



# FACULTY GUIDE TO ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Kutztown University is committed to increasing access and opportunities for individuals with disabilities by creating a welcoming and respectful learning environment and promoting equity and fairness for all.

To that end, Kutztown University complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and 2008 amendments.

The Disability Services Office (DSO) is responsible for coordinating services, approving reasonable accommodations, promoting disability awareness, and providing professional development opportunities for the campus community.

The ADA defines a person with a disability as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having an impairment.

A major life activity includes:

- Walking
- Seeing
- Speaking
- Hearing
- Learning
- Working
- Sleeping
- Caring for one's self

The ADA also covers bodily functions including immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine and reproductive functions.

The DSO requests, reviews, and maintains disability-related documents, determines eligibility for services, and develops plans for reasonable accommodations for students.

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## ***Confidentiality of Disability-Related Information***

All disability-related information is considered confidential, including accommodation letters and correspondence, as well as all consultations/meetings about accommodations, and should be handled in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Breaches of confidentiality are taken very seriously and may result in the university being in non-compliance with federal regulations. Please contact the DSO if you have any questions, issues, or concerns regarding maintaining confidentiality of this information.

### **Guidelines**

- ⇒ Never discuss or refer to a student's disability or accommodations in the presence of other students. Never discuss or refer to a student's disability or accommodations in the presence of other staff or faculty who do not have an “educational need to know.”
- ⇒ When meeting with a student to discuss the logistics of implementing accommodations, arrange to meet in private. To facilitate this process, offer to be available by email, during office hours, by appointment, and/or by Zoom or other electronic platform.
- ⇒ It is inappropriate to request specific information about a student’s disability or to request a letter from the student’s physician. The accommodation letter is all that is needed to justify the needed accommodations.
- ⇒ If a student tries to provide you with disability documentation (letter from physician, IEP, or other disability related evaluation), **do not read or accept it**. Refer the student to the Disability Service Office, as it is the repository of all disability-related documentation at KU.
- ⇒ Do not leave student disability information visible on your computer or in any printed format that others can see and dispose of it securely at the end of the semester.
- ⇒ At no time should the class be informed that a student has a disability. Be careful not to inadvertently disclose an accommodation when providing instruction to your class.
- ⇒ Do not send messages containing student names with disability information in the subject line. Also, when leaving voice mail messages, don't refer to the disability. Simply leave your name, phone number, and the best time to reach you.

# Communicating with Students About Accommodations

Effective communication between faculty, students, and DSO staff plays a crucial role in appropriately providing accommodations. Students who are registered with the DSO and have been approved for accommodations will request to have their accommodation letter emailed to you. This process is initiated by the student. Students will then contact you to discuss their academic needs. It is important that you take the time to review the accommodation letter (see sample letter below), discuss the student's needs, and determine how you will provide the approved accommodations in your class. Please be aware that your advisees with disabilities may also request that an accommodation letter be sent to you. Retain a copy of all current students' accommodation letters for your records.

## Tips for Effective Communication

1. Give students the opportunity to privately discuss with you their need for accommodations. If a student catches you in a space that does not allow for a confidential conversation, suggest that you meet in your office, in an empty classroom, or remotely. It is okay to schedule an appointment to meet at a better time or location/platform.
2. Encourage students to discuss their strengths and weaknesses as they relate to your course. Students are not required to disclose their disability and by law you are not permitted to ask.
3. Remember that each student is an individual and different disabilities create different circumstances. Even among those with the same disability, an accommodation that works for one student may not for another.
4. Most reasonable accommodations are easy to arrange. Discuss with your students how you will implement their accommodation plan (how, when, where). Invite the student to make suggestions based on their experiences in other courses.
5. Keep in mind that some students are self-advocating for the very first time. Please be patient and helpful as the student explains their need for accommodations.

**Please call the DSO if you have questions or need assistance in providing accommodations for a student.**

**From:** DSO@kutztown.edu  
**Sent:** August 27, 20XX  
**To:** avalanche@kutztown.edu  
**Subject:** Accommodation Letter– SPT-160-010

Dear Dr. Avalanche,  
Jordan Goldenbear (002XXXXXX) a student in SPT-160-010 Intro to Sport Management has requested that you receive this accommodation letter. Please retain a copy for your records.

Jordan is registered with the Disability Services Office. The following accommodations have been approved:

- Provide extended time on all tests and quizzes including online assessments and any other in-class timed assignments at 50%.
- Allow use of a computer, tablet, or braille notes in class for note taking
- Needs preferential seating

**Additional Information:**

Jordan would like you to know that he has ADHD and can be easily distracted.

Reasonable accommodations help to compensate for a disability and ensure equal access to the classroom, course, lecture, instructional materials, as well as an equal opportunity for students to demonstrate their mastery of the course content.

This student should reach out to you to discuss these accommodations. Please take some time to review the approved accommodations with the student and discuss how you will provide these accommodations in your class. Be sure to specify any parameters for accommodations that request "reasonable flexibility". For guidance on providing flexibility with attendance go to [www.kutztown.edu/DSO/attendance](http://www.kutztown.edu/DSO/attendance). If note taking is an approved accommodation **and** your assistance is needed to acquire a note taker, the DSO will contact you via email.

Feel free to contact our office at DSO@kutztown.edu if you have any questions about this student's accommodations or need assistance with how to implement them in your class.

Disability Services Office  
215 Stratton Administration Center  
610-683-4108

## Common Academic Accommodations

Academic accommodations are meant to provide students with equal access to courses without fundamentally altering the essential elements of any course or degree program. On the next few pages, you will find examples and explanations of common academic accommodations.

You, as a faculty member, play an important role in assuring institutional compliance with nondiscrimination laws. Students with disabilities have the right, by law, to use their accommodations. They may not be ignored, and students should not be persuaded, either overtly or covertly, into not using them. **Please contact the Disability Services Office if you need assistance in implementing any accommodations in your courses.**

### Test Accommodations

The most commonly used accommodations are those associated with taking tests. Test accommodations are modifications to testing conditions for students with hearing, visual, motor limitations, or those who have learning, cognitive, medical, or psychological disabilities that significantly affect the ability to demonstrate their mastery of course material under normal testing conditions. Test accommodations may include:

- Extended Test Time
- Distraction Reduced Testing Environment
- No Scantrons (allow student to write on test)
- Test Reader
- Test Scribe
- Use of a Computer for Tests

As a faculty member, you should discuss testing accommodation needs with the student and decide how you will provide or implement the approved accommodations. Students with disabilities are typically best served by accommodation(s) provided in the most integrated setting possible. Consider whether you are able to provide the accommodation(s) requested in your classroom, office, or within your department.

If you determine that you are unable to provide testing accommodations because of logistical problems (for example, there is no quiet room available or you can not provide a test reader), the student, with your approval, may arrange to take the test at the **DSO Testing Center** in 205 Stratton. Students can also request to test in the DSO Testing Center, and as long as it logistically makes sense, you should allow them to do so.

The DSO Testing Center can provide extended test time, distraction reduced testing environment, reader, scribe, and computers for testing, all in an environment that is constantly proctored by DSO staff. **Using this service requires some advanced planning for both you and the student. Please see the next page for details.**

The DSO Testing Center has eight individual testing rooms and one small group testing room that can accommodate four students. All testing areas are monitored by camera with a DSO staff member present in the office. Additional rooms and proctors are scheduled during high volume testing periods and final exams.

# Common Academic Accommodations

## Utilizing the DSO Testing Center

When a student requests testing accommodations, first consider whether you are able to provide the accommodation(s) requested in your classroom, office, or within your department. If you are not able to provide an accommodation due to a logistical problem, the student can arrange to take the test at the DSO Testing Center.

1. At least three days prior to the exam, the student will need to schedule the exam by completing the DSO Testing Form located in My KU (click on KU Academic Services, then select the DSO Testing Form). You will receive a notification by email when the student completes this form.
2. Decide how you will deliver the test to the DSO Testing Center (campus mail, fax to 610-683-4812, attaching it to an online form that you will receive each time a student registers for an exam in your course, or drop off in 205 Stratton) and how you would prefer the test be returned to you (campus mail, email, fax, or professor pick up in 205 Stratton). **Please ensure that the exam arrives at the DSO Testing Center 24 hours in advance** of the scheduled exam.
3. The DSO Testing Center will provide all approved testing accommodations as listed on the student's accommodation letter (including extended time, use of calculator, use of a computer, scribe, reader, no scantron) unless you provide alternative written instructions and rationale.
4. Students are expected to schedule their exams at the same time that the class meets. If a student needs to test outside of this time to accommodate their needs or because of a scheduling concern, we require specific written approval via email from you as their professor.

## Online Tests and Exams

Testing accommodations also extend to online tests and exams. Extra time can generally be set up through the online settings. If you need assistance with testing accommodations in D2L, please contact the Distance Education Office at KU extension 34636. If you need assistance with testing accommodations for publisher's software, such as McGraw-Hill's Connect or Pearson's MyMath Lab, contact that publisher's technical support.

Additional online accommodations can be provided by setting the test to move forward and backward between questions and/or providing a paper-based version of the exam.

If you as a faculty member would like to tour the DSO Testing Center, please send an email to [DSO@kutztown.edu](mailto:DSO@kutztown.edu) and the DSO will be more than happy to schedule a tour.

## ***DSO Testing Center Policies***

These policies are provided to students once they are approved for testing accommodations through the DSO. These policies are also posted within the DSO Testing Center.

- Students must have approval of their professor and must complete the Test Request Form in MyKU at least 3 days prior to each exam.
- All tests must be taken during the student's scheduled class time, in one testing session, unless prior written permission is provided by the professor. **Please note:** The Testing Center closes at 4:30 p.m. Students who have afternoon exams should work with their professors to adjust the start time of the exam to ensure that the exam session is completed by 4:30 pm.
- Students must arrive at the DSO Testing Center on time for their scheduled exam session. No additional time will be added to the student's approved test time limits to compensate for tardiness. Any students who arrive more than 15 minutes late for their exam will not be administered their exam or quiz without the permission from the course professor. The DSO Testing Center will not start an exam for any students arriving at or after the end of the scheduled class period. Students will be referred to the professor to discuss options for re-scheduling/re-taking the exam.
- Students who are late or miss an exam due to an emergency will be referred to the professor to discuss options for re-scheduling/re-taking the exam. The DSO will require written permission from the professor to re-schedule the exam.
- A student ID or photo identification is required when you check into the DSO Testing Center. Students must turn in cell phones any wearable technology, including smart watches, to the DSO Testing Center staff prior to starting the testing session. The staff will maintain these items along with the student's ID until the test is completed and turned into the DSO Testing Center staff.
- Students who wish to have a clock in the testing room may request one.
- All book bags and other items must be stored in the DSO Testing Center reception area. Only pre-approved items will be permitted in the testing room. If any unapproved items are discovered, the item(s) will be removed immediately and the professor will be notified. Consequences for having unapproved items in the testing room will be determined by the professor.
- All students are required to start their exam/quiz at their assigned testing time. Any student that wishes to study or review notes prior to their exam/quiz must arrive early and will be expected to start their exam/quiz at the scheduled time.

## Reader Accommodation

Students who are approved for the “reader” accommodation must have their exam provided in an accessible electronic format that can be read aloud utilizing a screen reader, such as JAWs or Natural Reader. Please be aware, it is the responsibility of course professors to ensure quizzes/exams are accessible. If you would like additional information / resources on how to check a document’s accessibility, please request the *Faculty Accessibility Guide* from the DSO at DSO@kutztown.edu or contact Amber Leidy, Assistant Director of Computer and Assistive Technologies, at aleidy@kutztown.edu.

## STEM Courses

Electronic readers/screen readers will not accurately read the equations, formulas, or mathematical/scientific notation; therefore, the testing center will utilize a human reader for these exams

If sending the testing center an exam with complex formulas, equations, and/or scientific terms, you must send a copy of the exam of how to phonetically pronounce the questions on the exam to the student to ensure accuracy.

For example, if the following equation is on an exam:

$$X^2 - X - 6 = (X-3)(X + 2)$$

It should be written out as the following:

Ex squared minus ex minus six equals open bracket ex minus three close bracket, open bracket ex plus two close bracket.

Alternatively, you can create the exam on Desire2Learn (D2L) or consider a supplemental instructor or another person in your department to administer the exam. D2L has the ability for math and chemistry equations to be accessible by screen readers and other assistive technologies. If you have a supplemental instructor, you may want to consider having them read the exam to the student; or you can work with your department to ensure that someone with the appropriate training can accurately read the exam to the student.

# ***Common Academic Accommodations***

## **Accessible Materials**

Students with physical, sensory, and/or cognitive disabilities often require instructional materials in alternate/accessible formats that are compatible with the student's limitations. The instructional materials that you procure, develop, maintain, and use in your classroom should provide the same or similar functionality, experience, and information access for students with disabilities as it provides for students without disabilities. When creating content, there are a few basic steps to follow to ensure your content is accessible. These steps are the same regardless of whether your document is in HTML, Microsoft Word, Adobe PDF, or another format:

### **Use Headings**

Heading structure helps visually impaired students understand how documents are organized. Additionally, students who use screen readers can jump between headings to navigate a document more efficiently. This is similar to a student without a visual impairment skimming a document. Be aware that increasing font size or using boldface does not make text a heading. In order to convert text to a heading in Microsoft Word, you must use the built-in Heading Styles like "Heading 1" and "Heading 2" available under the Styles section in the Home tab.

### **Use Lists**

Lists should be created using built-in tools for ordered (numbered) and unordered (bulleted) lists. Without using these tools, content is more difficult for screen reader users to organize and understand.

### **Use Meaningful Hyperlink Text**

When inserting hyperlinks, use words and phrases that convey information about the destination of the link. Screen readers can jump from link to link, skipping content in between, and will often sort links in order of appearance or alphabetically. Avoid using phrases such as "click here" and "more," and instead use language that will help the student find and organize the content needed, like article titles or a description of the link.

### **Add Alternate Text to All Images**

Alternate text (Alt Text) provides a description of any images or graphics used in your documents or materials. In most versions of Word, you can enter alternate text by right-clicking on the image and selecting "Edit Alt Text." Enter content and/or function information about the image in the description.

### **Identify Document Language**

Set default language for the document. Screen readers use the document's language setting to determine pronunciation of the words. Different language settings can be utilized for passages within the document.

### **Use Tables Wisely**

Tables present information in a grid or matrix and have columns or rows that show the meaning of the information in the grid. Sighted students can visually scan a table and fairly quickly make visual associations between data in the table and their appropriate row and/or column headers. Visually impaired students who cannot see the table cannot make these same visual associations, so proper markup must be used to ensure association between elements within the table. When the proper markup is in place, students who use screen readers can navigate through data tables one cell at a time and will hear the column and row headers spoken aloud. Consider simplifying complex tables by breaking them into multiple tables.

### **Use the Accessibility Checker**

Microsoft products and Adobe Acrobat Pro have a built-in accessibility checker that can help the document author test the overall accessibility of the document.



# Common Academic Accommodations

## Instructional and Classroom Materials

Faculty should ensure that all instructional materials are available in accessible format. These materials should be prepared and provided to students with disabilities at the same time the rest of the class receives their materials.

## Print Handouts

All handouts should be formatted so that they can be provided in electronic or enlarged font format. Please remember to include descriptions of any visual content including tables, graphics, photos, and artwork. Some students will be utilizing a screen reader (text to speech technology). If you are preparing your documents in a PDF, make sure they are accessible so they can be read by a screen reader. The university maintains a license for Adobe Acrobat which can assist with converting documents to ensure accessibility. Contact the IT Helpdesk for assistance with Adobe Acrobat.

## PowerPoint Presentations

In addition to creating your PowerPoint presentations using the Basic Accessibility Guidelines found on page 8, please follow these suggestions:

- ⇒ Avoid inserting additional textboxes. Instead, use the built-in slide layout templates, which are designed to ensure the reading order of the slide content is consistent for both sighted students and those who use screen readers.
- ⇒ Screen readers read the elements of the slide in the order in which they were added to the slide, which may be different than the order in which they appear visually. Check the reading order by going to the “Arrange” button of the Home tab and clicking “Selection Pane”. From this pane, you can drag and drop to adjust the reading order of the contents of the slide.
- ⇒ Ensure that color is not the only means of conveying information, as visually impaired and colorblind students may miss certain content. Consider using boldface or choose larger font size for headings.
- ⇒ Use sufficient contrast for text and background colors. White and black color schemes are easier for those students with color blindness.
- ⇒ Use a sans serif font such as Arial or Calibri with a minimum point size of 18. Avoid excessive use of italics and underline. Ensure your slides have ample white space between sentences and paragraphs.
- ⇒ Give every slide a unique title. Students with disabilities rely on slide titles to navigate and scan through a list of slide titles.
- ⇒ Ensure that any videos imbedded in your PowerPoint are accessible to visually impaired and deaf students (see video section below).
- ⇒ Run the accessibility checker and repair any issues found in the report. The tool can be accessed in the *Review* tab and click the drop-down menu arrow next to the Check Accessibility button.

## Videos and Movies

Videos and movies shown in class or assigned as homework must have captions, subtitles and/or a descriptive transcript. Rohrbach Library provides access to three streaming services where closed captioned (or transcribed) films can be found: *Films on Demand*, *Kanopy*, and *Ambrose*. Videos that cannot be found with captions/transcripts may be transcribed manually or using speech to text software. It is important to carefully proofread any automated conversions. Videos can also be professionally captioned/transcribed with your department chair's approval and funding.

# Common Academic Accommodations

## Artwork, Photographs, and Other Visual Materials

All visual materials should have descriptions available for visually impaired students that include:

- ⇒ Details about the picture/artwork: Who created it? When, where and why was it created? What is the background story attached to it, if any? How large and in which format is it? For paintings: What techniques have been used?
- ⇒ Iconographical and iconological description: What is depicted? What is in the middle, at the top, at the bottom, on the left and on the right? From which angle is the picture taken? Are there remarkable compositional features?
- ⇒ What impression does the picture make on the describer? Here personal impressions should not overbalance more objective features.

## Websites

Faculty are encouraged to use D2L for instructional materials, as this platform is supported by the university and meets accessibility guidelines. If you create a website for your students or use another platform, you must ensure that it meets all web content accessibility guidelines (WCAG). These guidelines can be found on the Web Accessibility Initiative website: [w3.org/WAI](http://w3.org/WAI)

## Publisher/Commercial Website and Materials

Publishers often provide additional materials such as PowerPoint presentations, test banks, videos, E-books, and other multimedia materials. Instructional content provided by a publisher is no different than faculty-created content in terms of accessibility requirements. It is the responsibility of the faculty to ensure that all content provided to students is accessible. It is essential that faculty thoroughly check the accessibility of any instructional materials before adopting them for your courses. Work closely with any student who uses screen reader technology or is limited to keyboard navigation to ensure they have access to all instructional materials. In cases where full accessibility is not possible, consider equivalent alternative assignments and readings for these students.

- ⇒ Are the videos captioned and audio recordings transcribed? If there are not, ask the publishing representative if they would provide a captioned version in a timely manner if a student needed them.
- ⇒ Can all of the text that is displayed on the screen be read aloud by a screen reader? Screen readers only read real text. They cannot read images of text or text embedded in Flash animations/movies/simulations.
- ⇒ How accessible are the E-books? Check to see if you can find a Document Accessibility Profile (DAP) on the E-book. The goal of DAP is to make it easy to find and use accessibility information for electronic textbooks and other documents.
- ⇒ Can all interactive elements (media players, quizzes, flashcards, etc.) be completed by keyboard alone (no mouse required)? It is required that any interactive elements provided by the publisher be operable by a keyboard alone. For example: An interactive exercise that requires dragging and dropping is not keyboard accessible, unless there is a keystroke alternative for dragging and dropping.
- ⇒ Is there any documentation available (VPAT or White Paper, for example) that confirms accessibility or usability testing results? A VPAT is a Voluntary Product Accessibility Template used by many organizations to report the level of accessibility of their software products. Don't just take the publisher's word for how accessible they are, especially if they do not have a VPAT or any research that confirms the accessibility of their product.
  - ⇒ If any of the answers to the questions above are "No," you should consider using a different publisher or find alternative resources.

## **Common Academic Accommodations**

### **Alternate Textbook Materials**

Alternative textbooks are an accommodation for students with visual limitations, learning disabilities, or other cognitive or physical limitations that significantly affect the ability to read and/or comprehend print material. Students may request assistance from the DSO to secure alternative format textbooks. To the extent possible, please select class materials that can be purchased in an accessible or electronic format, including those available with inclusive access.

### **ASL Interpreters/Captioning Services**

ASL Interpreters and captioning services are accommodations approved for students who are deaf or hard of hearing in order to provide equal access to lecture content. The DSO contracts with an outside vendor to provide these services.

### **Cue/Formula Sheet for Exams**

A cue sheet is a memory aid which may be approved for use during exams by students with significant memory processing deficits. A cue sheet is meant to aid the student in triggering the recall of information stored in their long-term memory. A cue sheet is not meant to provide a student with answers to exam questions. Any information that is to be remembered as part of an essential learning outcome should not be included on a cue sheet.

A cue sheet should be no more than one 8.5x11 single-sided sheet of paper and may include the following: acronyms, short phrases, mind maps, and/or rough sketches. Cue sheets need to be approved by the professor prior to the exam (preferably a few days in advance in order to allow time for the student to make content adjustments if needed.) The professor has the final say in granting approval for a cue sheet as the professor is the content expert who determines the learning outcomes and objectives for the course.

### **Audio Recording Lecture and/or Electronic Note Taking**

Electronic note taking and/or audio recording is sometimes an accommodation for students with memory impairments, visual impairments, attention deficits or distractibility, impaired auditory processing, or limited manual dexterity. The DSO provides students approved for the electronic note taking accommodation with Glean, a web-based note taking application that combines class notes with lecture recordings and PowerPoint slides. Students create a new note for each class session, click record, and start taking notes. There are tools to flag portions of the lecture as important, and reminders to return to places where you need further clarification as you record your notes. Glean keeps all of your ideas and recordings together in a clean, organized space. Students can review the audio and their notes later, add more notes as they review, or print an outline of their text notes. According to the regulations, students with disabilities who are unable to take or read notes have the right to record class lectures only for personal study purposes. Lectures recorded for personal study may not be shared with other people without the consent of the lecturer, and doing so could result in punishment related to academic dishonesty at the discretion of the professor. KU students who are approved for electronic note taking sign an agreement with the DSO outlining these responsibilities. For a copy of this contract, please reach out the DSO, or find more information under the "Faculty and Staff " tab on the DSO website.

## **Common Academic Accommodations**

### **Peer Note Taker**

Note taking is an accommodation for students with hearing, visual, motor limitations, or those who have learning or cognitive disabilities that significantly affect the ability to take notes in class. The note taking accommodation is designed to enhance the student's learning process by having a second set of notes. This accommodation is not to be used as a substitute for attending class or taking one's own notes, if physically able. The DSO coordinates the note taking accommodation and will contact the faculty member only if assistance is needed in acquiring a note taker for the course.

### **Personal Frequency Modulation (FM) System**

An FM system is an accommodation for students with audio processing and hearing difficulties. It provides students access to the professor's voice/lecture through a transmission signal. The FM system is a simple set of equipment that includes a transmitter unit and a receiver unit. The professor wears the transmitter with a lapel microphone during class and the student wears the receiver. The student is responsible for providing the transmitter and microphone to the professor at the beginning of class and getting it back at the end of class, as well as ensuring that the device is charged before attending class.

### **Preferential Seating**

Preferential seating is an accommodation for students who have disabilities that affect their ability to see, hear, sustain attention, or participate in activities in the same ways as other students. Preferential seating allows students to sit in a location that is most beneficial for their learning. If the student has a visual impairment or hearing impairment, seating closer to the front of the room may be most appropriate, but a student who experiences anxiety in the classroom may need seating in an aisle seat, back row, or near the door. In certain circumstances, students approved for this accommodation may ask for your assistance in changing their seat to best meet their learning needs within the classroom space without distracting or negatively affecting others within the classroom.

### **Student May Need to Leave Class to Re-group and Return**

This accommodation is approved for students with various physical or psychological conditions to provide a break to relieve physical or emotional discomfort during class. Students with this accommodation are encouraged to sit near the door in order to minimize disruption during class, and are expected to return after a few minutes.

### **Temporary Accommodations**

Occasionally, students are approved for temporary accommodations following an accident or injury. The accommodation letter for students will have an expiration date. If the student is still in need of accommodations after the expiration date, the student may renew the accommodations by providing the DSO with updated documentation of the disability. A new accommodation letter will be issued.

### **Use of Technology in the Classroom (Including Computer, iPad, Calculator, Braille Note)**

This accommodation is often approved for students with hearing, visual impairments, or those with motor limitations in order to have equal access to the lecture or course materials. Depending on the disability/need the student may use the technology to take notes, read electronic documents, or to access other applications.

## **Common Academic Accommodations**

### **Flexibility in Regard to Assignment Deadlines**

Students who have impairments which are chronic/episodic in nature that cause difficulties in meeting assignment deadlines may be approved for reasonable flexibility regarding assignment deadlines. This is **not** a blanket accommodation that automatically applies to all course assignments. This accommodation is applied on a case-by-case basis when a student experiences a flare-up of disability-related symptoms that impact the student's ability to complete an assignment by the set deadline.

The faculty member must assess whether an extension to an assignment deadline is a reasonable accommodation for each type of assignment/assessment, taking into consideration the learning objectives of the course and the purpose of the assignment/assessment. Faculty can use the information below and on the following page to analyze if a deadline extension(s) is a reasonable accommodation and for how long an extension is allowable to ensure equitable access to the student while maintaining essential course requirements.

These disabilities might include, but are not limited to, students with diabetes, epilepsy, cancer, migraines, and conditions requiring on-going or specialized medical treatment. Students with psychological disabilities who experience an exacerbation of symptoms and students who have reduced or limited stamina and/or have difficulty sitting, reading, writing/typing, and/or using the computer for extended periods due to illness or injury, may also be approved for this accommodation.

### **Determining Reasonable Flexibility**

There is no set formula for determining the length of assignment deadline extensions. However, there are several factors that can be considered when providing reasonable flexibility with assignment deadlines:

- ⇒ What are the expectations for the assignment and the course?
- ⇒ How do the assignments impact the student's learning process and the learning experience for others in the class?
- ⇒ Do the assignments (and associated learning outcomes) build on one another sequentially or are they independent of one another?
- ⇒ What length of assignment extension would substantially alter the outcomes, integrity and nature of the course?

For example, in courses where lab assignments are due every Wednesday, it might be reasonable upon request to extend the deadline until Friday. This short extension considers the expectations associated with the original deadline and allows the student time to make up for time lost due to impairments arising from their disability. At the same time, this short extension ensures that the student stays on track with the content and receives feedback in order to progress in the course. For larger assignments and projects, an additional week or two might be reasonable depending on the factors listed above.

# Common Academic Accommodations

## Guide to Assessing Accommodations for Reasonable Flexibility Regarding Assignment Deadlines

### Accommodating Extended Assignment Deadlines

To help set parameters and clarify expectations, a discussion about extended deadlines should occur between the professor and the student as early as possible in the semester. The discussion should include:

- ⇒ What is the late assignment protocol established in the syllabus?
- ⇒ What is a reasonable assignment extension if a disability related flare up causes a deadline to be missed?
- ⇒ How and when should the student notify the professor regarding the need for a disability related deadline extension?

Students are expected to follow the attendance policy established by the professor in each class. Some students with disabilities may be approved for an accommodation consideration of "reasonable flexibility regarding assignment deadlines due to a disability." Reasonable flexibility, in this case, means an exception to the assignment deadline policy when educationally feasible. Similarly, all students are expected to comply with assignment deadlines stated in the syllabus and/or established by the course professor.

Course Analysis	Yes	No
If an assignment is not completed by the deadline, will the student be unprepared to fully participate in a class meeting?		
If the assignment is not completed by the deadline, will there be a direct impact on the learning experience for the student and/or classmates (for example, team projects, class participation, etc.)?		
Does "meeting assignment deadlines" constitute a learning objective of the course (for example, writing a business memo, preparing a brief, scaffolded lesson, etc.)?		
Would an additional day or two extension alter the purpose and ability to grade the assignment using the same criteria applied to the class?		

### Analyze Results

If you answered "yes" to most or all of these questions, a deadline extension would not be a reasonable accommodation. If you answered "no" to most or all of the questions, a deadline extension should be allowed. If you need assistance determining if this accommodation is reasonable, please contact the DSO at 610-683-4108.

# Common Academic Accommodations

## Flexibility in Regard to Attendance

### Accommodating Disability-Related Absences

Requests for accommodations for flexibility with regard to attendance should be considered on an individual and course-by-course basis. To help set parameters and clarify expectations, a discussion should occur between the professor and the student early in the semester before absences become an issue. This will allow the student to make informed decisions about alternatives. The discussion should include:

**1.If in-class participation is essential to the learning outcomes of the course, how many classes (beyond what any student is allowed) can be missed before the integrity of the course is impacted?**

It is helpful to provide a specific number of absences. This number should not be simply a restatement of the number of absences allowed for all students. See the below for OCR guidelines. Please contact the DSO immediately if you need assistance implementing this accommodation or have concerns about excessive absences.

**2.How and when should the student notify you of a disability related absence?**

It is reasonable for the student to notify you of an absence either before or after the missed class, depending on the nature of the disability. Please note: at no time is the student required to present you with medical documentation/medical excuse for disability related absences. This does not include absences that meet the policy for university-approved absences, including medical appointments.

**3.What is the procedure for turning in homework/assignments/projects due the day of the absence?**

A general rule for determining a reasonable timeframe for a makeup or postponement of an assignment (such as a paper, exam, or quiz) is the time equivalent to that which was missed. In certain courses, it may be appropriate to consider an alternative assignment, reading, or project to make up for missed class discussions or projects.

### Evaluating the Role of Class Participation and Attendance

The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) has provided the following guidelines to be used in considering whether attendance is an essential element of the course:

- ⇒ Do student contributions constitute a significant component of the learning process?
- ⇒ Is there classroom interaction between the instructor and students and among students?
- ⇒ Does the fundamental nature of the course rely on student participation as an essential method for learning?
- ⇒ To what degree does a student's failure to attend constitute a significant loss to the educational experience of other students in the class?
- ⇒ What do the course description and syllabus say?
- ⇒ Which method is used to calculate the final grade?
- ⇒ What are the classroom practices and policies regarding attendance?

This accommodation should be provided unless the accommodation threatens the integrity of the course as offered. If you need assistance in implementing this accommodation in your course or believe an exception of the attendance policy will constitute a fundamental alternation of the curriculum, please contact the DSO to discuss your concerns.

# Common Academic Accommodations

## Reasonable Flexibility Regarding Attendance

Requests for accommodations for flexibility regarding attendance should be considered on an individual and course-by-course basis. To help set parameters and clarify expectations, a discussion should occur between the professor and the student early in the semester before absences become an issue. Federal law requires universities to consider reasonable modification of attendance policies, if needed, to accommodate a student's disability. In making this determination, two questions must be answered:

- (1) Does the student have a documented disability that directly affects his/her ability to attend class on a regular basis? The DSO will make this determination based on a review of documentation from the student's physician, psychologist, or other medical specialist and through an interactive process with the student.
- (2) Is attendance an essential part of the class? Specifically, would modification of the attendance policy result in a fundamental alteration of the curriculum? The course professor will determine the degree to which in-class participation impacts the learning outcomes of the course and specifically how many absences are reasonable for each course.

Course Analysis	In all class meetings	In most class meetings	In some class meetings	In a few class meetings	NA
There is significant interaction between the course professor and students during the class meeting (for example, discussion, interactive experiences, problem solving).					
There is significant classroom interaction among students during the class section (for example, peer review, teamwork, group discussion, etc.).					
A fundamental learning objective relies on active student participation during the class meeting (for example, lab experiments, paired language learning, performance work, clinical placement rotations, etc.).					
The student's absence or variable attendance will constitute a significant loss of the educational experience for the student and/pr classmates (for example, group or paired projects, in-class performances, etc.) and/or cause a disturbance to course instruction.					

### Analyze Results:

- ⇒ If most of your answers fall within the areas of *in some class meetings*, *in a few class meetings*, or *NA* categories, then allowing disability-related absences is considered a reasonable accommodation.
- ⇒ If most of your answers fall within the *in most class meetings* category, allowing disability-related absences is a reasonable accommodation. You may designate days in which attendance is essential to the learning outcomes of the course.
- ⇒ If most of your answers fall within the *in all meetings* category, with attendance being essential in all or a majority of the class meetings, allowances for absence from class meetings may be minimal. Consider if the student could participate or make up for missed experiences in an alternative manner.
  - ⇒ If you need assistance determining if this accommodation is reasonable, please contact the DSO at 610-683-4108.



## ***Special Considerations***

Experiential learning and study abroad opportunities are exciting and dynamic experiences for students. When offering these opportunities, you must consider how students with disabilities will be accommodated. It is important to note that in addition to students who have disabilities, you may have additional students that will require accommodations for experiences that require travel or disruption to their usual routine.

### **Academic Field Trips**

- Make students aware of upcoming field trips with enough notice to arrange any needed accommodations. When feasible, consider including field trips on the course syllabus (location, time, means of transportation, meals and dining arrangements). Additionally, the syllabus should identify if the academic field trip is “required” and if an alternative assignment/experience will be offered.
- Field trip planners should be aware of the accessibility of the destination and make arrangements to accommodate all students and staff during the trip. Additionally, if transportation is being provided by the university, the transportation must be accessible for all students and staff attending the event.

### **Internships, Practicums, and Clinical Experiences**

- Make students aware early in their program that an experiential learning experience (internship, practicum, or clinical experience) is required for graduation. Encourage **all** students to start thinking about possible sites and any accommodation needs.
- Assist students who disclose a need for specific accommodations in identifying sites that will meet their needs (i.e. transportation, physical accessibility).
- Encourage the student to work with the Career Development Center and the Disability Services Office to discuss how and when to disclose their disability and how to request reasonable accommodations. Please remember, it is the student’s responsibility to disclose their disability to their site, not the faculty member or the university.
- The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) at [askjan.org](http://askjan.org) provides valuable information for students and employers regarding reasonable workplace accommodations.

### **Study Abroad**

- Students who are planning to study abroad through a third party provider such as Academic Programs International (API) or International Studies Abroad (ISA) should work directly with those organizations to determine how accommodations will be handled. Students who are applying directly to a university abroad program will likewise need to work directly with that institution.
- Faculty who are leading study abroad programs will need to be aware of accommodation needs of students and determine reasonable accommodations prior to the trip. Encourage students to work with International Office of Admissions and Services and the Disability Services Office to discuss how and when to disclose their disability and what accommodations may be needed.

# ***Advising Students with Disabilities***

As an advisor, you may have advisees who disclose their disability and/or accommodation needs to you, either through conversation and/or an accommodation letter. If the student is not already registered with the Disability Services Office, please refer them to our office.

When advising a student with disabilities, it may be helpful to discuss the impact of their disability on course selection and course planning. Addressing these concerns during your advising session may help the student minimize the impact of their disability on their academic work. Depending on the student's unique needs, there are several things to consider.

## **Scheduling Considerations**

### **Number of courses/academic workload**

(mitigating academic difficulties and symptom management)

### **Variety of courses in regard to content/focus**

(balancing strengths and limitations in reading, speaking, listening, math, memory, and/or writing skills)

### **Course format**

(aligning learning needs/preferences for in-person, hybrid, and online courses)

### **Length of instructional time- 50 minute, 75 minute, 3 hour**

(mitigating attention and focus challenges as well as symptom management)

### **Timing and location of courses throughout the day**

(mitigating any mobility concerns, medication/sleep schedules, or focus/attention difficulties)

### **Placement of courses throughout the week**

(allowing time for any ongoing medical appointments and procedures)

## **Other Considerations**

Most, but not all, students with disabilities are approved for early course registration. If your advisee needs help with the process of registering for their courses in MyKU, please refer them to the DSO. If a student discloses any difficulty with advocating, implementing, or using their accommodations, please refer the student immediately to the DSO for assistance.

It is never too early to encourage students to work with the Career Development Center to clarify career goals and work on career readiness skills.

Encourage students to get involved in major-related clubs/organizations, volunteer work, and/or part-time or seasonal jobs.

If the student's academic major requires an internship, practicum, or clinical experience, please discuss this with the student a few semesters in advance. Help the student to identify any accommodations or special considerations that need to be addressed. The Career Development Center and the DSO can help the student with how and when to disclose their disability and how to request reasonable accommodations.

If you have any questions or disability-related concerns regarding your advisee, please contact the DSO.

# Applying Universal Design Strategies

Universal design in education involves using a variety of methods or strategies that remove barriers to learning and providing all students an equal opportunity for success. By applying universal design concepts, you may effectively reach and actively engage all students, including those with disabilities.

## Strategies for Universal Course Design

- ⇒ Include a statement on your syllabus that invites students to meet with you to discuss disability-related accommodations and other learning needs.
- ⇒ Utilize multiple methods to deliver content (including lecture, discussion, hands-on activities, web-based interaction, and fieldwork) to engage all learners.
- ⇒ Use examples that appeal to a variety of students with respect to race, age, gender, and disability.
- ⇒ Provide printed and/or web-based materials which summarize content that is delivered orally.
- ⇒ Use only captioned videos and ensure PowerPoint presentations and web pages are accessible (provide text descriptions for any graphics or photos).
- ⇒ Provide printed materials in accessible electronic format.
- ⇒ Provide printed materials early or post to D2L so students can access the materials in alternate formats before class.
- ⇒ Provide multiple ways for students to demonstrate knowledge and mastery of course content.

## Strategies for Applying Universal Design to Class Discussions

Facilitating an engaging and focused discussion can be very difficult considering the diverse range of academic background, ability, social skills, and personality among students. Below are some tips that may help you to achieve an equal educational experience for all students:

1. Establish clear goals for the class discussion. Define the purpose of the discussion and your desired outcome.
2. Promote even participation among students and discourage off-topic tangents by creating some basic guidelines for your class discussions (see examples below).
3. Prepare for the discussion by introducing the goals and guidelines. It is best that this be communicated both orally and in writing (perhaps as part of the syllabus, written on the black/white board, or sent in an email or agenda).

## Example of Class Discussion Guidelines

- ⇒ Let students know ahead of time when the discussion will take place and how much time will be allotted for the discussion.
- ⇒ Before the discussion begins, allow some quiet time to ensure that everyone has had time to think about the topic/question and formulate a response.
- ⇒ Let every attendee/class member have an opportunity to share before anyone gets to share a second time.
- ⇒ Permit only one person to talk at a time. Reinforce good listening behavior/attentive body language.
- ⇒ Limit the amount of time each student is allowed to speak (e.g. 30 seconds -1 minute). You may want to use a visual cue such as pointing to your wrist if a student is speaking too long.

## ***Applying Universal Design Strategies***

- ⇒ Indicate when student comments are off-topic and refocus discussion. Let students know that getting caught up in the details and getting off-topic happens to everyone, it is not personal. You may want to use a visual cue such holding up a yellow card if a student is getting off-topic.
- ⇒ Create a safe and respectful environment for everyone by discouraging side bar discussions, interruptions, and/or disparaging comments. Address/renounce this behavior.
- ⇒ When opinions are offered, encourage students to use “I” statements such as “I think...”, “I understood it to say...”, or “In my opinion...”. You may need to model or rephrase statements for the first few discussions.
- ⇒ Consider how you might handle disagreements. Opposing views on topics are likely to occur. Encourage students to wait a couple seconds before responding to a statement that triggers an emotional response. Remind students that they are challenging the idea, not the person.
- ⇒ If a student lacks voice intonation, it may be important for you to repeat or rephrase the student’s discussion point to clarify it for the group.
- ⇒ If you are breaking a large group into smaller discussion groups, be thoughtful about how these groups are formed to ensure equal and even participation among the group members.

### **Strategies for Applying Universal Design to One-on-One Student Meetings**

One-on-one meetings can be an effective means to communicate, connect, and motivate students in a personal way. These meetings can help students to plan and set goals, reflect upon their work, resolve problems or conflicts, and understand their performance in a course.

#### **General Tips for One-on-One Meetings**

1. Establish clear goals and expectations for the meeting, including time & location of meeting, expected length of meeting, topics to be covered, and materials needed or tasks the student needs to complete prior to the meeting.
2. Promote active student participation in the meeting session by encouraging students to think about and prepare questions ahead of time.
3. Ensure that your office is accessible and has adequate space to maneuver within. Also, consider the seating arrangements in your office. Some students may be more comfortable working next to you rather than across from you/face-to-face. If your office is not accessible or space is limited, consider making arrangements to meet in another location, such as a classroom or conference room.
4. Be aware that your office environment ,including lighting, visual clutter, background noise, and interruptions, may be distracting and possibly even overwhelming to students with sensory impairments. Try to minimize these distractions in your office space or consider meeting with your students in an alternative location.
5. Be prepared to provide handouts or printed materials in a format that is accessible to the student (electronic or enlarged font format).

# Applying Universal Design Strategies

## Strategies for an Effective Meeting

- Before the discussion begins, allow some quiet time to ensure that the student has had time to settle in to the space.
- Review the goals of the meeting.
- When appropriate/possible, use visuals to reinforce content/process (check lists, drawings, demonstrations).
- Allow time for the student to ask questions.
- Discuss action plan/next steps. Encourage the student to take notes and/or follow-up via email with a written summary.

## Tips for Effective Communication

- Communicate clearly and concisely. Avoid using metaphors, idioms, or sarcasm. Some students are quite literal in their communication and can easily misinterpret these exchanges. Check for understanding before moving on.
- Give students ample time to respond to questions. Some students may need time to process questions and formulate responses.
- Avoid asking “why” questions when possible. “Why” questions can imply criticism and put students on the defensive. Try questions/statements such as:

*What brings you in today?*

*What are you finding challenging about...?*

*What questions do you have for me?*

*How can I help you today?*

*Show me where you are getting stuck.*

*Tell me a little about your situation.*



### **What should I do if a student hands me a medical letter from their doctor requesting accommodations in my course?**

*Please return the letter to the student and refer them to the Disability Services Office.*

### **I suspect that a student in my class has a disability, but they have not provided me with an accommodation letter. How can I help this student?**

*If this situation arises, have a one-on-one, private, conversation with the student. While you cannot simply ask if the student has a disability, you can talk about what you have observed that led you to this suspect this. For instance, I noticed that you do a very good job answering questions in class, but seem to have difficulty answering the same questions on an exam. Have you noticed this? Have any other teachers or professors talked to you about this? Through this conversation, if the student discloses a disability, please refer them to the DSO. If the student does not disclose a disability, you may refer the student to other campus support services such as the Student Success Center for assistance.*

## ***Animals On-Campus***

As a general rule, animals **are not** permitted in campus buildings except for demonstration purposes and as allowed by Residence Life, Housing and Dining Services. However, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and its 2010 amendments establish that service animals shall not be excluded from university/college facilities or activities.



The ADA defines service animals as: "...dogs (or miniature horses) that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities." Examples of such work or tasks include:

- Alerting people who are deaf
- Pulling a wheelchair
- Alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure
- Reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications
- Calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack

### **Interacting with Students (Handlers) and Service Animals**

If you have a student with a service animal in your classroom or using the services or facilities in your department, and the service animal's purpose is apparent (i.e. guide dog for an individual without sight), you should **not** ask the handler any questions about the use of the animal. You may, however, discuss practical issues surrounding the use of the animal, such as appropriate seating for handler and service animal or breaks for the animal.

When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, only limited inquiries are allowed. Faculty and staff may ask two questions:

- Is the service animal required because of a disability?
- What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

**Please be aware:** You cannot ask about the individual's disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the animal, or ask that the animal demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task.

### ***Service Animals in Training***

According to PA law, service dogs in training are allowed on campus and in classroom and administrative buildings. Service animals in training have the same expectations for behavior and control as service animals (see next page) with the following caveats:

- Service animals in training must be at least 6 months of age.
- Must wear a vest that identifies the dog as a "service animal in training" and identifies the recognized organization with which it is training such as Guiding Eyes for the Blind or The Seeing Eye.

**Please report any concerns with service animals or service animals in training to the DSO immediately.**

# Animals On-Campus

## General Guidelines for Faculty and Staff

Below are some practical guidelines for working with service animals and handlers in the classroom, department/office, or at departmental functions.

1. Service animals must be under the control of the handler at all times. In most cases, this means the animal should be harnessed, leashed or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls. If you have concerns about the control of the animal, contact the DSO.
2. The animal must be as unobtrusive as possible. The service animal should remain next to the handler at all times. Students and staff should not touch or interact with the service animal while it is working.
3. If the animal displays out of control behavior (i.e. aggressive or disruptive behavior such as uncontrolled barking), you may inform the individual that the service animal must be removed from the room or activity. Never separate the service animal from the handler. You must permit the individual to continue to participate in class/activity without the animal's assistance, if the individual chooses. Please contact the DSO to determine a long term plan of action concerning the animal.
4. The animal must be "housebroken" and the handler is responsible for cleaning up after the animal. If the animal is not housebroken or the animal becomes sick (i.e. vomiting or diarrhea), you may ask the individual to remove the animal and to clean up after the animal. Again, you must permit the handler to continue to participate without the assistance of the service animal, if the individual chooses.
5. If other students express concerns about the animal in the classroom due to fear or allergies, you may attempt to solve the problem by placing the students in separate areas of the room. Be careful not to place either individual in a remote area or to isolate them, however. If there is no apparent solution, please contact the DSO.
6. If the animal poses a problem with a particular activity (i.e. a project that requires a sterile environment), you may ask the handler to remove the animal for the duration of the activity, but you must allow the individual to continue to participate in the activity. The animal may only be removed during the period where the animal presents an identified problem.

Please contact the DSO if you notice an animal that is not being cared for or seems to be abused (needs water, flea infested, in poor condition, poorly treated). Kutztown University policy DIV-003 outlines the university's full policy and procedures regarding animals on-campus and can be viewed on the University's Policy Register.

## Emotional Support Animals (ESA)

Emotional support animals, which are sometimes called comfort animals could be many different types of animals including cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, and birds. ESAs are generally not trained to perform work or tasks for daily living that would qualify them as a service animal under the ADA. However, through provisions in the Fair Housing Act, ESAs may be approved to be in and around university housing facilities.

**Please note:** ESAs are not permitted in other college buildings such as classrooms or administrative buildings. For the safety of all students and trained service animals, please do not allow ESAs in your classroom.



## Additional Resources

Throughout the academic year, the DSO sponsors informational sessions and professional development opportunities for KU faculty and staff. Information sessions will be announced in the Daily Brief and through email. Additional resources can be found on the DSO website.

- The Disability Services Office Webpage for faculty and staff at [www.kutztown.edu/DSO](http://www.kutztown.edu/DSO)



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