



Disability Support Services
Southwestern College
DSS Faculty Handbook



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Table of Contents

Introduction to Disability Support Services (DSS).....	3
ADA and Sections 504 and 508.....	3
Access and Accommodations	4
The DSS Application and Eligibility Process for Students:	5
Student Resources Which Directly Impact Faculty	6
Test Proctoring.....	6
To Provide Test Accommodations.....	7
Note-taker Service.....	8
Reader Service	9
Instructor Liaison	9
Adapted Computer Technology	9
Specialized Equipment.....	10
High Tech Center	10
Specialized Coursework.....	11
Adapted Exercise Science: Exercise Science Limited.....	11
Information on Specific Disability Populations.....	12
Students with Visible Disabilities.....	12
Mobility Impairments	12
Visual Impairments	12
Medical Disabilities	13
Students with Communication Disabilities.....	13
Deaf and Hard of Hearing	13
Speech and Language Disorders	14
Students with Invisible Disabilities	14
Learning Disabilities	14
Psychological / Psychiatric Disabilities	15
Acquired Brain Injury	16
Intellectual Disability.....	16
Questions and Answers for Faculty	18
Legal Issues / Faculty Responsibilities.....	18
Instructional Strategies.....	19
Academic Accommodations	22
Test Proctoring.....	23
DSS Forms	26
Sample Authorized Academic Accommodations	26
Sample Test Accommodation Request Form	27
Universal Design: Educational Principles and Applications	28
Instructional Methodologies	29
Southwestern College DSS Faculty and Staff	30

Introduction to Disability Support Services (DSS)

ADA and Sections 504 and 508

Historically, students with disabilities in higher education received the support of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This legislation established services and programs for students with disabilities throughout the 1970's and 1980's. Section 504 and Section 508 primarily place the responsibility of access to higher education on federally funded public institutions.

In July of 1990, the disability movement in the United States gained momentum with the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA was a sweeping civil rights legislation that legally mandated colleges and universities to provide equal access for students with disabilities. The ADA covers all aspects of disability in society including employment, education, telecommunications, private sector services, public sector services, transportation and more.

The ADA requires each of us to be part of the solution, and to include persons with disabilities in all aspects of college life. Current statistics indicate that approximately 10 percent of the population has a disability that impacts daily life. Here at Southwestern College, Disability Support Services (DSS) serves about 1,200 students or approximately five percent of the SWC student population. If you notice a student using an assistive device and/or suspect that a student's difficulties in class stem from a disability, please contact DSS for ideas for student support. DSS encourages faculty members to refer students to DSS or to ask students whether or not they are utilizing services. The ADA emphasizes the direct involvement of the student with a disability in the educational process and in related decision making. An important aspect of a student's success is empowering them with the ability to make their own decisions.

Access and Accommodations

Disability Support Services is the office of primary responsibility designated by the SWC District to provide access and accommodations for eligible students as mandated under the ADA and Sections 504 and 508 of The Federal Rehabilitation Act. In 1976, California Assembly Bill-77 (Lanterman) created community college-level Disability Support Programs and Services by providing specialized funding for support services and instruction for students with disabilities. Currently, Southwestern College's DSS office serves over 1,200 students with disabilities and is funded from a variety of sources including state categorical funds, VTEA, the college district, and the state Department of Rehabilitation.

The DSS department offers students a variety of specialized support services and assistive equipment. These services are intended to provide access for college students with disabilities to all college programs and activities in a timely manner.

Authorized accommodations may not alter the fundamental nature of the course/program or impose an undue financial burden on the institution. The official "Course Outline of Record" represents elements fundamental to the nature of the course/program (per Ralph Black, Legal Counsel, CCCCCO, September 1995, March 1997).

Accommodations authorized by DSS may include:

- disability counseling
- registration assistance
- learning disability assessment
- adapted physical education
- specialized coursework
- high tech center
- note-taking assistance
- readers
- test proctoring
- sign language interpreting/real-time captioning
- campus liaison
- community resource liaison

The above support system enables students to participate in the regular activities and classes offered by the college.

The DSS Application and Eligibility Process for Students:

1. Students first complete a DSS application in the Disability Support Services Office located in the Student Services Center. Applications are also available online at the [DSS Website](#)
2. It is the responsibility of each student seeking services and accommodations to provide a comprehensive evaluation verifying the disability and the resulting educational limitations. DSS can help students with the process of obtaining needed disability verification.
3. If the student is requesting a learning disability assessment to verify a suspected learning disability, the student must attend an LD Orientation appointment. After the orientation appointment, and upon recommendation of the LD Specialist, individual testing appointments are scheduled.
4. Once the student supplies disability verification, or has a learning disability verified through LD testing, an appointment is made with a DSS Specialist.
5. The DSS Specialist and the student will establish services and accommodations based on the educational limitations presented by the student's disability. These services and accommodations are documented on the Authorized Academic Accommodations form.

For Example:

- The educational limitation of a deaf student may require the use of a sign language interpreter in the classroom.
- The educational limitation of a student with a learning disability may require the student to have additional time and/or use of a reader when taking tests.
- The educational limitation of a student with poor motor skills may require the use of a note-taker in class.

Faculty members who have more specific questions regarding eligibility and accommodations are encouraged to contact a DSS faculty member who will be able to assist you.

Student Resources Which Directly Impact Faculty

The role of DSS faculty is to determine student eligibility for an accommodation based on the educational limitation of the disability. As an instructional faculty member, you will become directly involved in the process of providing accommodations for students. To make the accommodation a successful one, collaboration among the instructional faculty member, the student, and the DSS faculty member is required. DSS encourages instructional faculty to provide input regarding the academic conditions that might affect the implementation of an accommodation.

The following are some of the student resources that require faculty involvement in order to be successful:

Test Proctoring

Many students, due to the functional limitations of their disability, require test-taking accommodations. Specific test accommodations depend upon the student's specific disability and the disability's impact on the student's ability to demonstrate their knowledge on a specific type of test.

Common test accommodations include:

- ✓ additional time
- ✓ distraction-free environment
- ✓ taking the test on a computer
- ✓ use of a scribe
- ✓ use of a reader
- ✓ using an alternate format

DSS manages a **Test Proctoring Center in Room 420A** to assist faculty in providing test accommodations for eligible students. Proctored tests are scheduled by the DSS Test Proctoring Coordinator and are scheduled as close to the time as the class exam as possible. The exams are administered by DSS hourly test proctors in the small tutorial rooms in the ASC or at the Higher Education Center (HEC) sites for classes at the HECs. DSS keeps all tests in a locked file cabinet, and all DSS test proctors are trained by DSS faculty to ensure a secure and confidential testing situation. DSS does not employ students as test proctors. During a test, the student must leave all bags, supplies, and unauthorized materials with the proctor. Any additional materials that

the student may use during the test must have been approved by the instructor.

When a student comes to you requesting a test accommodation, they must have already given you their Authorized Academic Accommodations form, which is completed by their DSS Specialist. The specific authorized test accommodations are indicated on this form. DSS suggests that students speak with their instructors about their disability, and provide the Authorized Academic Accommodations form, during the first two weeks of class. However, students are not required to do this. If a student is requesting test accommodations, and the student has not provided you with the Authorized Academic Accommodation form, you may contact DSS for more information.

To Provide Test Accommodations

1. **You may choose to provide the authorized test accommodations yourself.**

If you choose to administer a test to a student with a disability yourself, you must be able to provide each of the authorized accommodations; for example, extended time, distraction-free environment, reader, etc.

2. **You may choose to use the DSS Test Proctoring Center services.**

If you choose to use the DSS Test Proctoring Center, you and the student need to complete each of the following steps:

- I. The **student** must bring you the **DSS Test Accommodation Request Form (TARF)**. You write the class and test information on the TARF and give it back to the student.
- II. The **student** then brings the TARF to the DSS Test Proctoring Center, Room 420 A at the Chula Vista campus, or to the Student Services counter at the HECs, at least **4 days prior to the exam** to schedule the exam.
- III. When the exam is scheduled, a copy of the TARF form that shows the date and time of the scheduled exam will be emailed to you. Your copy can serve as a reminder to deliver the test to the DSS Test Proctoring Clerk. In addition, the student is given a copy of the TARF for their records.
- IV. The **instructor** sends the exam to the DSS Test Proctoring Center at least 24 hours prior to the exam. Please deliver your exam to DSS Test Proctoring either: 1) in person to Room 420A; 2) by email to CPullman@swccd.edu; or 3) by fax at 619-216-6642. For your convenience, a secure drop

box is located outside the door of the 420A office. **If you deliver the exam after hours, please deposit the exam in the DSS locked drop box outside of Room 420A.**

- V. After the student completes the exam, the DSS test proctor will return the exam to either yourself or the department office and obtain a signature verifying the return of the exam.

During peak testing times (i.e. finals), the DSS Office may lack the appropriate facilities and staff for administering large numbers of exams simultaneously. During these times, we may inquire if you are able to provide the test accommodation yourself if the accommodation is for extended time only, or we may ask your permission to schedule the exam for the first available time nearest to the time during which the test is being given to the entire class.

Please remember that the test proctoring service is designed to serve both students and instructors. Contact either the Test Proctoring Clerk in the Test Proctoring Center, or the DSS Office, with any questions regarding test-proctoring services.

Note-taker Service

A common concern for students is solving the problem of taking notes, especially students with poor motor functioning, hearing impairments, or learning disabilities. The DSS Office provides special NCR paper, which can be shared between the student and a volunteer note-taker. The most logical choice of a note-taker is a student who is also enrolled in the class who is known to be a good student with satisfactory penmanship and regular attendance.

As the instructor you are usually the most appropriate individual to assist the student with the selection of a note-taker. You may do this by asking for a volunteer in the class, or you may ask a specific student who is known to you as a good student to serve as a volunteer note-taker. Volunteer note-takers are eligible for a Certificate of Service from the DSS office. Please send interested students to the DSS office for their certificates. DSS may provide aides to sit in class and take notes if there are special circumstances, such as when there are frequent in-class writing assignments. The student bears the responsibility of speaking up promptly if the note-taker is unsatisfactory.

In addition you may offer the student any printed notes or materials you may have which can assist them visually. Your creativity in meeting the

student's need can have very positive benefits! Please contact the DSS department if you have any questions regarding the provision of a note-taker.

Reader Service

Many students with disabilities are eligible to receive assistance with reading their course textbooks and materials. The student needs to work out this accommodation with their DSS specialist. DSS can help the student obtain their textbook on CD through one of the following methods:

1. **Learning Ally** is a national clearinghouse of audio CDs, mp3s and other materials for eligible students with a wide variety of disabilities (not just blind). DSS can assist students in using Learning Ally services.
2. **Texts on CD services** are provided by DSS for students who have difficulty with visual processing and cannot receive the book through Learning Ally. DSS will check other sources for the text on CD, or can assist the student in creating their own taped version of the text through hardware and software available in the High Tech Center (HTC).

Instructor Liaison

On occasion a DSS faculty member will contact you to discuss a matter related to a student. Generally this occurs because the student is seeking advocacy regarding the nature of the disability or eligibility for an accommodation. The DSS department encourages students to learn self-advocacy skills and to speak directly with their instructors regarding their disabilities. However new students sometimes need assistance with this process and the DSS faculty member becomes involved as the facilitator of communication.

Adapted Computer Technology

Access to computers for persons with disabilities now receives equal legal consideration as access to facilities. Students with disabilities need to have the same access to computers and technology (i.e., the Web, classroom software) as their non-disabled peers. With the rapid progress being made in specialized software and hardware, it is now possible for persons with even the most severe disabilities to use computers.

The Southwestern College DSS High Tech Center (HTC) staff is able to make assistive technologies available to students throughout the entire college. For example, the HTC staff can provide software that allows for screen enlargement, screen reading, voice activation, and adaptable keyboard input. If you have classroom or laboratory instruction that incorporates computers, please contact the DSS High Tech Center staff when working with a student who has a disability. The HTC faculty will collaborate with you to provide a hands-on computer experience for the student that will enable the student to complete the course requirement as independently as possible.

Specialized Equipment

A variety of specialized equipment is available through DSS for individual loans such as assistive listening devices, Alpha Pro word processors, and tape recorders. Additionally, students who are deaf or hard of hearing have access to TTY telephones in the DSS office and in other locations on campus (Admissions, Counseling, Human Resources, Health Office, Campus Police, Higher Education Center, and San Ysidro Center).

High Tech Center

Although assistive technology is increasingly available in all campus labs, there is a laboratory on campus that is more directly tailored to training in assistive technology. The High Tech Center, located in Room 421, is open to students who qualify for services through DSS. The High Tech Center provides instruction in adaptive hardware and software, and houses numerous adaptive instructional software programs for student use. In addition, students may enroll in the High Tech Center lab in order to practice and become efficient users of adaptive technology, and also to receive assistance with college assignments that require a use of a computer.

Examples of assistive technology available in the High Tech Center include; screen readers, screen magnification software, alternative input devices, spell checkers, speech synthesizers, word predictors and more. Instructors are always welcome to use any of the assistive technology in the HTC, and you are invited to arrange a visit to the High Tech Center to learn more about this program. Please contact the High Tech Center at Ext. 5418 for an appointment.

Specialized Coursework

The DSS department offers a number of specialized courses every semester. These classes are taught by DSS faculty, and are listed in the Southwestern College schedule under Personal Development - Disability Support Services. A variety of classes are offered in basic skill development including basic academic skills, learning strategies, career exploration and work experience, and adapted computer application and skills. Coursework is designed to provide educational enrichment experience and/or to prepare students to enter general Southwestern College academic courses.

Adapted Exercise Science: Exercise Science Limited

The Exercise Science Limited (Adapted Physical Education) program provides exercise classes for individuals with disabilities. A variety of classes are available to those whose physical condition makes participation in traditional physical education classes inadvisable. Each student's exercise program is individualized and is based on his/her current skill level, fitness level, interests and personal physical objectives. Adapted exercise classes provide an excellent way for students to increase stamina, strength and improve flexibility. These courses are listed in the class schedule under Exercise Science – Limited.

At this point you have learned about many of the instructional support systems available to students with disabilities. There may be other occasions when you become involved in the process of providing other accommodations for students. Please contact the DSS department so that we can support you in your efforts to provide access.

Information on Specific Disability Populations

Students with Visible Disabilities

Mobility Impairments

This disability will usually be visible to some extent and the educational limitations will revolve around providing physical accommodations. Mobility impairments include students using wheelchairs, crutches, braces, walkers or canes to move about; however, not all students with mobility impairments require mobility aides.

Some students have disabilities in which the intensity of the impairment can vary. This means the accommodation(s) will be necessary on an occasional basis. It is important that you always allow this student to be as independent as possible in the educational environment. Talk directly to students and involve them in the process of implementing the accommodation(s). If talking to a student in a wheelchair for more than a few minutes sit down or kneel if convenient. Working directly with the student may be the best way to provide modifications to the work/classroom environment.

Common accommodations may include: reviewing emergency evacuation plans based on student needs, accessible locations for field trips, more time to arrive in class based on interruptions to travel routes, note-taker assistance, and scribes for test taking situations, and the use of a tape recorder in class.

Visual Impairments

Even though a visual impairment is considered a low incidence disability, most colleges have experienced an increase in this student population over the past few years. The totally blind student is a small minority, most are considered "legally blind". Even with correction, a legally blind person's best eye sees less at 20 feet than a normal eye sees at 200 feet.

Students who have been blind since birth have no visual memories. Mobility skills may vary depending on mobility training and talent. Some students may use Braille with confidence, but many do not use it. Many students with visual impairment can acquire information through listening. Some may be competent typists, but lack written communication and spelling skills due to their dependence on audio

information. Last minute assignments can present problems due to the time needed for preparation and reader scheduling needs.

Common accommodations for students with visual impairments include; seating arrangements near the front of the class, alternative formats for written materials (i.e. enlarged syllabus), expanded explanations of visual aids in the class, copies of your in-class notes and overheads, books on tape, note-takers, extended time on exams, and/or use of tape recorders.

Medical Disabilities

A wide variety of medical disabilities are covered under the ADA including any physiological disorder or condition affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory, cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genitourinary, skin and endocrine. Students with illnesses such as cancer, lupus, HIV/Aids, diabetes, arthritis, epilepsy, hypertension and asthma may have educational limitations that require accommodation. If a student in your class is experiencing a medical illness and is having difficulty meeting course requirements, refer this individual to the DSS department for assistance.

Common accommodations for students with medical disabilities include: extended time on exams, flexibility with regard to attendance policies, allowing students water in class in order to take medications, and/or breaks during class.

Students with Communication Disabilities

Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Hearing impairments, which includes all types of hearing defects, is the most prevalent chronic physical disability in the United States with over 13 million individuals being affected. Students who are deaf or hard of hearing will typically function very independently in your class with one or more of a few basic accommodations. Because there is a wide range of hearing loss from mild to profound, the educational limitations of a student with a hearing impairment will vary.

The more severe the loss, the more likely it is that the student will have the skills to use a sign language interpreter to facilitate classroom communication. The DSS department contracts with an interpreting service to provide sign language interpreters for classes as needed.

Lighting is very important when communicating with a hearing impaired person. Adequate lighting allows the student to see you or the sign language interpreter. Facing students when talking, speaking slowly and not over exaggerating your lip movements may be helpful.

Accommodations for students with hearing impairments may include: use of sign language interpreter, real-time captioning, seating near the front of the class, additional pauses during lectures, extended time on exams, patience during in class questions, and use of assistive listening devices. An instructor will also want to make arrangements with the student regarding in-class discussions.

Speech and Language Disorders

Some community college students present specific articulation and expressive or receptive language disorders. This is not to be confused with the issues of English as a second language (ESL) unless it is determined that the disorder exists in the primary language. The DSS department can assist with the facilitation of communication through technology, assessment and support for faculty.

Accommodations for students with speech and language disorders may include: extended time during exams, note taking assistance, allowing students to speak for themselves, use of tape recorder, and/or the use of an interpreter. The instructor may want to make arrangements with the student regarding in-class discussions.

Students with Invisible Disabilities

Invisible disabilities are among the fastest growing disability category at Southwestern College. Due to improved identification and instructional methods, advances in assistive technologies, rehabilitation strategies, enhanced medical interventions and more effective prescription medications, you will continue to find more of these students requesting accommodations in your classes. These disabilities will be more difficult to see but can present more barriers to education than some very visible disabilities. Your openness to recommended accommodations often plays a decisive role in the academic success of the student in your classroom.

Learning Disabilities

A learning disability is a permanent disorder, which affects the manner in which an individual processes, retains or expresses information.

Common areas of academic deficits, which result from a specific processing deficit, include reading comprehension, spelling, written expression, math computation, problem solving, organization, and social skills.

A student with a learning disability functions in the average to above average range of intelligence. There must be a measured severe discrepancy between their intellectual ability and an area of academic achievement that is the result of a specific, measured, and severe processing deficit. The educational limitations of a student with a learning disability will vary depending on the nature of the specific processing deficit and academic deficiency. All California Community Colleges apply uniform eligibility criteria in determining if a learning disability is present. Some students were identified as learning disabled in the K-12 system. However, a significant number of students are not identified until they reach the community college system. The DSS Learning Disabilities Specialists are available to you to discuss the accommodations requested by the student in your class. In addition, you may refer students to the DSS department who have difficulties in the areas listed above for an orientation and consultation with a Learning Disabilities Specialist.

Accommodations for students with learning disabilities may include: extended time during examinations, more in-class handouts, use of tape recorders, and note-taking assistance. Additional pauses during lecture, to allow students to process new information or answer questions, may be helpful to these students.

Psychological / Psychiatric Disabilities

A psychological disability is defined as a persistent psychological or psychiatric disorder, emotional or mental illness that adversely affects educational performance. As is the case for many students with invisible disabilities, these students are hesitant to disclose their disability. While

many are stable and show no symptoms, others may have fluctuations in behavior and performance.

The most common psychological disability among students is depression. It may appear as apathy, disinterest, inattention, irritability, or as fatigue. It has been the experience of the DSS staff that most students with psychological disabilities are not disruptive. Many students do experience side effects from the medications they are taking and may request modifications.

As with other students with disabilities, students with psychological/psychiatric disabilities may require accommodations and additional support to be successful in college. However, working successfully with this student may require you to examine your own understandings and beliefs about mental illness.

Accommodations for students with psychological/psychiatric disabilities may include: additional time on examinations, breaks during class or water in class, and tape recording lectures.

Acquired Brain Injury

On occasion you will encounter a student with an acquired brain injury (ABI) that is the result of an accident, stroke, tumor or other neurological trauma. The student may show no physical evidence of the impairment, but may demonstrate difficulty with short or long term memory, attention span, vocabulary, motor skills, social skills, impulse control, speech and/or other related characteristic. This student will often share the disability with you and this makes it easy for you to refer the student to the DSS department. If you suspect that a student may have acquired brain impairment you may contact the DSS department for advice.

Common accommodations for a student with a brain injury may include: extended time on exams, help in finding a note-taker, use of a tape recorder, and making sure student is aware of revision of important dates.

Intellectual Disability

This student exhibits below average intellectual functioning and potential for measurable achievement in instructional and employment settings (Section 56040 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.) This student must be provided access to the class/ program that best meets

His/her educational needs and promotes maximum independence and integration for the student.

Students are successful in classrooms that provide a learning environment that is self-paced and/or focuses on the student's areas of strengths. On occasion you may notice a student falling behind in your class because it takes longer for him/her to learn and process new information. Please contact the DSS department for referral or assistance in working with this student.

Accommodations for the learner with an intellectual disability may include: additional time on exams, taking additional time during long lectures, proceeding slowly through intense amounts of information, use of tape recorders, help with finding a note-taker, and making arrangements with the student regarding in-class discussions.

Questions and Answers for Faculty

Legal Issues / Faculty Responsibilities

Are student records confidential? Does an instructor have a right to know who in their class has a disability?

All records maintained by the DSS department pertaining to students with disabilities shall be protected from disclosure and shall be subject to all other requirements for handling of student records (Federal Family Educational Rights Privacy Act of 1974).

If a student requests accommodations that impact the delivery of instruction, the instructor has the right to know the educational limitation(s) and the appropriate accommodation. The nature and origin of the disability are not to be disclosed to the instructor without the student's permission.

What if I do not agree with an authorized accommodation for a student in my class?

Faculty members do not have the right to contest disabilities or the right to refuse to provide necessary accommodations. However faculty will be provided the opportunity to participate in decision-making regarding the implementation of the accommodation as it relates to classroom instruction. If you have any question regarding a student's disability or authorized accommodations, please contact that student's DSS Specialist.

What if I believe a student with a disability may not be successful in my class?

Faculty members are encouraged to contact the student's DSS Specialist as soon as possible to discuss concerns. If a student has met the prerequisites for the class, it is illegal to discuss dropping the class on the basis of the student's disability.

Can faculty members be held personally responsible for failure to accommodate students with disabilities?

Individual faculty members can be held accountable for blatant discriminatory actions that deny students their rights (Campbell. Dinsmore v. Charles C. Pugh and the Regents of the University of California 1989).

Instructional Strategies

Many students determined to be eligible by DSS receive the accommodation of additional time for tests. How is this accommodation determined and does the student receive unlimited time to complete the test?

The accommodation of additional time for tests is based on the educational limitation of the student (e.g. a student with poor motor skills needs additional time to complete the test independently, a student with a learning disability needs additional time to process information on the test, etc.). Generally speaking, the average extended time limit permitted in DSS is double time, but this implies that some students require more time while others finish under this allowed time. Additional research information on this area is available through the DSS department.

Some students in our classes have severe test anxiety or limited English proficiency; do students such as these qualify for services from DSS?

Usually not, however, if in doubt you may refer the student to DSS to determine if the student has a disability. DSS will provide testing accommodations only for eligible students with disabilities.

Does Southwestern College waive course and/or test requirements for students with disabilities?

No. All students must meet both the course and test requirements for graduation. In rare instances students may petition to have a graduation requirement substituted with alternative course work. Students are encouraged to meet all requirements as outlined in the catalog. Appropriate support services are available to assist them.

What is the correct way to refer a student to DSS?

If you suspect that a student in your class has a disability, you are strongly encouraged to refer the student to DSS for assistance. If the disability is visible, it is easier to approach the student and say something like, "Do you have someone you work with in the DSS department?" If the student says "no", you may suggest that the student visit the DSS department and inquire about the types of instructional support may be available.

If you suspect that a student may have an invisible disability and you're unsure how to approach the situation, please call the DSS department to discuss possible ways to refer the student. Do not delay; your referral

may make the difference in whether the student succeeds in college or not.

I have strict attendance policies in my classes. Do I need to make exceptions for students with disabilities?

Students with disabilities can be expected to attend classes as other students do. However there are disabilities that prevent the student from attending some classes due to hospitalization, infirmity, and outpatient treatment such as chemotherapy or side effects of medication. In addition, students with mobility impairments may face problems in being transported to the college or with actually getting to class due to a broken elevator. In these classes the actual accommodation may involve making a reasonable allowance for the student to make up missed assignments. Refusing to be flexible could cause a legitimate complaint of discrimination to the college district. The DSS Specialist can assist you in working out a reasonable accommodation with the student in such a matter.

The growing number of students with disabilities has become apparent in laboratory classes on campus. Is there a limit to the number of students with disabilities we can place in each lab?

The college cannot set specific limits on how many students with disabilities can enroll in a laboratory class, or any class. However the creative instructor can certainly work together with the student(s) and the DSS department to provide access. For example, it can be "suggested" that another lab would provide the student with more individualized contact with the instructor, but it cannot be required. Remember that DSS can provide funding to hire assistants in the laboratory and has information on making successful accommodations. Through collaborative efforts involving the instructional department, DSS, and the student, problems with access can be studied and solved effectively.

I often schedule field trips to supplement my class instruction. How can I be sure to accommodate students with disabilities on field trips so that they have the same educational experience as non-disabled students in my class?

One of the most important caveats in planning class field trips is to give all students plenty of advance notice. This is particularly important for students with disabilities who may need to plan for accessible transportation, work around aid and therapy schedules, and plan for assistive devices and/or personal aids. When planning a field trip, make sure in advance that the site is accessible for all students, including

those in wheelchairs. If the site is not accessible, and the field trip is a mandatory assignment, an educationally equivalent experience needs to be provided for the student (i.e., videotaping the field trip). Remember, if the college is providing transportation, and a student requires accessible transportation, this also must be provided by the college. Again, advance planning is necessary. DSS staff is available to help faculty in planning accessible field trips and transportation.

How do I develop a barrier free syllabus?

Recommendation #1:

“Southwestern College recommends that students with disabilities or specific learning needs contact their professors during the first two weeks of class to discuss academic accommodations. If a student believes that they may have a disability and would like more information, they are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services (DSS) at (619) 482-6512 (voice), (619) 207-4480 (video phone), or email at DSS@swccd.edu. Alternate forms of this syllabus and other course materials are available upon request.”

A simple statement on your syllabus such as the one above will make all the difference for a student with a disability that reviews your course syllabus for the first time. It informs the student that it is "OK" to approach you to discuss his/her educational limitations and what accommodations will assist him/her in meeting the requirements of the class. The student will possibly inform you of an affiliation with DSS, or this may be the perfect opportunity for you to refer the student to DSS if he/she is not aware of the services and programs available to them.

The more detailed a syllabus an instructor is able to provide, the more this will assist students with organization. For example: if test dates are provided at the beginning of the semester, this allows the student to fill out proctoring forms well ahead of deadlines. An instructor wants to be sure all students are aware of important date changes; in particular, it is imperative that students that may arrive late due to mobility challenges are informed of any class announcements they may miss.

Recommendation #2:

Be careful what you print as policy on your syllabus. Be sure that policies comply with local/state/federal regulations. Individual policies in areas such as tape recording and attendance could pose a barrier to students with disabilities. While your real intention is not to exclude, the student reading such a policy may believe differently causing him/her to drop out of the class or file a complaint. Remember that although you ask students to notify you of accommodation needs within the first two

weeks of class, accommodations cannot be denied because the student did not meet that deadline.

Recommendation #3:

Another important issue is related to access of printed information. Include on your syllabus the following statement: "If you need this syllabus or other course materials in alternate format, please speak with the instructor." You may need to have your syllabus and/or handouts made available in an alternative format such as large print or Braille. The DSS department can assist you in facilitating this accommodation in a timely manner. Contact DSS for any alternate format requests.

Academic Accommodations

What are "academic accommodations"?

These are modifications made in an academic setting to afford the student with a disability an equal opportunity to learn in lecture/lab and show what they have learned on tests. The accommodations may not alter the fundamental nature of the course/program or impose an undue financial burden on the institution. The official "Course Outline of Record" represents elements fundamental to the nature of the course/program (per Ralph Black, Legal Counsel, CCCCO, September 1995, March 1997). Examples of common accommodations include: note-taker in class, extra time on tests, and use of a tape recorder.

What are student responsibilities regarding academic accommodations?

To receive an accommodation, the student must request the "reasonable" accommodation in a timely manner. The student must provide the instructor or Disability Support Services (DSS) written documentation of the disability.

What are Southwestern College's responsibilities regarding academic accommodations?

The institution via instructional faculty must provide reasonable accommodations to the student with a known disability. The instructor and student discuss the requested accommodation(s) and how the accommodation(s) will be provided. All communications are confidential.

What is the role of DSS in the provision of academic accommodations?

DSS verifies the existence of a disability, functional limitations, and authorizes reasonable academic accommodations according to the Title 5 regulations. This information is found on the SWC “Authorized Academic Accommodations” (AAA) form. Students show the instructor a copy of the AAA form when requesting accommodations and the instructor initials the AAA form to show that a discussion regarding accommodations has occurred. DSS is available to help instructors organize and provide accommodations.

DSS recommends all students discuss accommodation requests in the first two weeks of the semester; however, students are not required to do so. DSS can assist when questions arise.

If the student with a disability or faculty have a question and do not wish to use DSS, they may confer with the 504 Coordinator/Dean of Student Services.

What happens if faculty do not agree with a particular accommodation?

According to SWC District Policy No. 6089 and procedures, the instructor should contact the DSS Specialist or the 504 Coordinator/Dean of Student Services for advice and/or clarification. If the matter is not resolved in five (5) instructional days, the student can request its review by the College Academic Accommodations Panel. For students whose disabling condition has been verified, the accommodation will be allowed for a maximum of four weeks during which time a resolution will be achieved.

What can I do to facilitate academic accommodations?

Include this statement on your course syllabus “Southwestern College recommends that students with disabilities or specific learning needs contact their professors during the first two weeks of class to discuss academic accommodations. If a student believes they may have a disability and would like more information, they are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services (DSS) at (619) 482-6512 (voice), (619) 207-4480 (video phone), or email at DSS@swccd.edu. Alternate forms of this syllabus and other course materials are available upon request.”

Test Proctoring

How does DSS determine test accommodations?

Test accommodations are determined on an individual basis and are dependent on the functional limitations imposed by the student’s

disability. For example, a student with a learning disability might be authorized extended time due to difficulties with reading fluency while a student with a mobility disability might be authorized extended time due to difficulties with manual dexterity and speed. Each student meets with a DSS Specialist to review disability verification, establish functional limitations, and determine reasonable academic and test accommodations.

How do I know what test accommodations have been authorized for a student in my class?

Each semester, students with verified disabilities request academic accommodations from their DSS Specialist. A student's authorized accommodations are indicated on the DSS Authorized Academic Accommodations (AAA) form. The student will show you a copy of the AAA form and discuss their accommodations with you. Initial the form after the discussion regarding accommodations. DSS recommends all students discuss accommodation requests in the first two weeks of the semester; however, students are not required to do so. DSS can assist when questions arise.

How do I arrange DSS test proctoring for a student in my class?

It is the student's responsibility to arrange test proctoring. Students who will be using DSS test proctoring are required to give their instructor the Test Accommodations Request Form (TARF) to complete before each test. The instructor completes the TARF and then returns it to the student. The student is required to bring the TARF to the DSS Test Proctoring Center in Room 420A or the Student Services counter at the Higher Education Centers (HECs) at least 4 days prior to the exam.

DSS asks that instructors send the student's exam to the DSS Test Proctoring Center at least 24 hours before the scheduled test proctoring date. Please make sure the student's name is on the exam. For your convenience, you may bring your exam to Room 420A, fax your exam to 619-216-6642, or e-mail your exam to cpullman@swccd.edu. For exams at the Higher Education Centers, DSS will send a proctor to the HEC to administer the exam. After the student completes the exam, the DSS test proctor will return the exam to either the instructor or the department office and obtain a signature verifying return of the exam.

Must students or instructors use DSS test proctoring to provide test accommodations?

No. DSS provides test proctoring as a service to both students and faculty. A student and instructor can informally work out test accommodations together. DSS can assist when questions arise.

How does DSS ensure test security and a secure testing environment?


DSS employs a test-proctoring clerk to oversee and manage DSS test proctoring. Our test-proctoring clerk is Carol Pullman. She is located in Room 420A and can be reached at extension 5271. In addition, all DSS test proctors have been trained by DSS faculty in test proctoring procedures to ensure a secure environment. Students are not employed as test proctors.

Who do I contact if I have a question?

Contact the DSS office at 482-6512, or stop by our office in Room S108. DSS staff can answer any general questions regarding accommodations or test proctoring. For specific questions pertaining to a student in your class, DSS staff will refer you to that student's DSS Specialist.

DSS Forms

Sample Authorized Academic Accommodations



Disability Support Services

AUTHORIZED ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

STUDENT: _____

SWC ID #: _____ **TERM:** _____

SPECIALIST: _____ **DATE:** _____

Students must request academic accommodations every semester. Request in person at the DSS Office, by email to DSS@swccd.edu, or by Web form on the DSS Web pages under "Continuing Students". All accommodation forms will be emailed to you from rvalerio@swccd.edu.

This student has enrolled in one or more of your classes for the semester, and has a verified disability that makes him/her eligible for reasonable accommodations as defined under Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. **This information is confidential.** The policy of Southwestern College is to make education accessible to all students in accordance with State and Federal Regulations.

Please contact DSS 619-482-6512 if you have any questions regarding this student's accommodations

☐ **Test accommodations**-exams will be administered by a proctor or the instructor with the following accommodations:

Test proctoring, as a service to you, the DSS Test Proctoring Office, located in Building 420, Room 420 A can schedule test proctoring. The student must provide you with a Test Accommodations Request Form (TARF) to complete and sign each time DSS test proctoring is requested. The student must schedule the test in the DSS Test Proctoring Office or at the Student Services Counter at the Higher Education Centers at least 4 school days prior to the exam.

Faculty: If the class is held on the Chula Vista campus deliver exam(s) to the DSS Test Proctoring Office, Room 420 A, or email to cpullman@swccd.edu. You may also fax to 619-216-6642.

If your class is held at a Higher Education Center, please deliver exam(s) to the Student Services Counter at that HEC location.

All exams must be delivered at least 24 hours prior to your student's examination time.

☐ Extended time (1 1/2 times the standard time allowed) ☐ Extended time (2 times the standard time allowed)

☐ The exam will be administered in a distraction-reduced environment. ☐ The exam will be administered in a group setting.

☐ Student may read aloud to self. ☐ The exam will be read to the student. ☐ Answers will be physically written by proctor.

☐ Use of: dictionary, or computer with spell check, or spelling will not impact grade.

☐ The student may use computer w/ large print, voice output, or other assistive technology

☐ The student may write answers on test instead of scantron

☐ Other: _____

☐ **Notetaker**-is a student in your class who takes notes using special carbonless copy paper provided by DSS. Volunteer notetakers may request a "Certificate of Service" from the DSS Office.

Please assist us by requesting a volunteer from class, or by asking an individual student, whom you feel is taking good notes, to serve as a volunteer notetaker. Refer volunteers to DSS, Room S108, for information on getting a "Certificate of Service".

☐ **Tape recorder**-the student uses a tape recorder to tape your lectures with the understanding that recorded information is restricted for personal use.

☐ **Interpreter/Real Time Captionist**-an interpreter will translate your lecture for a student who has a hearing impairment.

☐ **Preferential seating**-the student must have a seat at: ☐ front of class ☐ back of class ☐ side of classroom ☐ near door.

☐ **Facial contact**-The student needs to see your face during lecture, so he/she can read your lips and body language.

☐ Student needs-table/chair during class. ☐ Student needs to stand/stretch during class.

☐ **Alternate Media Production**-please provide all print instructional materials to student ASAP so DSS can translate them.

☐ Other: _____

To Instructor: Initial, and return this form to the student. Signature indicates review of accommodation form with the above student. This form may not be duplicated or distributed without written permission from the student.

	Instructor 1	Instructor 2	Instructor 3	Instructor 4	Instructor 5	Instructor 6
Initials						
Class Number & Section						

Sample Test Accommodation Request Form



Disability Support Services

TEST ACCOMMODATION REQUEST FORM

(This form must be turned in at least 4 school days before the exam)

Student:

- Complete **Section A** of this form
- Have your instructor complete **Section B**
- Return form to: DSS Test Proctoring Office, Building 420, Room 420A, *or*
- If the class is at a Higher Education Center, return to the Student Services Counter at that location
- Test Proctoring Office phone: 619-421-6700 ext. 5271

Section A:

Student Name _____ SWC ID _____

Contact Phone _____ Today's Date _____

Course _____ Section # _____

DSS Specialist: _____

Class Location: ☐ Chula Vista ☐ National City ☐ Otay Mesa ☐ San Ysidro

Instructor Use Only Section B:

Complete Section B, sign, and return to student. DSS staff will schedule the exam appointment with the student, and a copy of the completed form will be delivered to your department mailbox.

1. Instructor _____ Phone/Ext _____
2. Exam Date _____ Exam Time _____ ☐ am ☐ pm
The amount of time the CLASS will have to take the test: _____ hrs. _____ min.
3. Student may take the test(s) _____ school days *before* or _____ school days *after* the exam date.
4. Check materials that may be used in the test proctored setting:
☐ Books ☐ Calculator ☐ Formulas
☐ Class Notes ☐ Spell Checker ☐ Dictionary ☐ Other _____
5. Other Instructions: _____
6. If class is held at the Chula Vista campus, deliver test to the DSS Test Proctoring Office Building 420, Room 420A, or email to dssproctor@swccd.edu. You may also fax test to: 619-216-6642.

If class is held at a Higher Education Center, deliver exam to the Student Services Counter at that center 24 hours prior to the exam date.

Instructor's signature _____

Date _____

DSS Use Only	Total Test Time _____ hrs. _____ mins.	DSS Initials _____
Test Accommodations:	Date: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Scribe	<input type="checkbox"/> Extended Time	<input type="checkbox"/> Computer
<input type="checkbox"/> Group Setting	<input type="checkbox"/> Scantron	<input type="checkbox"/> Spell Check/Dict.
<input type="checkbox"/> Distraction Reduced Environment	<input type="checkbox"/> Enlarged Print	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Reader	<input type="checkbox"/> Read to Self	
Date: _____	Time: _____	
Day: M T W Th F	<input type="checkbox"/> am <input type="checkbox"/> pm	Proctor Assigned: _____
White: DSS Test Proctor	Yellow: Student	Pink: Instructor

Universal Design: Educational Principles and Applications

Universal Design (UD) as defined by The Center for Universal Design at North Carolina State University is “the design of products and environments which are useable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without need for adaptation or specialized design”. Universal Design in Education (UDE) applies to educational products (such as curriculum, academic programs, computers, websites, software, textbooks, lab equipment) and environments (campus facilities, classrooms, learning resource centers, online and distance learning courses).

Principles of Universal Design for Instruction

Equitable Use: The design does not disadvantage or stigmatize any group of users.

Flexibility in Use: The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

Simple, Intuitive Use: Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.

Perceptible Information: The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.

Tolerance for Error: The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

Low Physical Effort: The design can be used efficiently and comfortably, and with a minimum of fatigue.

Size and Space for Approach & Use: Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use, regardless of the user's body size, posture, or mobility.

A Community of Learners: The instructional environment promotes interaction and communication among students and between students and faculty.

Instructional Climate: Instruction is designed to be welcoming and inclusive. High expectations are espoused for all students.

While courses, technology, and student services are typically designed for the average student, UDE promotes the consideration of students with a broad range of characteristics which include gender, culture, age, stature, disability, and learning style. Teaching must move beyond traditional presentation styles and incorporate strategies that are more diverse, flexible, and accessible in order to be universally effective.

In order for UDE to uphold essential components of course information, the following guidelines may be considered:

1. *Class Climate.* Adopt practices that reflect high values with respect to both diversity and inclusiveness.
2. *Physical Access, Usability, and Safety.* Assure that activities, materials, and equipment are physically accessible and usable by all students and that all potential student characteristics are addressed in safety considerations.
3. *Delivery Methods.* Use multiple, accessible instructional methods.
4. *Information Resources.* Assure that course materials, notes, and other information resources are flexible and accessible to all students.
5. *Interaction.* Encourage effective interactions between students and between students and the instructor and assure that communication methods are accessible to all participants.
6. *Feedback.* Provide specific feedback on a regular basis.
7. *Assessment.* Regularly assess student progress using multiple, accessible methods and tools and adjust instruction accordingly.

Instructional Methodologies

	Challenges	UD Strategies
Lecture	Requires sustained concentration, retention of information, fluency in spoken language, and note-taking.	Create and post detailed notes on an accessible Website, provide periodic breaks during long sessions, provide adequate space & lighting for interpreters; allow time for questioning and clarification throughout presentation.
Group Work	Requires substantial, appropriate physical space; use of printed materials; sustained concentration; interpersonal, communication and writing skills; may spark anxiety issues.	Design group roles to ensure that individual differences are naturally mediated through distribution of responsibilities; minimize amount of printed materials and assure accessible formats when necessary.
Power Point	Requires use of visual information (clarity, color, size, and density of slides); lighting may be an issue.	Create slides with solid background (light text on dark background); use at least a 24-point font (Arial, Times New Roman); describe slides orally; limit number of slides; allow adequate time for audience to read each slide; use software to create accessible PowerPoint slides to post to an accessible Website.
Videos/Films	Requires use of auditory and visual information; lighting may be an issue.	Ensure captioned videos; prepare a disk of descriptive narration or transcript for ready availability of alternative format.
Written Exercises	Requires reading, writing, access to print formats and English language fluency.	Present written exercises as group work OR allow the use of assistive technology, reader, scribe, or a dictated response; use at least 18-point font on a solid background using simple, intuitive language.
Activities	Requires physical movement, use of auditory and visual information, English language fluency; may spark anxiety issues, compromise effectiveness of accommodations (sign language interpreters), and prevent adequate control of physical environment (noise, space, lighting).	Plan / consider value of activity due to the wide range of issues and individual differences of participants; consider options to accomplish the same goals. Plan necessary supports to allow for ease of movement and communication. Practice variations of the activity with user/experts to evaluate inclusiveness.
Discussion	Requires English language fluency and use of auditory information; may require note-taking, sustained concentration, use of visual information; may compromise effectiveness of accommodations (sign language interpreters) and spark anxiety issues; space may have inadequate acoustics.	Provide adequate space and lighting; provide options for participation, such as note cards; summarize key points; design seating arrangements that provide face-to-face contact for all participants; ensure appropriate acoustic environment.

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