

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Becoming a student at Southwestern College means becoming a member of an academic community of faculty, staff, administrators, and other students. The heart of the community is the student, who has both the right and responsibility to take a primary role in his/her education. At Southwestern College, the student learns that a good education goes beyond what is taught in lectures and textbooks. Students are encouraged to actively participate in the cultural and social opportunities afforded by the academic community.

STUDENT RIGHT-TO-KNOW

In compliance with the Student Right-to-Know (SRTK) and Campus Security Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-542) and as a service to its community, the Southwestern Community College District makes available its completion and transfer rates to all current and prospective students.

Beginning in fall 2006 a cohort of all college students who were certificate-, degree-, and transfer-seeking first time, full-time students were tracked over a three-year period. The completion and transfer rates are based on information submitted by each college to the U.S. Department of Education. Based on the cohort defined above, 19.63 percent of the SWC cohort attained a certificate or degree or became transfer-prepared from fall 2006 to spring 2009. In addition, 12.48 percent transferred to another postsecondary institution (University of California, California State University, or other California community college) during the same three-year period.

Note: The above rates do not represent the success rates of the entire student population at Southwestern College (SWC), nor do they account for student outcomes occurring after this three-year tracking period. Additionally, the rates do not describe other important features about the College and its students. SWC contributes significantly to the lives of thousands of students in assisting them to meet their educational goals.

More information concerning SRTK is available from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Academic Affairs Offices. Additional information can also be found at the following websites: <http://www.cccco.edu/divisions/tris/mis/srtk.htm> and <http://srtk.cccco.edu/091/99index.htm>.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

The Southwestern Community College District is committed to providing support programs and services for students with verified disabilities in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (1) and the Americans with Disabilities

Act of 1990. The fundamental principles of non-discrimination and accommodation in academic programs provide that (Policy No. 5140):

- No student with a qualified disability shall, on the basis of the disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any post-secondary education activity or program; ([84.43(a)] Section 504, Fed. Rehab. Act, 1973); and
- Reasonable accommodations or adjustments to academic activities shall be made as are necessary to ensure that such requirements do not discriminate or have the effect of discrimination on the basis of the disability; and
- The District shall maintain an educational environment where students with disabilities have equal access to instruction without compromising the essential components of the course, educational program or degree.

To ensure that students with disabilities receive appropriate accommodation in their instructional activities, the Southwestern Community College District adopted procedures to review any dispute regarding academic accommodations. Primary responsibility for implementation of the Academic Accommodation Review Procedures is assigned to the 504 Compliance Officer/Dean of Student Services, appointed annually by the Superintendent/President.

In compliance with state and federal laws and in order to create an educational environment where students with disabilities have equal access to instruction without compromising any course, educational program or degree, the procedures outlined below have been developed.

ACADEMIC ADJUSTMENT PROCEDURES

1. The student bears the responsibility of presenting Disability Support Services (DSS) with professional disability verification that describes specific educational limitations before an academic accommodation will be authorized.
2. If the student does not have appropriate disability verification, DSS will direct the student to the appropriate professional who can determine disability, or will initiate an assessment to determine and document a disability within the scope of assessment services provided by DSS and deemed necessary by a DSS professional.
3. The DSS professional, who meets the standards established by state regulations, will assess and document the extent and the effects of the current disability. Depending on the severity and educationally related functional limitations of the assessed disability, the DSS professional shall authorize accommodations immediately upon request of the student.
4. The student will submit to his/her instructors the authorized accommodations forms completed by the DSS professional.

INFORMAL RESOLUTION

- 4a. The College is charged with determining and providing what it believes to be the appropriate academic accommodation for a student. A student who disagrees with the academic accommodation(s) prescribed by DSS should discuss his/her concern with the DSS professional recommending the accommodation. If the student's concern continues to be unresolved, the student should discuss his/her concern with the DSS Director. If the concern continues to be unresolved, the next step is to contact the 504 Compliance Officer/Dean of Student Services as outlined in number 5 below. Student must then file an Academic Accommodation

appeal with 504 Compliance Officer prior to the posting of the final grade.

- 4b. If an instructor has questions about an accommodation requested by a student with a verified disability, the instructor should promptly contact the DSS professional who authorized the accommodation(s). Informal meetings and discussion among the instructor, department chair or designee, the student, the appropriate members of DSS, and/or other appropriate members of the college community are essential at the outset, and will be completed within five (5) instructional days following the student's request for the accommodation.
5. If no informal resolution can be found within five (5) instructional days and the accommodation is not allowed, the DSS professional, student, or the instructor will refer the matter to the 504 Compliance Officer/Dean of Student Services as soon as possible for review. The 504 Compliance Officer/Dean of Student Services will conduct interviews with all involved parties, and will make a decision regarding the accommodation within seven (7) instructional days of having received the matter.
6. Following notification by the 504 Compliance Officer/Dean of Student Services, if either the instructor or the student disagrees with the decision, they will notify the 504 Compliance Officer/Dean of Student Services in writing within three (3) instructional days. Written notice must be hand-delivered or postmarked by the three (3) day deadline. The 504 Compliance Officer/Dean of Student Services will then proceed with the Academic Accommodation Hearing process.
7. The accommodation originally authorized by DSS will be allowed for a maximum of four (4) instructional weeks during which time a resolution will be achieved. If the decision of the Committee is that the accommodation is not reasonable, the accommodation will either be modified or rescinded depending upon the Academic Accommodation Hearing Committee's recommendations.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION HEARING PROCESS

Students or instructors wishing to appeal a decision made by the 504 Compliance Officer/Dean of Student Services at the conclusion of the informal resolution process will file a formal written request for a hearing with the College's 504 Compliance Officer/Dean of Student Services. The 504 Compliance Officer/Dean of Student Services is located on campus, in the Cesar Chavez Building, Room S109, 619-482-6369.

1. The 504 Compliance Officer/Dean of Student Services is responsible for informing the complainant of his/her rights, responsibilities, and procedures.
2. The accommodation originally authorized by DSS will be allowed for a maximum of four (4) instructional weeks during which time a resolution will be achieved.
3. An Academic Accommodation Hearing Committee will be scheduled by the 504 Compliance Officer/Dean of Student Services within five (5) instructional days to review the complaint. The hearing will be convened within ten (10) instructional days. The committee will be composed of the following voting members:
 - a. DSS Director or his/her designee
 - b. ADA Compliance Officer or his/her designee
 - c. Appropriate Department Chairperson
 - d. Academic Senate President or his/her designee
 - e. 504 Compliance Officer
4. The 504 Compliance Officer/Dean of Student Services shall serve as Chairperson and will vote only in case of a tie and will be responsible for appointing a secretary or providing a tape recording of the hearing.
5. All five (5) voting members, including the chair, shall constitute a quorum by which the hearing may proceed.
6. Both parties have the right to present witnesses, testimony, and evidence, but only as related to the case.
7. Both parties have the right to be accompanied by an advocate in the formal appeal hearing.
8. The hearing shall be closed to the public.
9. The Committee shall review both the written and oral testimony presented and shall render a written decision within three (3) instructional days following the conclusion of the

hearing. Copies of the findings shall be sent to the student, instructor, committee membership, and other cognizant administrative officers. In addition, a copy of the Committee's findings shall be sent to the College Superintendent/President.

10. The 504 Compliance Officer/Dean of Student Services shall inform the complainant of the Committee's action by certified mail within three (3) instructional days of the receipt of the Committee's findings.
11. Upon notification of the Committee's findings, either party may appeal the Committee's decision to the College Superintendent/President. Any appeal to the Superintendent/President must be made in writing, and shall be either hand delivered or postmarked within three (3) instructional days following notification of the Committee's findings.
12. The Superintendent/President will review the decision of the Committee and will either accept or modify the decision.
13. The Superintendent/President shall inform the complainant and the Committee of his/her final action by certified mail within fifteen (15) instructional days of the receipt of the appeal request.
14. The Superintendent/President's decision shall be the final decision rendered and shall be implemented within five (5) instructional days.
15. The confidential tape recording of the proceedings shall be kept in a confidential file by the 504 Compliance Officer/Dean of Student Services and a copy shall be available to the parties. All documents shall be filed separately from the personnel file of Southwestern College employees.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The time limits specified herein shall be considered under normal circumstances and every effort shall be made to expedite the process. Time limits may be extended only by mutual consent, in writing.
2. The complainant may withdraw the appeal at any time. However, the same appeal shall not be filed again by the same complainant.
3. Either party may consult with the 504 Compliance Officer/Dean of Student Services regarding any of these procedures.

OTHER COMPLAINTS

Students wishing to file complaints or grievances based upon discrimination on the basis of physical or mental disability should contact the 504 Compliance Officer/Dean of Student Services located on campus, in the Cesar E. Chavez Building, Room S109, 619-482-6369.

SERVICE ANIMALS AT SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE FACILITIES

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, people with disabilities may bring their service animals into all Southwestern Community College District facilities.

A service animal is defined as “any animal that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability.” Under the ADA, a service animal is not considered a pet. Service animals must be permitted to accompany a person with a disability everywhere on campus or off campus as the activity (e.g., internship, field work, etc.) pertains to the curriculum. If there are any questions as to whether an animal qualifies as a service animal, a determination will be made by the Section 504 Compliance Officer/Dean of Student Services and/or DSS Director (542 U.S. Code Sections 12101, Policy No. 5143).

STUDENT RIGHTS POLICY

If admitted to Southwestern Community College District in accordance with District admission policies (Education Code Section 76000), a student can exercise the following rights pursuant to Title 5, Sections 55521, 55530, 55534, 58106:

- Enrollment in any course for which the student can meet necessary and valid prerequisites and corequisites that have been established pursuant to Title 5, Section 58106.
- Access to clear and consistent information describing student rights and responsibilities available in college publications and documents such as catalog, schedule, and student educational plan.
- Participation in an efficient matriculation process that encourages student access to college programs.
- Maintaining enrollment status in a course after the beginning of the semester. The student may withdraw voluntarily or can be dropped from the course against his/her will if he/she fails to comply with District attendance policy or exhibits disruptive behavior as identified in District policy. A student who does not meet the mandatory prerequisite or corequisite may be dropped from a course. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the College to ensure that students are informed about mandatory prerequisites and corequisites and that prerequisites and corequisites are enforced in a timely and efficient manner. (Title 5, Section 55758)

A student may petition for waiver or appeal if he feels that assessment, orientation, counseling, prerequisites, corequisites, or any other matriculation procedures are being applied in a discriminatory manner. Where a student believes an injustice is being done, the student may seek redress through established grievance policy and procedure. See this catalog under SSSP Appeals Petition, page 14.

STANDARDS OF STUDENT CONDUCT

The California State Education Code requires that each community college student be furnished with a copy of the policy regarding student conduct and discipline adopted by the governing board of the community college district.

Disciplinary action may be imposed upon a student by an instructor, administrator, or staff for violation of specified college policy and state regulations. Students are subject to charges of misconduct for any of the following acts on college-owned or controlled property or at a college-sponsored activity.

UNIVERSAL DESIGN

In order to provide an accessible education that develops the human potential of all its students, Southwestern College shall comply with the Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and conform to the principles of Universal Design in Education (UDE) as defined by the Center for Universal Design at North Carolina State University: “the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.” Promoting the values of diversity and inclusion, UDE recognizes the full spectrum of user abilities and thus benefits all members of the Southwestern College community (Policy No. 3415).

This policy applies to, but is not limited to, the following:

- Instruction
- Student Services
- Facilities
- Institutional Technology
- Public Information
- Other campus goods, services, and environments