

# Academic Accommodations Defined

This is meant to be a resource for faculty when providing academic accommodations. This is not an exhaustive list and does not cover every circumstance. Please contact Accessibility Services for clarification when needed.

## Testing (Extended Time and Reduced Distraction)

For testing accommodations that are listed on a student's notification: Students will initiate a meeting with the instructor to determine the logistics of where and when to test.

Things to consider:

- The testing location (classroom, testing center, etc...)
- Test time (time conflicts and test time alternatives) If testing will take place in the testing center then the Accessibility Services staff will determine the time.
- Test forms (When will forms be submitted by Instructor: two days prior to testing, at the beginning of the semester, etc...)

## Preferential Seating

This accommodation is provided to students for many different reasons. A student with a visual impairment may request preferential seating at the front to better see the slides, overheads, or chalkboard. Students with hearing impairments may request this to better hear the instructor or to accommodate their Sign Language interpreter. A student with anxiety may request preferential seating at the back of the room for easy access to the door should they have a panic attack. Students with limited mobility may need access to a specific row or wheelchair accessible table. Determine in advance how this will be handled in the least conspicuous way.

## Notetaking, Access to Instructor Resources, Recording Lectures

Students may require assistance obtaining materials presented in class because of limitations resulting from their disability. These accommodations include requesting copies of the instructor's notes or visuals presented in class, the ability to record lectures, taking pictures of the board, use of a computer, and access to another student's notes.

For most students with disabilities, these accommodations are meant to supplement the student's own notes. Examples of students that may require these accommodations are students with learning disabilities or physical impairments. An exception would be Deaf students or students that are hard of hearing that completely rely on note takers since they are unable to watch their Sign Language interpreter and take notes at the same time. The student's accommodation notification describes these requests as follows:

- **Access to Instructor Resources, when feasible** – Copies of lecture materials provided to student. This includes materials such as instructor’s notes, videos, and PowerPoint presentations when reasonable for the instructor to share.
- **Pictures of board** – Student may take photographs of the board, PowerPoints, and other visuals as needed. If there is a concern about the student taking photographs, please contact the Accessibility Services Office to discuss.
- **Permission to Record lecture** – Student may audio record lecture. If there is a concern about the student recording lecture, please contact the Accessibility Services Office to discuss. Students should sign the Audio Recording Policy, which is available to the instructor on the student’s notification page. If there are questions about recording, please contact Accessibility Services for guidance.
- **Use of computer for notetaking and written assignments** – Use of technology, such as a laptop or tablet to assist with notetaking and all written assignments, including tests and exams. Computers with disabled internet access are available to be checked out from Accessibility Services for testing.
- **Access to another student’s notes** – Use of copies of notes from another student in the class.
- **No penalty for spelling errors** – Student may not be penalized for spelling errors. If spelling is being assessed in the course, please contact Accessibility Services to determine if a fundamental alteration exception to this accommodation is appropriate.

More information about [Auxiliary Aids and Services for Postsecondary Students with Disabilities](#) from the Office of Civil Rights (OCR).

When students are approved for these accommodations, the Accessibility Services staff will discuss and share specific guidelines for using the accommodations.

## Modified Attendance & Deadlines

Federal law requires colleges and universities to consider reasonable modification of attendance policies and deadlines if needed to accommodate a student’s disability. In making this determination, two questions must be answered:

- Does the student have a documented disability that directly affects his/her ability to attend class on a regular basis or submit work on time? Accessibility Services will make this determination based on a review of documentation from the student’s physician or other qualified provider and provide verification in a letter the student presents to the instructor.
- Is attendance an essential part of the class? Would modification of attendance policies or deadlines result in a fundamental alteration of the curriculum? Instructors make this determination in consultation with Accessibility Services.

The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) has provided the following guidelines to assess if attendance is an essential part of a class:

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

Accessibility Services requires that students with a disability-related need for flexibility in attendance and deadlines meet with their instructors to discuss the extent to which modification in attendance policies and deadlines may be reasonable for a particular class. Following this meeting the student and instructor should have a clear understanding of what accommodations can be made for disability-related absences. To facilitate this discussion the Modified Attendance & Deadline Agreement form should be reviewed and completed to clearly set out expectations. Accessibility Services staff are available to consult with instructors and students on issues concerning disability and attendance and can facilitate the completion of this Agreement.