



## **Disability Support Services Academic Accommodations Questions and Answers**

### **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, CCCCCO, 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](mailto:DSS@swccd.edu). Alternate forms of this syllabus and other course materials are available upon request.”



## **Disability Support Services Test Proctoring Questions and Answers**

### **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](mailto: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.

To request this material in alternate media, please call voice (619) 482-6512 or VP (619) 207-4480.