

UNIVERSITY COMMITMENT

The University of New Orleans (UNO) is committed to providing for the needs of enrolled or admitted students who have disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

In general, University policy calls for reasonable accommodations to be made for students with documented disabilities on an individualized and flexible basis. It is the responsibility of students, however, to seek available assistance at the University and to make their needs known.

The policies and procedures outlined in this publication are intended to comply with both the letter and the spirit of these federal guidelines. Their goal is to ensure that students with disabilities are given an opportunity to succeed at UNO equal to that granted to all other students at the University.

GENERAL POLICY

The University of New Orleans Office of Disability Services (ODS) is recognized as the UNO authority on all aspects related to academic accommodations for students with disabilities. Even if someone chooses not to employ ODS's assistance in acquiring accommodations, the faculty can use ODS as a resource to verify the legitimacy of the request for accommodation, review and interpret documentation, and explain the student's legal rights to accommodation.

ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES

Only those students who identify themselves to the University and present appropriate written documentation of a disability shall be eligible for academic accommodations.

Accessing accommodations through ODS requires several administrative steps. The first step, is for the student to submit appropriate documentation of disability and of the disability-related need for any specific accommodations being requested to the ODS staff. A student need not submit written documentation of a disability if its effects are visible to the ODS staff, and if the need for all accommodations being requested is readily evident on the basis of those visible effects.

Documentation

The staff of Office of Disability Services requests disability-related documentation from an appropriate professional to verify a student as having a disability and to determine reasonable accommodations. The cost of the documentation is the responsibility of the student. If the initial documentation is incomplete or inadequate to determine the extent of the disability and reasonable accommodations, the Office of Disability Services has the discretion to require additional documentation.

It is not considered appropriate for professionals to evaluate members of their families.

Handwritten notes on prescription pads will not be accepted.

All documentation must minimally include the following:

1. The documentation must be from a qualified professional. The name, title/credentials, address, phone number, state of license and license number of the evaluator (where appropriate).
2. The documentation must identify an actual diagnosis of an impairment;
3. The documentation must discuss functional limitations in an academic environment which are caused by the impairment;
4. The documentation should recommend accommodations to compensate for identified functional limitations.
5. the documentation should list current medication, dosages, and existing (not possible) side effects (where applicable).

ODS offers a documentation packet to facilitate the gathering of complete and appropriate documentation.

The student should set an appointment with ODS staff. During this appointment, accommodations will be discussed and determined and all necessary forms and procedures will be reviewed with the student. The student will be provided with the following forms after this meeting:

Student Accommodation Agreement (SAA)

This form is used by most students receiving classroom accommodations and by all students receiving testing accommodations through ODS. One form is created for each class in which accommodations will be needed. The form outlines the accommodations and requires both student and faculty agreement to the provision of the accommodations. The faculty can also authorize ODS to proctor the course exams with accommodations by signing the bottom section. A copy of the signed agreement must be submitted back to ODS; a copy will be provided to both the student and the faculty member for their records.

Accommodative Testing Form (ATF)

Students will use this form to make arrangements to take exams with accommodations in the Accommodative Testing and Adaptive Technology Center (ATATC). A separate ATF should be completed for each exam to be taken. Each form should be submitted about one week before the scheduled date of the test. ODS cannot accept forms without complete information. ODS cannot accept an ATF and schedule an exam without already having a signed SAA on file.

Conflict Resolution/Complaints

Students with disabilities are responsible for contacting the Office of Disability Services if reasonable accommodations are not implemented in an effective and timely manner. The Office of Disability Services will work with University personnel and the students to resolve disagreements regarding recommended accommodations.

Conflict resolution should be attempted at the lowest level possible. Faculty members and students with disabilities should first consult with the Director of ODS when accommodation-related concerns arise. If the dispute cannot be resolved, the Vice President for Student Affairs would be advised and a meeting scheduled. Faculty members who question the legitimacy of an accommodation recommended by ODS should continue to afford the accommodation to the student while the appeals procedures are implemented. At this meeting, the documentation would be reviewed and the reasoning for and against the requested accommodations reviewed. If upon this review, the accommodations are determined to be reasonable and not pose a fundamental alteration to the nature of the course, the faculty member will be required to accommodate the student.

How to File an ADA Complaint with the U.S. Department of Justice

You can file an Americans with Disabilities Act complaint alleging disability discrimination against a State or local government or a public accommodation (including, for example, a restaurant, doctor's office, retail store, hotel, etc.) by mail or email.

http://www.ada.gov/fact_on_complaint.htm.

Rights and Responsibilities

Rights of Students with Disabilities

- Every student has the right to confidentiality regarding his/her disability and related information except where permitted or required by law.
- Every student has the right to be seen in a timely manner.
- Every student has the right to be reasonably accommodated.
- Every student has the right to provide feedback to ODS regarding its operations.

Responsibilities of Students with Disabilities

- Every student has the responsibility to disclose any disability-related information to the appropriate ODS official if it may have a bearing on his/her academic progress.
- Every student has the responsibility to follow recommendations and established procedures for academic support.
- Every student has the responsibility to make appointments with ODS staff as the need arises, and to inform ODS if there is a need to cancel.
- Every student has the responsibility to provide feedback to ODS regarding its operations.

Responsibilities of the University of New Orleans

- UNO has the right to request and receive through ODS, current documentation that support requests for accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services.
- UNO has the right to deny requests for accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services if the documentation demonstrates that the request is not reasonable, or if the individual fails to provide appropriate documentation.
- UNO has the right to select among equally effective accommodations, adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services.
- UNO has the right to refuse an unreasonable accommodation, adjustment, and/or auxiliary service that impose a fundamental alteration on a program or activity of the University.
- UNO has the responsibility to provide information to faculty, staff, students, and guests with disabilities in accessible formats upon request.
- UNO has the responsibility to ensure that courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities, when viewed in their entirety, are available and usable in the most integrated and appropriate settings.
- UNO has the responsibility to evaluate faculty, staff, students, and applicants on their abilities and not their disabilities.
- UNO has the responsibility to provide or arrange reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services for faculty, staff, students, and guests with disabilities in courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities.
- UNO has the responsibility to maintain appropriate confidentiality of records and communication, except where permitted or required by law.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION RELEASE

The Office of Disability Services is committed to ensuring that all information regarding a student is maintained as confidential as required or permitted by any law. Any information collected is used for the benefit of the student. This information may include test data, grades, biographical history, disability information, and case notes. Procedures about the treatment of such information have been adopted by Office of Disability Services and are rigorously followed and shared with students.

1. No one has immediate access to student files at the Office of Disability Services except ODS staff. Any information regarding disability gained from medical examinations shall be considered confidential and shall be shared with others within the institution on a need-to-know basis only. University faculty and staff members do not have a right or a need to access diagnostic or other information regarding a student's disability; they need only to know what accommodations are necessary or appropriate to meet the student's disability-related needs.

2. Information in files will not be released except in the following circumstances:

- The student states the intent to harm himself/herself or others.

- A student's file may be released pursuant to a court order or subpoena.
- A student may give written authorization for the release of information when (s) he wishes to share it with others. Before giving such authorization, the student should understand the information being released, the purpose of the release, and to whom the information is being released. Information will not be released without consent unless federal or state law requires it.
- Office of Disability Services will retain a copy of all information provided for a minimum of 7 years. If a student wishes to have a record expunged, (s) he must make a written request to the director who will decide whether it is necessary for the office to retain the record.
- A student has the right to review his or her own file.

Accommodations

The Office of Disability Services (ODS) was established at UNO to provide a campus-wide standard for the provision of accommodations. The primary function of the office is the coordination of efforts by a variety of departments in providing accommodations.

Physical Adaptations

Procedures for accessing physical adaptations vary widely. There are a few adaptations which are commonly offered through ODS, and procedures for accessing them are listed below. Students who need physical adaptations which are not often offered should discuss their needs with the ODS staff at the time of their initial appointment. To have tables and chairs placed in your classrooms (for students who cannot sit comfortably in desks or cannot sit in desks for extended periods of time): submit a written request (can be submitted via email if sent from the student's UNO email) listing the classrooms you will be taking classes in and the days and times you will be there, at least 2 weeks before you will need the tables and chairs.

Some students may need preferential seating in the front of the classroom (students with vision impairments or hearing impairments.) When you present your Student Accommodation Agreements (SAA) to your faculty, be sure to discuss the "selective seating" accommodation with your instructor, and make arrangements to be seated appropriately.

Classroom Accommodations

For most classroom accommodations, you will need to pick up your completed SAAs and discuss your accommodation needs with your instructors, and finally return the completed AAs to ODS. There are, however, also other procedures that should be followed in some cases.

- To obtain volunteer note takers (for students who cannot hear well enough or cannot write well enough to take notes for themselves), submit the AAR and then completed SAAs. When you pick up your SAA forms, you must request a Student

Note Taker Packet as well as the appropriate number Volunteer Note Taker Packet. Present your note takers the Volunteer Note Taker Packet. Encourage them to submit the Volunteer Note Taker Information Form in a timely manner. If you wish to use NCR paper for auto-duplicating notes, arrange this with the Note Taker Manager.

- To arrange for interpreters or other methods by which spoken lecture can be translated submit a written request to a ODS, listing all those classes in which you will need interpreters by location, day and time, and subject matter. You will also sign an Agreement for Interpreting Services form, which outlines the policies and procedures for this type of service.

Testing Accommodations

Testing accommodations can be provided by ODS or by the faculty member. The ODS Accommodative Testing and Adaptive Technology (ATATC) is uniquely set up to provide proctoring, as well as more specialized accommodations such:

- Distraction reduced testing environment
- Extended testing time
- Test enlargement or other alternate test formats
- Adaptive technology use for testing
- Orally-proctored tests
- Scribes

Other Services

ODS has available, for loan, equipment such as assistive listening devices, tape recorders, and magnification devices, for purposes of meeting students accommodations needs. The loan of this type of equipment will be discussed when the student meets with an ODS staff member to discuss accommodations. If equipment is to be loaned, the student will then complete a Loan Form, to be kept on file.

To obtain texts and class materials in alternative formats (for those students who cannot read or cannot interpret written materials), meet with an ODS staff member or the Reader/Note Taker Manager to discuss options. These students will be given a Readers Services packet, outlining procedures for requesting audio texts or texts in other alternative format. Many materials are available through agencies outside the University, such as Learning Ally. Many students also receive funding from LRS or other governmental agencies for the hiring of private readers. ODS staff will work to produce the materials in alternative formats as necessary. Every case is individual, and should be addressed individually in a one-on-one meeting with an ODS staff member when discussing recommended accommodations.

To arrange an appointment for training in the use of adaptive technology on campus (for students who need to have written materials enlarged, translated to Braille, or voiced in order to access them, or who require computer assistance to write, proofread, or spell-check documents), after discussing your need for such access with an ODS staff

member at the time of your initial appointment, make phone contact with the staff of the ATATC.

Once you know how to use the equipment properly, you may make appointments to do so. Appointments are preferable at all times, since the first priority of the ATATC is for administering testing accommodations.