an instructor within a few days of an assignment or exam, the instructor may not be able to provide the optimal accommodation requested.

Responsibility of the Student

Receiving academic accommodations at Wallace State is a **5-step procedure**:

- (1) Students must complete an accommodation request form from the ADA Office each semester.
- (2) After completing request form, students obtain accommodation letters from the Director of Special Populations.
- (3) Students may hand-deliver the letter or have it sent via WSCC intra-mail and/or email to each instructor.
- (4) Student must make the first initial contact with the instructor. The student and the instructor discuss the students' accommodations for the class. Any accommodations needed for testing needs to be decided at that point. (a) It is the students' responsibility to start the process for individualized proctored exams. A copy of the procedure is in the handbook. Students must complete request form, have their instructor complete his/her section of request form and, then, submit the form to the ADA Office.
- (5) Students report any concerns about accommodations to the Director of Special Populations as soon as possible.

Students with disabilities must maintain the same responsibility for their education as students who do not have disabilities. This includes maintaining the same academic levels, maintaining appropriate behavior and giving timely notification of any special needs. As a student with a disability, learn not to be ashamed or embarrassed about having a disability. Asking for assistance is not a sign of weakness or dependence, and use accommodations available to you.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Questions and concerns regarding accommodations and services for students who have a

disability should be directed initially to the Director of Special Populations.

At the beginning of each semester, students should give a copy of the accommodation letter to the instructor of each class where accommodations need to be made. Students and instructors will discuss the requested accommodations. If an agreement cannot be reached, the student should consult with the Division Chair. If an agreement is still not obtained, the student should contact the ADA Office to begin the steps in the conflict resolution.

Steps in Conflict Resolution

1. The Director of Special Populations meets with the Department Chair. If an agreement is not reached with the student, he or she may submit an appeal, in writing, to the Dean of Students within three (3) working days of the decision of the Department Chair.
2. The Dean of Students will review the student's information, may conduct further investigation as needed, and will issue a written decision to the student within five (5) working days of receipt of the appeal. If the student disagrees with the decision, the student may submit an appeal, in writing to the President.

The College will make every reasonable effort to address a student's concerns promptly to minimize the effect on course participation.

During the conflict resolution process, the student is entitled to receive all accommodations recommended by the Director of Special Populations. It is important that concerns are addressed promptly so that the student's participation in courses is not affected.

Guidelines for Proctored Exams

Proctored exams are a service for students and faculty. A proctored exam is only recommended when a) the student needs to have a reader, writer, or special equipment; and/or b) the instructor cannot proctor the exam. *It is always preferable for the instructor to provide exam accommodations so the student with a disability has the same opportunity to clarify information as others in the class. Proctored exams may or may not coincide with class exams, depending on the availability of proctors.*

Student Responsibilities

7 Days in Advance

1. Obtain a "Request for Individualized Testing" form from the ADA Office.
2. Complete the student information section and have the instructor complete his/her section.
3. Bring form back to ADA Office (form must be submitted at least 7 days in advance of exam).
4. Check with the ADA Office to confirm arrangements.

Exam Day

1. Arrive at arranged location on time. Being late will result in loss of arrangements.

2. Be prepared. The proctor cannot answer questions. Exams are timed according to the student's Accommodation Memo.

Problems

1. A physician's note or other acceptable documentation is required to verify absence from a proctored exam. The student is expected to call in advance of an absence, so the proctor can be cancelled.
2. Exams which are not taken as scheduled will be returned to the instructor who will determine if rescheduling is appropriate. To reschedule the exam, a new "Request for Individualized Testing" must be completed with sufficient notice.

Instructor Responsibilities

1. Upon request, arrange to meet with student to discuss exam accommodations and complete the "Request for Individualized Testing" if you cannot provide the accommodations.
2. Arrange exam accommodations in a confidential manner.
3. Deliver exam or send password for exam to be proctored to the ADA Office *at least 24 hours* in advance of the exam. Alternate format test (such as Braille) must be submitted at least 48 hours.
4. Call the office if you have any questions 256-352-8052.

At the conclusion of the proctored exam, students will be asked to sign a form acknowledging that they received their ADA accommodations and the test may be submitted for grading.

Accommodations and Services

The Director of Special Populations may recommend the following academic accommodations, based upon appropriate documentation and individual class requirements.

Services of a personal nature are not considered academic accommodations. Examples of personal services include transportation and attendant care.

Priority Registration– All students registered with the ADA Office are eligible for priority registration. Students are registered the day before open registration begins for the College.

Testing Accommodations– Testing accommodations may include extended time, reduced-distraction testing situation, orally administered tests, and /or alternate test formats. Tests are administered in each department, if possible. Students should discuss testing accommodations with their instructors at the beginning of each semester.

Tape Recording, Note Taking Assistance, Readers, and Scribes– Students may tape record class lectures and/or request peer note takers. The ADA Office can provide tape recorders and carbonless paper for note takers. Students may request readers and/or books in electronic format through the ADA Office. Scribes for students requiring such assistance may also be provided.

Sign Language Interpreting– Deaf and hearing impaired students may be provided with state licensed/permitted interpreters.

Academic Classroom Aids– Students may use calculators, dictionaries, word processors, spell checkers, and/or grammar checkers for in-class and out-of-class work.

Alternative Formats for Assignments– Assignments may be submitted in formats other than those stated in course syllabi (i.e., on cassette taped rather than written or typed rather than hand written).

Other Services That Are Available

- Tutoring services may be available through the WSCC Tutorial Lab
- Academic advising
- Referrals to Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services

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DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES

HEALTH CONDITION, MOBILITY, HEARING, SPEECH, OR VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

A letter or report from treating physician, orthopedic specialist, audiologist, speech pathologist, or ophthalmologist (as appropriate), including:

1. Clearly stated diagnosis
2. Defined levels of functioning and any limitations
3. Current treatment and medication
4. Current letter/report (within 1 year) dated and signed
5. Suggest accommodations/modifications to equalize this student's educational opportunities at the post-secondary level

PSYCHOLOGICAL DISORDER

A letter or report from a mental health professional (psychologist, neuropsychologist, licensed professional counselor) including:

1. Clearly stated diagnosis (DSM-V criteria)
2. Defined levels of functioning and any limitations
3. Supporting documentation (test data, history, observations, etc.)
4. Current treatment and medication
5. Current letter/report (within 1 year), dated and signed
6. Suggest recommendations for academic accommodations and the rationale for such accommodations

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

A comprehensive evaluation report by a rehabilitation counselor, speech-language pathologist, orthopedic specialist, and/or neuropsychologist (or other specialist as appropriate), including:

1. Assessment of cognitive abilities, including processing speed and memory
2. Analysis of educational achievement skills and limitations (reading comprehension, written language, spelling, and mathematical abilities)
3. Defined levels of functioning and limitations in all affected areas (communication, vision, hearing, mobility, psychological, seizures, etc.)
4. Current treatment and medication
5. Current letter/report (post-rehabilitation and within 1 year), dated and signed
6. Suggest recommendations for academic accommodations and the rationale for such accommodations.

LEARNING DISABILITIES

A comprehensive evaluation report from a clinical psychologist, psychiatrist, neuropsychologist, school psychologist, learning disability specialist, or diagnostician, including:

1. Clear statement of presenting problem; diagnostic interview
2. Educational history documenting the impact of the learning disability
3. Alternative explanations and diagnoses are ruled out
4. Relevant test data with standard scores are provided to support conclusion, including at least:
 - a. WAIS-IV(b), WIAT-III
 - b. Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery-III including Written Language
 - c. Woodcock-Johnson Cognitive Processing Battery to substantiate any processing problems
4. Clearly stated diagnosis of a learning disability based upon DSM-V criteria (High School IEP, 504 Plan, and /or letter from physician or other professional **will not be sufficient to document a learning disability.**)

Signature _____ Date: _____

Student # _____

DOB: _____

Please return the report or address questions regarding documentation to:

Lisa J. Smith
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