



**Student Accessibility Resources  
(SAR) Faculty and Staff Resource  
Guide**

Updated January 2017

Dear GCSC Faculty and Staff,

Welcome to Student Accessibility Resources! As a GCSC faculty member, you play a very important role in promoting access for students with disabilities. Students are encouraged to collaborate with their instructors to ensure they have the accommodations they need in place to provide them with equal access to their education.

The information on our website is intended to provide faculty with more in depth information concerning working with students with disabilities. Our staff members are available to faculty for consultation and presentations dealing with disabilities on related topics any time.

Having an understanding of a disability and the limitations that can be caused by it are essential when teaching and interacting with students whose learning styles are different from their peers.

Please feel free to contact us any time. We will meet you at your convenience, in your office or in ours.

Have a great year!

Best Regards,

Jennifer Black  
Coordinator, Student Accessibility Resources

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# Section I: Introduction to Gulf Coast State College Disability Support Services

## Mission Statement

The mission of Disability Support Services (SAR) at Gulf Coast State College is to help create a fair and inclusive learning environment through specific educational accommodations and support services guided by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. As set by the standards of the GCSC mission, we want to assist our students in their educational, career, and personal achievements/goals with equal access to all programs using both on-campus and off-campus resources. In addition, we advocate for our students in order to lift educational barriers while empowering and embracing their differences by exploring new awareness campaigns and trainings for the GCSC population.

## Office Hours

Monday through Friday 8:00am – 4:00pm  
Other appointment times available upon request.

## Location

Student Union East, Ground Floor, Room 60

## Contact Information

E-Mail:  
SAR@gulfcoast.edu  
Phone: 850-747-3243  
Fax: 850-767-8034

## Disability Support Services Staff

**Jennifer Black**, Coordinator

**Elaine Poston**, Assistant Coordinator

**Heidi Reynolds**, Assistant Coordinator

**Marsha Jones**, Administrative Assistant

**Lauren Brunell**, Learning Support Specialist

**Sunny Pettis**, Learning Support Specialist

**Sandra Thompson**, Learning Support Specialist

**Yolanda Tingler**, Sign Language Interpreter

## Rights and Responsibilities

### Registration with Disability Support Services

Registration with Disability Support Services is a separate process from applying for admission to Gulf Coast State College. Interested students should contact Disability Support Services by phone at 850-747-3243 or email [SAR@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:SAR@gulfcoast.edu). In order to qualify and receive accommodations, it is necessary for students with disabilities to self-identify with SAR to determine eligibility for services based on their documentation and the intake interview.

### Disability Support Services (SAR) Rights and Responsibilities

Disability Support Services is the central contact point for students with disabilities. Services for students with disabilities focus on providing individualized accommodations while promoting student responsibility and self-advocacy. SAR views the provision of reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities as a collaborative effort, requiring the cooperation of the faculty and staff as well as students.

Students who choose to not self-identify when they enter Gulf Coast State College do not forfeit their right to identify themselves and to receive accommodations at a later date. However, the College is not obligated to provide accommodations or services for students with disabilities until students are registered with SAR and have made known their need for accommodations **each academic term/semester**.

Disability Support Services has the right to:

- Request and receive current disability documentation that supports requests for accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services;
- Deny a request for accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services if the documentation demonstrates that the request is not warranted or the student fails to provide appropriate documentation;
- Select among equally effective accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services;
- Refuse accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services that impose a fundamental alteration of a College program or activity.

Disability Support Services has the responsibility to:

- Provide information to students with disabilities in accessible formats upon request;
- Ensure that courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities are available and usable in the most integrated and appropriate settings;
- Review Application for Accommodations and Services to determine eligibility for services and nature of accommodations;
- Provide or arrange reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and auxiliary aids and services;
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality of records and communication, and to disclose such information only when permitted by law;
- Serve as a liaison between students and faculty;
- Serve as a resource on disability issues for the Gulf Coast State College campus community.

## Faculty Rights and Responsibilities

Faculty members have the right to:

- Identify and establish standards for courses and academic programs;
- Verify through the Disability Support Services the eligibility for and nature of accommodations before provision of accommodations occurs;
- Request assistance and resources from Disability Support Services.

Faculty members are responsible for:

- Evaluating students solely on the basis of their academic performance;
- Working with the student and the Disability Services Office to ensure the provision of reasonable accommodations;
- Fostering an accessible learning environment to all learners;
- Addressing concerns about disability accommodations with the Disability Services Office.

## Students Rights and Responsibilities

Students with documented disabilities at GCSC have the right to:

- Equal access to educational and co-curricular programs, services, and activities facilitated by GCSC.
- Equal opportunity to learn and receive reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids and services as supported by their documentation, which do not represent a fundamental alteration of the essential educational components of the academic programs.
- Confidential treatment of disability-related records that is housed at Disability Support Services. Only persons working at, or in collaboration with SAR have access to these records. Some level of disclosure to faculty may be necessary to coordinate requested accommodation(s). Disability documentation that is submitted to SAR are not a part of the student's permanent academic record.

Students with documented disabilities at GCSC are responsible for:

- Meeting qualifications and maintaining academic, technical, and institutional standards for courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities.
- Providing current and appropriate disability documentation in accordance with established GCSC guidelines. Typically, Individualized Education Plans (IEP), 504 Plans from a secondary school, or notes on physician prescription pads do not provide thorough information for the documentation of disability. However, such materials will be accepted as supplemental information.
- Initiating and following established procedure for obtaining reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services in a timely manner.
- Completing the Semester Accommodation Plan at the beginning of each new semester.
- Facilitating discussion with instructors regarding registration with SAR and eligible accommodations.

Students are advised to:

- **Meet with each of their professors to discuss the testing and academic accommodations that he/she anticipates needing for each class;**
- **Self-disclose their disability status to faculty and staff *when appropriate*;**
- **Exercise self-advocacy to meet their disability related needs.**



## Relevant Guiding Legislation

### The Rehabilitation Act of 1973-Section 504:

Provides a 'right of access' statute to individuals with disabilities. Section 504 provides persons with disabilities the right of access into, or to derive benefits from, any program or activity receiving federal financial funding.

### The Americans with Disabilities Act:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADAAA) of 1990 is civil rights legislation that affects approximately 54 million Americans with Disabilities. This federal law provides a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities. The ADA is regarded as the most sweeping civil rights legislation since The Civil Rights Act of 1964. The ADA protects the civil rights of individuals with disabilities by ensuring equal access to employment, state and local government agencies, transportation, public and private facilities, and telecommunications.

### Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states in part that . . .

"No otherwise qualified handicapped individual...shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

### Disabled Individual:

Both the ADA and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 define a "disabled individual" as anyone who:

1. has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, or working, or
2. has a record of such impairment; or
3. is regarded as having such an impairment.

## Policy on Confidentiality

### General Rule

The Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) regulates disclosure of disability documentation and records maintained by SAR. SAR requires prior written consent by the student before SAR may release disability documentation or records to any third party.

### Exception to the Rule

Under FERPA, SAR is permitted to release information to any school official who has a "legitimate educational interest."

### What Does this Mean?

Professors or other school officials, such as tutors, may request information about the impact of a student's disability on their ability to learn. SAR will only share information with other school officials when appropriate and will carefully balance a students' request for confidentiality and the request for additional, relevant information about the student. SAR seeks to preserve the students' wish to keep his/her disability information and status confidential.

### Other Students' Rights under FERPA

FERPA also allows students to inspect and review their files maintained by SAR. Students have the right to challenge any information contained in the files that is incorrect or misleading and request an amendment to this misinformation.

# Section II: Everything You Need to Know about Reasonable Accommodations

## Defining Reasonable Accommodations

- Reasonable accommodations are appropriate adjustments to programs, policy, and practice that make aspects of the college experience accessible and provide equal opportunities to Gulf Coast State College students with disabilities. An equal opportunity means a chance to attain the same level of performance or to enjoy equal benefits and privileges as are available to a similarly situated student without disabilities.
- Students are not charged for the cost incurred in providing reasonable accommodations, including auxiliary aids and services (e.g., sign language interpreters, note-taking support, text conversion to alternative accessible formats, etc.)
- To determine reasonable accommodations, SAR may seek information from appropriate college personnel regarding essential standards for courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities. The Coordinator makes the final determinations of reasonable accommodations in collaboration with the student and faculty as warranted.
- Reasonable accommodations are determined by examining:
  1. Environmental barriers limiting curricular, facility, or programmatic access.
  2. Whether or not the student has access to the course, program, service, activity, or facility without an accommodation;
  3. The range of possible accommodations that might remove the barriers;
  4. Whether or not essential elements of the course, program, service, activity, or facility are compromised by the accommodations.

## Procedure for Requesting Reasonable Accommodations

- Students must follow procedures for requesting accommodations:
  1. Complete Application and Forms for Accommodations and Services.
  2. Submit Disability Documentation.
  3. Sign Consent of Release of Information form.
  4. Complete Semester Accommodation Request form each subsequent semester student is enrolled in courses at Gulf Coast State College.
- Students must allow **at least two weeks** for Disability Support Services to review all new requests for accommodations. Students receiving provisional accommodations may have a longer waiting period until documentation has been furnished.

## Changes in Accommodations Needs

Students are entitled to request additional accommodations or academic adjustments during the course of the semester, or at any time during their tenure at Gulf Coast State College. Students are also entitled to request modifications to the nature of the accommodations. Students must work with Disability Support Services to determine the appropriate changes to accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services. The office should be contacted at earliest indication of emerging accommodation needs. Students must allow at least two weeks for the coordination and provision of new accommodations or modifications to existing accommodations.

## Examples of Reasonable Accommodations

Examples of some of the most frequently requested accommodations include:

- Extended time for quizzes and exams
- Distraction-reduced environment for exams
- Note-taking support
- Permission to record lectures
- Classroom materials and textbooks in alternative formats

## When are accommodation requests denied?

The College provides accommodations unless they fall under one of the following four categories:

- *Fundamental Alteration*
- *Accommodation Request is Not Supported*
- *Undue Hardship*
- *Personal Service*

**Fundamental Alteration:** If an accommodation reduces the academic standards of the College, its schools, departments, or courses, the College denies the accommodation because it is unreasonable. Academic standards are essential for every student. It is unreasonable to alter these fundamental standards with an accommodation.

**Accommodation Request is Not Supported:** An accommodation must be designed to both provide access to the College's programs and minimize the impact of the disability. In some cases, the requested accommodation cannot be substantiated as 'minimizing the impact of the disability' based upon a review of the submitted documentation and/or the subjective experience of the student. The accommodation is denied in these cases since the removal of a barrier is not warranted or necessary when compared to the limitations imposed by the disability.

**Undue Hardship:** If an accommodation costs too much or is impossible to administer, the College denies the accommodation because it is unreasonable. An unjustifiable financial burden will have an adverse effect on the entire College system. An undue administrative burden occurs when the College does not have the time or ability to respond to a request.

**Personal Service:** If a request for an accommodation falls under the definition of a personal service, the College denies the request because it is unreasonable. Personal services are those that a person with a disability must use regardless of attendance at the College. In addition, personal services are those for which no correlation between the disability's functional limitation and program access can be established.

## Notification of Denial for Accommodations

If a student is found to be not eligible for one or more requested accommodations, a SAR staff member will meet with the student to discuss denial, find alternatives, and advise on the appropriate appeals process.

## Section III: Using Accommodations and Disability Support Services at Gulf Coast State College

The majority of accommodations at Gulf Coast State College are provided and/or coordinated through Disability Support Services. In order to ensure that accommodations are provided in a timely and effective manner, specific procedures have been developed for the most common accommodative practices. Students should adhere to these procedures in order to request and utilize their accommodations. Students should discuss the process for coordinating non-standard accommodations (those not specifically discussed in this section), with a member of the SAR Staff.

### SAR Notifications

Students registered with SAR receive a Confidential Accommodation Letter (see appendix A) to bring to his or her instructor and are advised communicate their reasonable accommodations. The instructor and student should both sign the Confidential Accommodation Letter and keep a copy of the letter for reference of the student's accommodations. Instructors are encouraged to meet with the student in private and work collaboratively to determine if there are any other barriers that the instructor may want to address. If an instructor believes that an accommodation may fundamentally alter the nature of his or her course, he or she should address the concern with SAR ASAP. SAR asks that instructors do not communicate denial of accommodations with the student. The Coordinator of SAR will work with the instructor and student to establish any modifications to reasonable accommodations if the accommodations is deemed unreasonable.

### Testing Accommodations

Accommodative testing allows the student to take his/her exam in an alternative environment, or in an alternative format. Accommodative testing does not alter the content of the exam. Students with disabilities are held to the course requirements and college's academic standards. All testing is handled through the Testing Center, located in Student Union West on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor.

### Testing Center Staff

James Smith, Assistant Testing Coordinator  
[jsmith@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:jsmith@gulfcoast.edu)  
Office: 850-873-3594  
Student Union West Building, Room 311

Kara Hillard, Testing Assistant  
[khillard@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:khillard@gulfcoast.edu)  
Office: 850-873-3533  
Student Union West Building, Room 315

Angi Patterson, Testing Assistant  
[apatters2@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:apatters2@gulfcoast.edu)

### Procedure for Students Scheduling Testing Accommodations

1. Request and receive approval from SAR for testing accommodations.
2. Notify Instructors of testing accommodations.
3. Register for quiz/test/examination through RegisterBlast **no later than 48 business hours prior to the examination date/time**. This generally should be the same day/time that the rest of the class is scheduled to take the exam unless a mitigating circumstance (such as a class immediately following the exam time which would preclude the student from the accommodation of extended time) occurs. In these situations, the student should collaborate with SAR staff and the professor to work out an appropriate alternative.

***\*If a student is requesting to take his/her exam on a different date/time, the student must receive approval from his/her instructor. The instructor must sign the "Permission to Change Date and/or Time of Quiz/Test/Exam" or email [SAR@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:SAR@gulfcoast.edu) and James Smith ([jsmith@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:jsmith@gulfcoast.edu)) with the approval.***

### Testing Procedures for Faculty

- After the student has registered for his/her test, the Testing Center will request a copy of the quiz/test/exam via email approximately 2 days before the test date (at times, there will be a last minute notification due to the volume of students taking a test during peak times of the semester). Instructors can either send a copy of the quiz/test/exam via campus mail to the Testing Center or scan and email the copy as a reply to the request from the Testing Center.
  - The Testing Center will know the students accommodations when they arrive to take their test. At times, the Testing Center or SAR may request that the student take his/her test in an alternate format as a reasonable accommodation (i.e. breaking the test up into smaller sections, typing answers for written responses).
- If there is a discrepancy with a date/time that the student has requested, notify the Testing Center immediately. Do not assume that the Testing Center knows when the instructors' tests have been scheduled for the semester. The Testing Center does not have access to the student's syllabi for any class and therefore requests for the test are made for when the student has scheduled to take their test. It is the instructor's responsibility to communicate with the student on testing times and to communicate with the Testing Center when a student is taking the test at an alternate date/time that has not been approved by the instructor.
- Changes in test dates/times should be communicated with the Testing Center when a copy of the test is being requested.
- Approval by the instructor **MUST** be given before a test can be given at a different date or time. ***\*If a student is requesting to take his/her exam on a different date/time, the student must receive approval from his/her instructor. The instructor must sign the "Permission to Change Date and/or Time of Quiz/Test/Exam" or email [SAR@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:SAR@gulfcoast.edu) and James Smith ([jsmith@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:jsmith@gulfcoast.edu)) with the approval.*** Students who do not have approval will be sent back to class and the instructor will be contacted. It will be up to the instructor on what to do next with the student.

## Online Exam Accommodations

- Students should request their accommodations for online quizzes/tests/exams via email, phone, or office hours to give appropriate time to set up the accommodation.
  - Upon requests for the testing accommodation, Instructors should adjust all quizzes and tests that will be taken online through Canvas. Do not wait to set up the appropriate time for tests as this can put the student behind in the course. For questions as to how much time the student is allotted as their reasonable accommodation, please contact SAR or refer to the student's Confidential Accommodation Letter.
- If the online test must be proctored, the student will follow the steps for scheduling a test in the testing center. Students may also be approved to use ProctorU services or an approved proctor/proctoring agency if they are not located locally. The Testing Center can advise the student on how to set up additional proctoring services.

## Testing and Academic Integrity

Students registered with SAR are expected to uphold all of the college's academic integrity policies and abide by the student Academic Code of Conduct. SAR is committed to upholding these policies. Any actions that compromise academic integrity or Gulf Coast State College's Academic Code of Conduct will be referred to the professor for which the exam is being proctored. It is at the professor's discretion how to adjudicate the incident. This may include a referral to the Vice President of Academic Affairs for appropriate disciplinary action. Furthermore, students who engage in acts of academic dishonesty while receiving testing accommodations through SAR risk being subjected to special test scheduling criteria in order to ensure that a one to one proctor can be present.

If a student is found to be in violation of the academic code of conduct and/or the additional provisions, the exam will be stopped and returned to the professor with a note explaining the circumstances involved to necessitate the discontinuation of proctoring. The Vice President of Academic Affairs will also be notified of the incident.

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## Note-taking Support

Note-taking support is provided as a means to accommodate students who, due to the impact of their disability, might otherwise miss recording important information in their notes. Notes for individual classes are generally provided in electronic format and are sent to the individual student through the department's e-mail account, SAR@gulfcoast.edu. In some cases in which it is not practical for notes to be provided in electronic format, photocopies are placed in a file on the front desk in SAR room 60. **Provision of note-taking services is not a substitution for attending class and does not excuse a student from taking his/her own class notes or otherwise actively participating in the class.**

## Student Policies and Procedures for Receiving Note-taking Support

- Students requesting note taking support must be enrolled in the course for which the notes are being requested.
- Students are expected to attend class on a regular basis and to take notes to the best of their ability.
- Students must respond to all SAR email correspondence regarding note taking support requests. Failure to respond can delay services.
- Notes are for students' use only. They are not to be duplicated and distributed to others.

- Students should NOT ask the note taker for additional services such as tutoring.
- Students should notify SAR immediately if:
  - The student has recruited his/her own note taker.
  - The student has determined that note taking support is not needed for a particular course or if the student has withdrawn from a course for which notes were requested. Failure to notify SAR can result in suspension of note taking support pending a meeting with the Coordinator.
  - The student has not received notes in a reasonable amount of time.

## Faculty Information on Note-taking Support

- SAR will notify instructors when a note-taker will be present in the classroom
- At times, SAR may not be able to identify a note-taker for a particular class and will rely on making an announcement in the classroom to identify a peer note-taker. Instructors are welcome to assist in identifying strong candidates as peer note-takers in the class and can also make an announcement if SAR is unable to identify a note-taker. The announcement should not identify the SAR student nor make any derogatory comments regarding note-taking support. The instructor should use the following script if he/she choose to make an announcement:
  - ***Disability Support Services is currently seeking a student note-taker for this class. If you take clear, concise notes and would like to be a paid student worker through the Disability Support Services office, please meet me right after class ends today and provide your contact information that I can forward to SAR. You can also e-mail me, and I'll forward your information to SAR. Thank you.***
- Some instructors provide substantial notes in their course which is considered meeting a “reasonable accommodation” for SAR students. **Do not assume that SAR has knowledge of the structure of any particular course. SAR does not have access to students syllabi nor the students LMS and therefore will not know if an instructor provides notes.** It is up to the instructor to inform SAR when notes are already provided in their course after receiving the note-taker notification.
  - ***Some SAR students will still require a note-taker or audio recording of a course despite materials provided by the instructor due to the nature of their disability.***
- Note-Taker Responsibilities
  - Note-takers assigned by SAR are paid student assistants that must adhere to the SAR policies for employment. See appendix for example of agreement form.
  - The note-taker should attend each class, on time, and leave at the end of class, not early. Instructors should not tell the note-taker to leave early and should refrain from asking the note-taker to answer questions or to sit with the student receiving the notes. The note-taker will not know who he/she is taking notes for unless the student self-identifies to the note-taker.
  - **If a student note-taker is frequently late, leaves early, or is disruptive, you MUST contact SAR immediately.** The quicker SAR is made aware of a situation with a note-taker, the sooner we can counsel the note-taker, identify a replacement note-taker, or find an alternative note-taking method for the class.

## Audio Recording Policy

Students who are eligible and **have received approval from an Instructor** to audio record class lectures must agree to the following terms for Disability Support Services to request this accommodation:

- ***Students agree to abide by the policy of audio recording lectures as established by Disability Support Services. Students will not copy or share recordings from any of their classes with other students. Students will not copy or share these recordings with non-students. Students will not divulge the contents of recordings from any of their classes with agencies, representatives of organizations, the media, or any entity other than themselves. Following the term, students will erase recordings from all of their classes.***

Failure to abide by the audio recording of lectures policy may result in a charge of academic misconduct.

It is important to note that audio recording of lectures is a reasonable accommodation and if a student is approved for this accommodation due to the nature of his/her disability, instructors should use less reluctance in allowing students to record their class. Per the ADAAA, 34 CFR 104.44(b):

*“Other rules. A recipient to which this subpart applies may not impose upon handicapped students other rules, such as the prohibition of tape recorders in the classrooms or dog guides in campus buildings that have the effect of limiting the participation of handicapped students in the recipient’s education program or activity.”<sup>1</sup>*

Denial of tape recorded lectures must be communicated with a SAR staff member in order to assess the needs of the student and concerns of the instructor so as to not violate the student’s civil right.

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## Course Materials in Alternative Formats

Alternate Format Accommodations are provided to students who are registered with Disability Support Services (SAR), have been approved for the accommodation, and have met with a member of SAR.

Students may need textbooks in alternate formats such as .pdf or .doc files to be used with a screen reader. The steps listed below are for requesting textbooks in alternate format.

### Faculty Information on Alternate Formats

If a student is approved for alternate formats of course materials, it is the instructor’s responsibility to provide the student with an accessible format. By law, any course materials available to students in the course, including handouts, must be provided in an alternate format if requested by the SAR student. After the first request, all materials should be made into an alternate format and provided to the SAR student before the start of the class to have equal access to the course. The instructor can do this in a variety of ways:

- Create your own alternate formats by using MS Word and readable PDF’s and use these texts as your main course materials.

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<sup>1</sup> Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended in 2008 (ADAAA). <http://www.ada.gov/pubs/adastatute08.htm>



- IT can add Acrobat Pro which can make PDFs into a readable format. For additional information on how to create your own accessible formats, please contact SAR.
- Email all course materials to SAR as soon as the student requests the alternate format.
  - SAR will convert all course materials into an alternate format however, there will be a longer turn-around time.

Alternate formats of texts are very easy to do and SAR will be hosting workshops on how to make your courses more accessible, including how to create your own alternate formats. For training or assistance, please contact SAR.

## Procedure for Students Requesting Course Materials in Alternative Formats

1. Student must submit the **Semester Accommodation Plan each semester** to request academic accommodations.
2. The student requesting “alternate formats” must be enrolled in the course for which the material is being requested.
3. Student must attach a copy of his/her schedule to the Request for Alternate Text Form.
4. The student is required to look for an accessible format when purchasing required course textbooks prior to submitting the Alternate Format Request to SAR. If the student is unable to locate an accessible format from the publisher or the resources listed below, SAR will process the request. It is recommended that requests be submitted early, since turn-around time can vary.
5. If a student is unable to obtain an accessible format, the student will submit the Alternative Format Request to SAR.
6. In order to receive alternate text materials from SAR, the student must present the original receipts for each of the instructional materials being requested (SAR will retain a copy of the receipt). Legally, we are only providing an accessible copy of material students already own.

### How to receive Alternate Text:

1. Student will be contacted through GCSC e-mail by SAR once material is available (turnaround time may vary).
2. Student will bring a portable electronic storage device (such as USB drive) and SAR will download the material.

**Student Resources:**  
[www.learningally.org](http://www.learningally.org)  
[www.bookshare.org](http://www.bookshare.org)  
[www.coursesmart.com](http://www.coursesmart.com)

**Free Text-to-speech Websites:**  
[www.yakitome.com](http://www.yakitome.com)  
[www.text2speech.org](http://www.text2speech.org)  
[www.ispeech.org](http://www.ispeech.org)  
[www.cwu.edu/central-access/reader](http://www.cwu.edu/central-access/reader)  
[www.naturalreaders.com](http://www.naturalreaders.com)

\*\*Copying or distribution of files obtained through SAR is strictly prohibited and these electronic files may only be used for educational purposes. Copyright Law 17 U.S.C. 121 (1) – Chafee Amendment

## Sign Language Interpreters

Sign language interpreters are professionals who facilitate communication between hearing individuals and people who are deaf through the use of sign language. The role of the interpreter is similar to that of a foreign language translator- to bridge the communication gap between two parties. Sign language interpreters translate spoken English into the visual-spatial languages of ASL and Signed English (SE).

An interpreter may also be responsible for “voicing” responses for the student if the student is unable to communicate effectively on his/her own. When an interpreter is in the classroom, speak directly to the student rather than to the interpreter. You can speak at a normal speed, noting that there may be a lag time between the spoken message and the interpretation.

Instructors should use the following guidelines and practices when an Interpreter has been assigned to their course:

- Expectations of the student should remain the same as any other student in the classroom; accommodations are meant to provide equal access.
- The interpreter is not responsible for the student’s behavior, performance, or attendance in class. Issues should be addressed directly with the student as it would any other student.
- The interpreter’s role is to facilitate communication. Please refrain from asking the interpreter to act as an instructor’s aide or participate in the class.
- The interpreter communicates information being presented to the class without bias, therefore the interpreter will use facial expressions to communicate the tone of what is being spoken as well as signing the information.
- If the student is more than 15 minutes late to class, the interpreter is instructed to leave the class.
- The interpreter will either sit next to the student or stand in the front of the classroom depending on the student’s preference. Instructors should refrain from telling the interpreter where to stand and should not seclude the student to the back of the classroom if he/she has a seating preference.
- If a class is more than 2 hours long, two interpreters will be assigned to the classroom.
- The interpreter may request a copy of the course power points, lectures, and other material for each class to best prepare for the upcoming lecture. Those materials are for the interpreter only and will not be given to the student.
- The interpreter is translating everything being said by the instructor and will attempt to keep up with the pace of the lecture. At times, the interpreter may ask for clarification.
- During written assignments, the student will not be able to watch the interpreter and work on the assignment at the same time, therefore instructors should be mindful if speaking while the student is working to ensure the information is being passed to the student.
- **All audio-visual materials used within the classroom or in Canvas MUST be captioned or, at the least, transcribed. Please contact SAR if you have a Deaf/HH student in your class and need captioning services.**

## Role of the Interpreter for Students

Interpreters are required to follow the GCSC Code of Ethics. They must interpret classroom lectures and activities accurately and without bias. They are not permitted to tutor, express personal opinion or participate in the class in any way. They are not required to interpret non-class-related conversations. If you do not understand the course content, it is your responsibility to get clarification from your instructor. The Interpreter is only allowed to interpret your questions concerning exams, quizzes or assignments to the faculty member.

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## Captioning

### Equitable Access to Audiovisual (AV) Materials

**NOTE:** It is extremely important to notify a student's interpreter as soon as an in-class audio or video presentation has been planned.

Sign-language interpreting of AV material is not sufficient to allow students who are deaf or hard of hearing equitable access to the material. Interpreters cannot keep pace with the audio on most AV material, and it is difficult for a student to simultaneously follow a video and watch an interpreter or read captions on a separate screen. In addition, reading lips is more difficult from a screen so even students who use lip-reading to follow a conversation will likely require captions when watching films or television. Therefore, closed captions (video) and transcriptions or lyrics (audio only) are vital to a student's understanding of the material.

Closed captions are similar to subtitles in foreign language films. Captions appear at the bottom of the screen so the viewer can follow narration and dialogue. The main difference between subtitles and closed captions is that closed captions include not only dialogue but also non-dialogue audio information such as sound effects and speaker identification.

### Finding Captioned Videos

#### *Online Videos*

- PBS Nova has full episodes online with closed captions available (QuickTime only): <http://video.pbs.org/program/nova/>
- Another good online resource is Project Read On: <http://www.projectreadon.com/>
- Check YouTube videos first to see if they are captioned (very few are). After searching on YouTube.com for a video, limit the search results by clicking on the "Filter" drop-down menu and choosing "CC (closed caption)." Double-check that the captions are in English before using them in class.
- Overstream is a website where volunteers caption YouTube and other online videos. This content does not necessarily overlap with YouTube, so check both websites: <https://www.media-and-learning.eu/resource/overstream>

### Equipment for Showing Closed Captioned Video in the Classroom

Many video projectors used in GCSC classrooms do not have closed captioning decoders built into them. However, many classrooms do have overhead projectors or smartboards/screens that display what is shown on a laptop, computer, or smart device. Common media programs, such as iTunes and Windows Media Player, can be set up to show captions while playing a DVD.

If you have any questions or concerns, speak to the Media Services who can provide training on how to use the equipment.

### **If Captioned AV Materials are Unavailable**

In the event that a closed captioned version is not available in the library holdings, first:

- Check with the regional public library.
- Talk to the appropriate library staff (allow plenty of lead time) and request its purchase.

If these attempts are unsuccessful, SAR can provide either a captioned version (DVD or digital versions) or a transcript (VHS or Film) depending on the amount of lead time given.

### **Requesting Captioned Video from Disability Support Services**

Captioning videos is labor-intensive, so please make any captioning requests as early as possible, at a minimum, 48 hours before the video will be shown in class. Last-minute requests may not be accommodated. Providing a transcript of the video to be shown will greatly expedite the captioning process.

### **Requesting a Transcript for VHS, Film, or Audio from Disability Support Services**

SAR can provide a transcript for a student to use in place of captions. This is a less than ideal solution, but it is still preferable to attempting in-class captioning of AV materials. SAR will first attempt to locate an existing transcript, so please provide any relevant information including the full title, the series name (if applicable), the director's name, the production or distribution company's name, and the release date.

If a transcript cannot be obtained, SAR will create a transcript of the media being used. Because creating a transcript is an extremely time-consuming process, it is vital to provide this information and/or the AV materials to SAR as early as possible.

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## **Adaptive or Assistive Technology**

Assistive technology (AT) is any item, piece of equipment, or product system used to increase, maintain, or improve access for individuals with disabilities. Disability Support Services has access to an ever-changing variety of software and hardware that is available to loan to eligible students to assist them in mitigating the impact of their disability.

Once specific AT components are identified that are believed to be potentially beneficial to minimizing the impact of the student's disability, the student should complete the AT Borrowing Contract. Arrangements will be made to provide the student with established components in accordance with standard equipment loan procedures. The following general policies guide the loaning of SAR equipment to students:

- Use the borrowed materials for educational and accessibility purposes only
- Items are for personal use only and may not be shared with others
- Immediately report any damage or loss material to Disability Support Services; whether or not you are responsible for the damage
- Loans are for a pre-determined time period and must be returned or renewed on or before the agreed upon date

Our current inventory includes:

- Echo Livescribe
- Sonocent
- Assistive Listening Device
- JAWS Reader
- Kurzweil 1000
- ZoomText Magnifier
- Talking Scientific Calculator
- Talking Graphing Calculator
- Spellers
- Dragon Speech to Text
- iPads
- Sorenson Video Phone
- Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)
- Low-Vision Lamps

### **Assistive Listening Device - FM Systems**

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing may use an ALD in the classroom to enhance the voice of a speaker. The most common ALD is a personal FM system; the speaker wears a microphone and the student wears a receiving unit. A student using a personal FM system should familiarize you with his/her system before class. Most require you to do little more than attach the lapel mic to your clothing. Amplification devices provide auditory information (code) that cues the student about the spoken word. The student then has to take that code and try to interpret what was said. This technology is a tool to improve hearing but does not provide a level of hearing that is comparable to that of a person without a hearing disability.

Assistive technology is a rapidly evolving field, with innovative AT solutions constantly emerging. In the effort to provide students with the most effective AT solutions, Gulf Coast State College is committed to consistently upgrading its AT resources. Please periodically check with SAR to learn about its latest improvements to Gulf Coast State College's AT resources.

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## **Flexibility in Attendance**

### **Students with Disabilities and Flexibility in Attendance Policy**

Regardless of a disability, all students are responsible for fulfilling the essential requirements of courses/programs/degrees for which they are enrolled, including attendance expectations. However, when a student has a chronic condition with random or cyclical acute episodes, modifications to attendance policies may be reasonable. Student must provide disability documentation that supports this accommodation request. (Please see Appendix H for how to accommodate flexible attendance)

Disability Support Services (SAR) can provide verification of a disability which may address the legitimacy of absences, but not necessarily excuse it. SAR cannot officially excuse absences; the ultimate decision regarding absences and the resulting influence those absences have on grade is at the discretion of the instructor after close examination of the essential course requirements. Faculty are not required to lower or effect substantial modifications of standards for accommodation purposes. Attendance flexibility is not a waiver of attendance policies.

The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) has provided the following guidance questions to be used when determining if attendance is essential to a course:

- Are there regular classroom interactions between the instructor and students and among students?
- Do student contributions during the class period constitute a significant component of the learning process?
- Does the fundamental nature of the course rely upon 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 course?
- What are the classroom practices and policies regarding attendance and are they noted in the course syllabus?

### Student Responsibility

- Meet with faculty to develop a contingency plan (e.g. establish a pre-determined number of additional absences in order to avoid any misconceptions about the number of absences allowed) to accommodate any disability-related absences that may occur. Accommodations cannot be granted retroactively.
- Contact faculty every time a disability-related absence occurs and informing them when student will return. It is essential to maintain regular communication with faculty and keep faculty informed of student's status.
- Material covered or work completed during disability related absences. Student is responsible for obtaining lecture notes and missed materials.
- Neither extension of deadlines for assignments due nor arrangements for making up missed tests or quizzes are included in accommodation and must be negotiated individually with each instructor during the initial meeting with faculty to develop a contingency plan.

PLEASE NOTE: If any instructor believes attendance flexibility is not feasible because it will alter the fundamental nature or jeopardize the learning objectives for their class, the student may request that SAR re-assess the individual circumstances surrounding this request.

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### Service Animals

Some students with disabilities work as part of a service dog team, where both the handler and the dog have extensive training allowing them to navigate safely inside buildings and outdoors. For more information on how best to interact with working dogs, please refer to SAR or visit *Guide Dogs of America* at <http://www.guidedogsofamerica.org> . If a student with a service dog is enrolled in one of your classes, you might consider sharing the interaction recommendations with your class at the beginning of the semester.

If there are concerns about the service animal, please contact SAR immediately at 850-747-3243.

### Service Animals Policy

Under the 2010 Revised Requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADAAA), a service animal is defined as “any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to a person with a disability. If they meet this definition, animals are considered service animals under the ADA regardless of whether they have been licensed or certified by a state or local government.”

Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that the individual with a disability cannot perform on his/her own. A type of service animal most people are familiar with are guide dogs who are used by some individuals with visual impairments to navigate the surrounding areas. There are service animals that assist individuals with other disabilities in their day to day activities, for example:

- alerting people who are deaf
- pulling a wheelchair, carrying or picking up things for individuals with mobility impairments

- alerting and protecting an individual 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

There are specific rules related to service animals. When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, you may only ask the following questions:

1. Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability?
2. What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?

Staff may not ask about the individual's disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the dog, or ask that the dog to demonstrate the trained work or task.

An individual who is disabled under the ADA can use a service animal in a public place with public accommodations. While working, the service animal's behavior must be under control. A service animal should not pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others. Feeding, walking, and general caring for the service animal is solely the responsibility of its owner/user. A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove their service animal from the premises unless: (1) the dog is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it or (2) the dog is not housebroken. When there is a legitimate reason to ask that the service dog be removed, staff must offer the person with the disability the opportunity to obtain services without the animal's presence. Please contact Disability Support Services at Gulf Coast State College if you have any questions or concerns regarding service dogs on the college campuses.

## Support Animals Policy

Support Animals provide therapeutic support to individuals with an identified disability and are not trained to assist an individual with activities of daily living, therefore they are not considered Service Animals and do not qualify for the legal protection under ADA. Every attempt will be made by the College to ensure College policies adjust as changes in the laws may occur. Requests for Support Animals are reviewed on a case by case basis. Our full Support Animal policy can be found in our Student Handbook.

## Etiquette for Interacting with Service Dogs

- Don't touch, pet or feed a service dog while it is wearing a working harness. Do allow the dog to concentrate and perform for the safety of the handler.
- Don't call the dog by name. Do understand that, for safety reasons, some blind or low vision people will not reveal their service dog's name to a stranger.
- Don't give the dog commands. Do allow the handler to do so.
- Don't try to take control in situations unfamiliar to the dog or the handler. Do assist the handler upon his/her request, and always ask before you attempt to help.
- Don't walk on the dog's left side as it may become distracted or confused. Do walk on the handler's right side, several paces behind him or her.
- Don't attempt to grab or steer the handler while the dog is guiding him or her, and do not attempt to hold the dog's harness. Do ask if the handler needs your assistance and, if so, offer your left arm.
- Don't allow people to tease or abuse the dog. Do allow the dog to rest undisturbed and concentrate on its job.

- Don't allow pets or other dogs to challenge or intimidate a service dog. Do allow them to meet when all animals can be carefully supervised.
- Don't pat the dog on the head. Do stroke the dog on the shoulder area—but only with the handler's approval.
- When speaking to the service dog's handler, do address the person and not the dog.
- Sometimes a service dog will make a mistake, and a correction is necessary to keep up the training. This could be a verbal reprimand or a leash correction. Handlers have been taught the proper and humane training techniques to maintain their dogs' working standards. You may not always hear it, but service dogs get loads of praise when they do the right things.

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## Attending Campus Events

Accommodations for campus events are coordinated primarily by the department sponsoring the event with assistance provided by SAR. Students must notify the sponsoring department of accommodation needed to attend the event (examples: sign language interpreters for a theatrical production sponsored by Gulf Coast State College).



# Section IV: Instructional Support for All Students with Disabilities<sup>2</sup>

## Syllabus Statement

An instructor can help normalize the accommodation process by making an announcement at the first class meeting and by including the approved statement on their syllabi. Instructors are encouraged to invite students with disabilities to meet during office hours to discuss accommodation needs after receipt of notifications from SAR.

1. Syllabus Statement: Gulf Coast State College supports an inclusive learning environment for all students. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that hinder your full participation, reasonable accommodations can be arranged. Prior to receiving accommodations, you must register with Disability Support Services. Appropriate academic accommodations will be determined based on the documented needs of the student. For information regarding the registration process, email SAR@gulfcoast.edu or call 850-747-3243.

## Textbooks, Course Packs, Syllabi, Videos

At the time that students register for classes, SAR begins to order print materials into alternative formats for students who have visual impairments or learning disabilities. Therefore, it is helpful if faculty have the syllabus and course reading list ready four weeks prior to the beginning of classes so alternative formats of the materials can be ordered/prepared if necessary. This includes having compiled course packs and, when possible, procuring videos. All print and audio materials require conversion to accessible formats in order to be usable by students with various disabilities.

## Recommendations for All Courses

There are instructional choices that faculty can make to render courses more accessible to students with varying learning styles and abilities. These may also diminish the need to make significant changes as students with disabilities request accommodations.

## General Recommendations

- Have a detailed syllabus available during the course enrollment period. Students may need to determine if a course is a good fit with their strengths and abilities, and SAR may need to arrange accommodations in advance.
- Announce reading assignments well in advance for students who are using alternative formats for print materials.
- Give assignments in both verbal and written format.
- Make all web-enhanced elements of the course accessible.
- When creating course reserves, keep the font size of the reserve document as close as possible to that of the original document. Good copies of material make alternative text conversion much easier.
- Inform your students about the learning resources available to them on campus (i.e. Math Lab, Reading & Writing Center).
- Encourage students to use office hours to clarify course material.

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Cornell University Student Disability Services, Katherine Fahey (r. 2012). Permission is granted to copy these materials for educational, noncommercial purposes provided the source is acknowledged.

## Applying Universal Design Principles

- Use Canvas to post a general outline in advance of each class.
- Consider providing class notes in an accessible format, such as Microsoft Word or readable PDF.
- Teach in a multi-modality/multi-sensory format to reach all learning styles. Combine visual and auditory modalities when presenting lecture material and then create experiential learning through group work and hands-on application of the material.
- Start each lecture with an outline of material to be covered. At the conclusion of class, briefly summarize key points.
- Put new vocabulary on the board/smartboard.
- Allow students to record lectures.
- Provide an adequate opportunity for questions and answers including during review sessions.
- Consider audio recording the lectures and making them available after the class session.
- Caption all video content.

## Evaluation

- Provide sample questions, practice exams, and information about the exam format. Provide examples of well-answered exam questions.
- Provide examples of “good” writing for the course and discipline. Give feedback in writing that students can incorporate into future assignments.
- When appropriate, allow the use of calculators, paper, and dictionaries.

## How to Accommodate Various Academic Activities

For more in-depth resources regarding best practices for accommodations in various academic settings such as field work, group discussions, science labs, etc., please visit DO-IT's Faculty Room (<https://www.washington.edu/doit/Faculty/Resources>). DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology) serves to increase the successful participation of individuals with disabilities in challenging academic programs and careers such as those in science, engineering, mathematics, and technology.

# Section V: Information about Specific Disabilities<sup>3</sup>

## Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

“Using DSM-IV, patients could be diagnosed with four separate disorders: autistic disorder, Asperger’s disorder, childhood disintegrative disorder, or the catch-all diagnosis of pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified.”<sup>4</sup> Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has a number of different characteristics that range from low-functioning to high-functioning. Students with ASD tend to have strong, narrow interests and above-average to superior intellect in specific subjects of interest. Due to a limited ability to perceive social subtexts and respond appropriately, they tend to have difficulty with social interactions which can be perceived as rude or abrasive. They have a narrow range of facial and vocal expressions and are most comfortable with predictable routine; subsequently they may be disturbed by changes in familiar and expected routines.

### Common Characteristics

Students with ASD may exhibit some of the following behaviors in general social interaction as well as in the classroom:

- Poor eye contact
- Inappropriate social interaction
- Very literal and concrete thinking patterns
- Limited voice intonation and/or volume
- Impulsivity
- Sensitivity to sensory stimuli (bright light, touch, sounds)

Students may:

- Attempt to monopolize conversation
- Ask a multitude of questions that may not deal with the subject matter
- Become tangential in answering questions
- Exhibit distracting behavior in long classes
- Engage in self-stimulating behavior (rocking, tapping, playing with “stress toys”)
- Be argumentative

### Applying Universal Design Principles

- Provide a syllabus with clear explanations of course objectives and specific due-dates for assignments.
- Allow breaks during class, particularly for movement.
- Redirect responses to bring student to point of answer.
- Allow the student the same anonymity as other students (i.e., avoid pointing out the student or the alternative arrangements to the rest of the class).
- When in doubt about how to assist the student, ask him or her.

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<sup>3</sup> Cornell University Student Disability Services, Katherine Fahey (r. 2012). Permission is granted to copy these materials for educational, noncommercial purposes provided the source is acknowledged.

<sup>4</sup> American Psychiatric Association (2013), “DSM-5 Autism Spectrum Disorder Fact Sheet”, <http://www.dsm5.org/Documents/Autism%20Spectrum%20Disorder%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>.

## Typical Accommodations

- Extended time for in-class assignments
  - Note-takers if distraction is a problem for the student
  - One-one-one meetings with the student to clarify assignments
  - Written instructions
  - Computer use, especially word processing for writing
  - Accommodation for work/assignments dependent on groups (usually accommodated with an assignment for the individual student or assigning particular work to the student within the group)
  - Advanced notice and preparation when changes are anticipated
  - Exam modifications
    - Extended time
    - Reduced-distraction test environment
    - Use of a computer for essay exams
- 

## Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder<sup>5</sup>

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder is a chronic and impairing condition that is prevalent in 5% of adults. Some symptoms of ADHD include difficulty paying attention, procrastination, frequently losing or misplacing important items, restlessness, and interrupting others when speaking. These symptoms are manifested in academic, employment, and social situations. Not all students with ADHD exhibit the same symptoms, but in an academic setting ADHD is generally characterized by careless mistakes and disorganized work, difficulty concentrating on and completing tasks, forgetting the content of reading or conversations, and being easily bored. In social situations, inattention may be apparent from frequent shifts in conversation, poor listening comprehension, and not following the sequential details or rules of games and other activities.

## Applying Universal Design Principles

- Provide a syllabus with clear explanations of course objectives and specific due-dates for assignments.
- For large projects or long papers, break down the task into smaller parts.
- Give verbal reminders in class of deadlines regarding homework assignments and upcoming exams.
- Provide an outline of each lecture at the start of class.
- When possible, start each lecture with a summary of material to be covered and conclude each lecture with a summary of major points addressed.
- Students with ADHD may start to “drift” during class. A varied format may help to keep their attention.
- Allow the student the same anonymity as other students (i.e., avoid pointing out the student or the alternative arrangements to the rest of the class).
- When in doubt about how to assist the student, ask him or her.

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<sup>5</sup> Cornell University Student Disability Services, Katherine Fahey (r. 2012). Permission is granted to copy these materials for educational, noncommercial purposes provided the source is acknowledged.

## Typical Accommodations

- Extended time for in-class assignments
- Use of speech-to-text software
- Alternative print formats
- Textbooks on tape
- Tape recording lectures
- Note-takers
- Exam modifications
  - Extended time
  - Reduced-distraction test environment
  - Use of a computer for essay exams

## Strategies for Student Success

- Use of a day planner
  - Writing down all assignments
  - Taking notes in class; rewriting notes after class
  - Breaking tasks down into manageable components
  - Setting reasonable goals and using a checklist to keep track of progress
  - Use of an audio recorder for lectures and studying
  - Working on projects with someone who has strong organizational skills
  - Getting feedback on social behavior from a trusted friend
- 

## Learning Disabilities<sup>6</sup>

The National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities defines a Specific Learning Disability as a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include a learning problem that is primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of intellectual disabilities, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

These disorders are intrinsic to individuals, presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction, and may occur across the life span. Problems in self-regulatory behaviors, social perceptions, and social integration may exist with learning disabilities but do not by themselves constitute a learning disability. Although learning disabilities may occur concomitantly with other disabilities, they are not the result of those conditions or influences.

A learning disability is persistent and pervasive throughout an individual's life, although the manifestations of the condition may change. The condition has a significant effect on learning but is not an indicator of intelligence. LD can often cause inconsistent academic performance and may only require accommodation in specific classes or may alternatively have a global effect on academic functioning.

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<sup>6</sup> Cornell University Student Disability Services, Katherine Fahey (r. 2012). Permission is granted to copy these materials for educational, noncommercial purposes provided the source is acknowledged.

A learning disability is unique to the individual and can be manifested in a variety of ways. Therefore, accommodations for a student with a specific learning disability must be tailored to the individual. Determining accommodations is not an exact process but is based on the functional limitations identified in the student's psycho-educational evaluation. SAR staff may re-evaluate accommodations with the student and faculty as the semester progresses, as not all needs may be evident until the class gets underway.

## **Applying Universal Design Principles**

### ***Classroom Instruction***

- Provide information about textbooks and readings in advance so that students can start reading before the semester begins or have information converted to electronic text for use with screen-reading technology.
- Provide an outline at the beginning of lecture and summarize key points at the end. Identify key terms during the lecture.
- When talking, be mindful of speed and audibility.
- Present instructions and assignments both orally and in written form.
- When writing notes on the board, state them orally as well.
- Provide handouts and use visual aids such as graphs and charts to accompany verbal explanation.
- Explain your thought process in solving a problem and demonstrate how to check a problem for accuracy.
- Allow the student to tape-record lectures.
- Break information into small steps when teaching many new tasks in one lesson (state objectives, review previous lesson, summarize periodically). Connect new concepts to previously-learned material.
- Allow time for clarification of directions and essential information.
- Provide thought questions to guide students through dense reading.
- Connect readings to lecture and course objectives.
- Connect readings to students' prior knowledge, real-life examples, and stories.
- Provide opportunities for class discussion of readings. Encourage students to summarize, make predictions, and explore multiple interpretations of text. Allow time for clarification and questions about readings.
- Allow the student the same anonymity as other students (i.e., avoid pointing out the student or the alternative arrangements to the rest of the class).
- When in doubt about how to assist the student, ask him or her.

### ***Assignments and Exams***

- Provide examples of well-written papers, cases, and lab reports and explain why they are well written.
- Provide opportunities for students to submit early drafts of papers or reports for feedback.
- Provide feedback in writing so it can be saved by the student for incorporation into future assignments.
- Provide deadlines for stages of the writing process to discourage last minute work and to encourage a well-constructed essay.
- Encourage students to get started with the writing process by recording their thoughts into a tape recorder or making an outline or graphic organizer.
- Post solutions to problems on Canvas.
- Suggest effective study strategies for the discipline.

- Provide study guides or review sheets for exams.
- Relieve or modify the pressure of timed responses (both oral and written).
- Avoid closely-worded multiple-choice exams, which often do not allow students to demonstrate course knowledge.
- If applicable, allow students to have formula sheets during exams.

## Typical Accommodations

- Alternative print formats
- Written materials provided in electronic-text format
- Tape recording of classroom lectures
- Note-takers
- Exam modifications
  - Extended time
  - Reduced-distraction test environment
  - Use of a computer for essay exams
  - Scribe
  - Alternative to Scantron forms

## Specific Areas that May be Affected by LD

### ***Written and Spoken Language***

The student may have difficulty with spelling (e.g., mixing up letters) or with speaking (e.g., reversing words or phrases). The vocabulary used may be less sophisticated than expected for college level work. The student may have difficulty monitoring his/her writing for errors in spelling, grammar, word order, word endings, subject-verb agreement, punctuation, and paragraph formation. Handwriting can be poorly formed or illegible with letters and words unevenly spaced on the page. Students with writing disabilities sometimes use a mixture of printed and cursive writing and upper- and lower-case letters in the same document.

### ***Reading***

Reading involves the skills of decoding and comprehension; students with reading disabilities may have difficulty with one or both of these skills. Decoding involves recognizing phonemic units as words. Comprehension involves attaching meaning to words. A limitation in either area will result in a reading process that is extremely labored. Students with comprehension difficulties will often need to read a passage several times before they are able to attach meaning.

### ***Writing***

Students with a learning disability affecting written expression have problems communicating effectively through writing. Whether these difficulties are related to dyslexia or to the physical act of printing or writing (dysgraphia), the outcome is likely to be written work that appears careless. Sentences are sometimes incomplete, with essential words and phrases missing. The organization of the paper can be choppy, jumping from one idea to the next and back again. The student may write more simply or with less content than would be expected from his/her understanding of the subject matter.

Some of the difficulties these students experience with in-class essays and essay exams may be mitigated by the use of a computer or word processor with spell check, grammar check, and cut-and-paste capabilities. A student with written language disabilities may also benefit from working with a tutor at the Reading & Writing Center.

### ***Oral Language – Expression***

Some students are eloquent writers yet have extreme difficulty formulating an immediate verbal response to a question. They may appear socially inept as they are unable to gather and express their ideas amidst the fast pace of active dialogue. During oral presentations, their thoughts may come out jumbled and chaotic and they may use many filler words, such as, “uh,” “er,” and “um,” as they struggle to express themselves. Reading aloud in class and taking oral quizzes and tests can be stressful and embarrassing.

If oral expression is not a fundamental requirement of the course being taught, you may allow a student to complete an oral assignment using a different format. Some students may benefit from videotaping their presentation for viewing or delivering their presentation to the instructor privately.

### ***Oral Language – Comprehension***

Students who have a disability related to *taking in* oral information may have difficulty listening and taking notes at the same time. The problem may relate to difficulties in differentiating relevant from irrelevant details. This student frantically tries to write down everything being said. Similarly, students with *dysgraphia*, who expend more than the normal focus and energy in actually writing words they are hearing, may fall behind in taking notes and miss examples and nuances of a lecture that aid other students in understanding and memory. The use of adaptive techniques similar to those used for deaf students- note-takers, films, role-playing, captioned videotapes, and other visual materials- may be necessary.

### ***Mathematics***

To be successful in understanding math concepts and in knowing when and how to apply them, the student must have strong language, memory, sequencing, and problem-solving skills. Students who have disabilities in math reasoning and calculation (dyscalculia) may make errors that seem to be “dumb mistakes,” e.g., reversing numbers, miscopying and/or misaligning columns of figures, and making errors when changing operational signs or performing other conversions. Other students experience difficulty remembering and working through the sequence of steps required to solve a problem (so that steps may be repeated, performed out of order, or forgotten altogether). These students may also have problems doing mental calculations, estimating answers, and/or organizing a problem, especially a word problem.

A student’s confidence in his/her ability to be successful at mathematics adds another dimension to learning disabilities. Because math is a cumulative subject with new concepts building on previously acquired information, students who have memory difficulties or who never completely mastered specific math concepts may experience frustration and mounting anxieties. Teaching math requires that a great deal of information be presented in a short period of time. Students with learning disabilities may feel overwhelmed by the pace or believe they understand what is being taught only to later realize they cannot generalize math concepts to homework assignments or test questions. Thus, math anxieties may cause a student to freeze during testing.

Students with math disabilities and anxieties usually benefit from regular and frequent work with a tutor and clarification from the instructor as needed. In some cases, SAR may recommend that the student be allowed to use extended time, a quiet room, and/or scrap paper for quizzes and tests.

### ***Foreign Language***

Students who have disabilities that relate to distinguishing, processing, remembering, and expressing sounds and words may find learning a foreign language problematic. To successfully master a second language a student must be able to:

- Hear and cognitively differentiate between the sound structure of words.



- Comprehend and remember the meanings of words and differing meanings when words are combined.
- Understand rules related to sentence structure and grammar.
- Retrieve information easily.
- Mentally manipulate information to successfully communicate verbally or in writing.

### ***Sequential Memory***

Other students you may work with will have learning disabilities that affect sequential memory tasks such as spelling, mathematics, and following step-by-step instructions. Students in this area benefit from learning how to break down tasks into smaller parts and from gaining clarity on how text authors and instructors organize material for learning. Giving many opportunities for evaluation, such as frequent quizzes, tests, and writing assignments, can help *all* students learn how to successfully organize their study, how to transfer learning from facts to application, and how to determine the level of detailed memorization needed. Tutoring may be required in more problematic areas. In general, the student with a learning disability—and in fact all students—benefit when a multi-modal approach to teaching and learning is used (seeing, hearing, saying, and doing).

### ***Organization and Attention***

Success in college requires a reasonably sophisticated development of skills related to organization, focus and attention, and study. In addition to students with learning disabilities, people with ADHD and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) may seem vulnerable or lacking in these skill areas. For instance, you may see from a student's participation in class discussions that he/she has completed the necessary reading and has a good grasp of course material. Yet the same student may misplace papers to be turned in or postpone starting projects so that the final product is rushed and less thorough than you would expect.

The delayed start of papers and projects may relate to poor estimation of how long it will take to complete the task. A student may appear to have reasonable organization and study skills but have difficulty understanding how much detail to focus on during lectures or while reading, writing, and preparing for tests. Some students also have problems screening out sights and sounds in the classroom to maintain focus on the class lecture. These difficulties can increase during longer lecture classes and peak stress times, such as during midterms and finals. ***It is important to note that for these problem areas to be termed as disabling they must meet criteria that go beyond mere developmental immaturity.***

Students who have learning disabilities that affect organization and attention often have difficulty completing open-ended, unstructured, and last-minute assignments. Therefore they, like all students, can benefit from receiving a detailed syllabus that clearly states readings to be completed for each class period and gives due dates and clear descriptions for course papers and projects. Providing students with an outline of material to be covered for each class also helps them learn how to organize their listening, note taking, and studying. Some instructors make such outlines available at the beginning of each class, printed in a course pack, or available for downloading from the web so that students may devote more class time and attention to understanding concepts and noting examples that aid memory.

## **General Recommendations**

### ***Individual Differences Awareness***

Keep in mind that no two students with learning disabilities are alike. Learning strategies and accommodations that work for one student may not work for another. Likewise, what works in one subject area or class format may not work in another. In general, students with learning

disabilities will learn much better when more channels are used in the teaching/learning process—oral, visual, tactile, and kinesthetic.

### **Conferences with Students**

When a student registers with SAR to request accommodations from faculty, we recommend that the student meet privately with the instructor to discuss the accommodations needed. This is a good opportunity for students to discuss their learning style and to ask for suggestions from the instructor for studying the course material.

### **Making a Referral**

If you are working with a student who seems to be struggling in your class but has not indicated that he/she has a learning disability, you may wish to refer the student to SAR as well as to other learning resources on campus. However, do not assume that the student has a learning disability because they are struggling.

GCSC does not have the resources available to diagnose disabilities, which places the responsibility for diagnostic evaluations on the student. SAR is, however, equipped to offer guidance to students as they begin the evaluation process.

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## **Blindness or Low Vision<sup>7</sup>**

Students with blindness have several options for accessing written text. These include the following:

- Recorded material
- A reader
- A computer screen reader that reads text out loud
- Braille documents and books
- Raised line color graphics

To perceive non-textual material, students with blindness might use raised line drawings of diagrams, charts, and illustrations, relief maps, and/or three-dimensional models of physical organs, shapes, and microscopic organisms.

When printed text documents are scanned into a readable electronic format, they can be read by a synthesized voice output device or converted, as needed, into Braille, tactile color graphics, or large print. Students are responsible for requesting conversion of their academic materials each semester.

Converting course materials into alternate media is a labor-intensive and highly detailed process for courses that have a high degree of graphics or mathematical equations. The SAR Accessible Technology Specialist will often have to request course materials well in advance of a lecture to have them prepared on time for a student with low vision. Providing course materials with as much advance notice as possible will ensure equitable access for the student.

## **Applying Universal Design Principles**

- Have copies of the syllabus and reading assignments ready four weeks prior to the beginning of classes to assist SAR with converting materials into alternate formats.
- If you know that you will be distributing handouts in class, try to provide them to the student with blindness or low vision ahead of time. This allows the individual to have access to the content by the time class is held.

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<sup>7</sup> Cornell University Student Disability Services, Katherine Fahey (r. 2012). Permission is granted to copy these materials for educational, noncommercial purposes provided the source is acknowledged.

- Be flexible with deadlines if assignments are held up by the document-conversion process.
- Keep a front row seat open for a student with blindness or low vision. A corner seat is especially convenient for a student with a service dog.
- Pace the presentation of material so that when referring to a textbook or handout, students have time to find the information.
- Repeat aloud what is written on the board or presented on overheads and in handouts.
- When using PowerPoint, read the headings out loud to indicate where the class is in the presentation. When referring to an object on a slide, describe its location on the slide.
- When working with a smartboard, diagrams, PowerPoint, an overhead projector, or other visual materials, realize that precision in language is essential for the student with low vision. If you point to the board and say, for example, “The heart is here,” or “there,” the student will not know where you are indicating. However, if you say, “The heart is in the upper middle of the chest to the left side,” it is more accessible. “The sum of 4 and 7 is 11,” is more accessible than saying, “The sum of this and that is 11.”
- Like all students, students with blindness or low vision are responsible for the material covered in class. There are several different methods that can be used to take notes:
  - Recording the lecture
  - Having a note-taker in the course
  - Getting copies of the professor’s notes, if appropriate
  - Using a Braille device or laptop computer
- Allow the student the same anonymity as other students (i.e., avoid pointing out the student or the alternative arrangements to the rest of the class).
- When in doubt about how to assist the student, ask him or her.

### Typical Accommodations

- Alternative print formats
  - Magnification devices
  - Adjustments in lighting
  - Raised lettering
  - Tactile cues
  - Adaptive computer equipment
  - Text conversion
  - Recorded lectures
  - Lab or library assistants
  - Note-takers
  - Readers
  - Library retrieval
  - Exam modifications
    - Extended time
    - Readers
    - Scribes
    - Adaptive equipment including computer screen readers
    - Alternative formats such as Braille or enlarged print
-

## Deaf or Hard of Hearing (Deaf/HH)<sup>8</sup>

The causes and degrees of hearing loss vary across the deaf and hard of hearing community, as do methods of communication. Technology that has been developed to assist hard of hearing individuals by amplifying sounds includes hearing aids, FM systems, and cochlear implants. In the classroom, primary accommodations include the use of Assistive Listening Devices (ALD), sign language interpreting, and real-time captioning. Please refer to the ***Information about Assistive Communication*** section for further description of these accommodations.

Not all students who are deaf are fluent users of all communication modes used across the deaf community, just as users of spoken language are not fluent in all oral languages. The primary possibilities for communication include sign language, speech, lip reading, and writing.

### Applying Universal Design Principles

- All video content must be captioned.
- Circular seating arrangements offer deaf/HH students the benefit of seeing all class participants. When desks are arranged in rows, keep front seats open for students who are deaf or hard of hearing and their interpreters.
- If you are in a classroom that provides a microphone for the professor, please use it.
- Try not to speak with your back turned to the class. Be especially mindful of this when writing notes on the board. The deaf student is probably lip reading at least some of what you are saying.
- If an interpreter is present, make sure the student can see both you and the interpreter.
- Speak loudly, clearly, and at a moderate pace. Try not to go too quickly.
- Replace such terms as “here” and “there” with more specific terms such as “on the second line,” “in the left corner,” and “on page .”
- When mentioning a book, always refer to the page number being discussed and indicate where on the page a reference can be found. Leave time for the student who is deaf/HH to find the place because she or he cannot simultaneously flip to find a page and continue to be aware of what is said.
- If asking a question, give the deaf student a moment to catch up and read the question before answering.
- In discussions, encourage students to raise hands and take turns. This makes it much easier for the interpreter and student to identify the speaker.
- Repeat the comments and questions of other students and acknowledge who has made the comment so the deaf/HH student can focus on the speaker and/or know who has spoken.
- Pause at logical moments in the class to give the student time to catch up. Remember, the student receiving interpreter services is watching the interpreter for part of, or the entire lecture rather than listening to it and may be a few sentences behind.
- If requested by SAR, assist the student with finding an effective note-taker from the class and/or provide the student with copies of your own notes.
- If there is a break in the class, get the deaf/HH student’s attention before resuming class.
- Because visual cues are a deaf student’s primary means of receiving information, visual aids such as captioned films, overheads, and diagrams are useful instructional tools.

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<sup>8</sup> Cornell University Student Disability Services, Katherine Fahey (r. 2012). Permission is granted to copy these materials for educational, noncommercial purposes provided the source is acknowledged.

- Write new terminology on the board or present it in a handout. This is helpful both for the deaf/HH student and for the sign language interpreter.
- Allow the student the same anonymity as other students (i.e., avoid pointing out the student or the alternative arrangements to the rest of the class).
- When in doubt about how to assist the student, ask him or her.

### Typical Accommodations

- Sign language or oral interpreters
  - Note-takers
  - Captions for films and videos
  - Assistive Listening Devices
  - Exam modifications
    - Extended time
    - The use of a computer for essay exams
    - An interpreter may be needed to interpret test instructions or to interpret the student's questions during an exam.
    - Since English may be a second language for an American Sign Language (ASL) user, an interpreter may be needed for translation.
- 

## Chronic Medical Conditions<sup>9</sup>

Health-related disabilities are conditions affecting one or more of the body's systems. These include the respiratory, immunological, neurological, and circulatory systems. Students affected by health-related disabilities differ from those with other disabilities because their conditions are not static. As the condition changes, so too may the need for accommodations.

### Types of Health-Related Disabilities

There are many kinds of health-related disabilities, which vary significantly in their effects and symptoms. Below is a non-exhaustive list and brief descriptions of some of the more common medical conditions experienced by students at GCSC.

Arthritis	Lyme Disease
Cardiovascular Conditions	Lupus Erythematosus
Cerebral Palsy	Multiple Sclerosis
Chemical Dependency	Neuromuscular Disorders
Chronic Fatigue Disorders	Seizure Disorders
Diabetes Mellitus	Sickle Cell
HIV/AIDS	Traumatic Brain Injury

**Arthritis** is inflammation of the body's joints, which causes pain, swelling, and difficulty in body movement. Students with arthritis may have difficulty taking notes, walking to class, or writing exams for long periods of time.

**Cardiovascular conditions** can cause fatigue, sleeplessness, dizziness, and shortness of breath. Students with cardiovascular conditions may require assistance to class in order to

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<sup>9</sup> Cornell University Student Disability Services, Katherine Fahey (r. 2012). Permission is granted to copy these materials for educational, noncommercial purposes provided the source is acknowledged.

reduce the symptoms of fatigue.

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**Cerebral Palsy** is the result of damage to the brain prior to or shortly after birth. It can prevent or inhibit walking and cause a lack of muscle coordination, spasms, and speech difficulty. Students with cerebral palsy may need to use computers or adaptive equipment for writing and may have difficulty with mobility.

**Chemical Dependency** is considered a disabling condition when it is documented that a person has received treatment for a drug or alcohol addiction and is not currently abusing. Chemical dependency can cause permanent cognitive impairments.

**Chronic Fatigue Syndrome** is an autoimmune disorder that causes extreme fatigue, loss of appetite, and depression. Physical or emotional stress may adversely affect a person with this condition. Students may miss class more frequently because of illness. In class, students may need seats with cushions and/or testing accommodations because frequent breaks are needed to help manage fatigue.

**Diabetes Mellitus** causes a person to lose the ability to regulate blood sugar. People with diabetes often need to follow a strict diet and may require insulin injections. During a diabetic reaction, a person may experience confusion, sudden personality changes, or loss of consciousness. In extreme cases, diabetes can also cause vision loss, cardiovascular disease, kidney failure, stroke, or necessitate the amputation of limbs. Students may need to have food and drink in class and/or leave class to take blood sugar measurements.

**HIV/AIDS:** HIV is the human immunodeficiency virus. It is the virus that can lead to acquired immune deficiency syndrome, or AIDS. HIV damages a person's body by destroying specific blood cells, called CD4+ T cells, which are crucial in helping the body fight diseases.

**Lyme Disease** is a condition that can cause paralysis, fatigue, fever, dermatitis, sleeping problems, memory dysfunction, cognitive difficulties, and depression.

**Lupus Erythematosus** can cause inflammatory lesions, neurological problems, extreme fatigue, persistent flu-like symptoms, impaired cognitive ability, connective tissue dysfunction, and mobility impairments. Lupus most often affects young women.

**Multiple Sclerosis (MS)** is a progressive neurological condition with a variety of symptoms, such as loss of strength, numbness, vision impairments, tremors, and depression. The intensity of MS symptoms can vary. A person can be extremely fatigued one day and very strong the next day. Extreme temperatures can adversely affect a person with MS. Students may miss class more frequently, need enlarged print handouts, and require additional time to complete assignments.

**Neuromuscular disorders** include a variety of diseases, such as muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, and ataxia that result in degeneration and atrophy of muscle or nerve tissues.

**Seizure disorders** cause a person to experience a loss of consciousness. Episodes, or seizures, vary from petit mal, or short absence, seizures to the less common grand mal seizures. Seizures are frequently controlled by medications and are most often not emergency situations. Students with seizure conditions may miss class the day after a seizure. They also may need testing accommodations because medications affect cognitive processing and seizures affect memory.

**Sickle Cell Anemia** is caused by an abnormal type of hemoglobin. Symptoms include breathlessness, abdominal pain, fatigue, and low vision. Students with Sickle Cell Anemia will frequently miss class for home or hospital treatment of the symptoms.

**Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)** occurs when a sudden trauma causes damage to the brain. Symptoms of a TBI can be mild, moderate, or severe depending on the extent of the damage to the brain. The range of symptoms include headache, confusion, lightheadedness, dizziness, blurred vision or tired eyes, ringing in the ears, bad taste in the mouth, fatigue or lethargy, a change in sleep patterns, behavioral or mood changes, and trouble with memory, concentration, attention, or thinking. Resting the brain is essential to recovering from a TBI.

### Applying Universal Design Principles

- Design course websites that include a complete syllabus (posted during the registration period), daily class notes, and streaming video of lectures.
- Provide multiple ways of demonstrating learning: take home exams, papers, group work, presentations, etc.
- Allow breaks during class, particularly for movement.
- Keep a front row or aisle seat open for the student.
- Present instructions in both written and oral formats.
- Allow the student to tape-record lectures.
- Provide study sheets or review guides for exams.
- Be flexible with deadlines, class attendance, and make-up exams.
- Spend extra time with the student, when necessary, and assist the student with planning and time management.
- Allow the student the same anonymity as other students (i.e., avoid pointing out the student or the alternative arrangements to the rest of the class).
- When in doubt about how to assist the student, ask him or her.

### Typical Accommodations

- Priority scheduling to work around treatment regimens, personal care needs, medication schedules, and variations in energy level and pain
- Ability to take a lighter than average course load without losing the benefits of being a full-time student
- Flexibility in scheduling classes and exams
- Flexibility with absence policy
- Exam modifications
  - Breaks
  - Reduced-distraction test environment
  - Use of a computer
- Conveniently located parking or transportation assistance
- Note-takers
- Extended time to complete a task
- Instructor assistance outside of the classroom
- Snacks and/or access to a refrigerator
- Ability to take frequent breaks
- Appropriate seating arrangements
- Assistive technology that decreases the impact of the disability
- Residence hall assignment appropriate to the individual's specific situation



## Mobility Disabilities<sup>10</sup>

Mobility disabilities range in severity from limitations on stamina to paralysis. Some mobility disabilities are caused by conditions present at birth while others are the result of illness or physical injury. Injuries cause different types of mobility disabilities, depending on what area of the body is affected.

### Types of Mobility Disabilities

**Amputation** is the removal of one or more limbs, and is sometimes caused by trauma or another condition.

**Paraplegia** is paralysis of the lower extremities and lower trunk caused by an injury to the mid-back. Students often use a manual wheelchair and have full movement of arms and hands.

**Quadriplegia** is paralysis of the upper and lower extremities and trunk caused by a neck injury. Students with quadriplegia have limited or no use of their arms and hands and often use electric wheelchairs.

### Additional Information

#### **Wheelchairs**

A person who uses a wheelchair is not “confined” to it, but rather uses it to get around, much as many of us walk. Wheelchairs come in a variety of sizes and styles and with various optional attachments. They can be manual or motorized. If students are unable to propel themselves a significant distance manually, they will use an electric wheelchair or scooter.

#### **Personal Space**

Individuals’ wheelchairs and other mobility devices are essentially extensions of their bodies. Unless you are a close friend of the individual, it is not appropriate to lean or hang on the chair. Never move someone’s wheelchair without asking their permission.

#### **Relative Height**

When speaking with a person in a wheelchair or with short stature, consider kneeling or squatting so that you are at the person’s eye level. This eliminates the need for the person in the wheelchair to tilt their heads back awkwardly for extended periods of time.

### Applying Universal Design Principles

- If necessary, arrange for a room change before the term begins.
- If possible, try not to seat wheelchair users in the back row. Move a desk or rearrange seating at a table so the student is part of regular classroom seating.
- Make sure accommodations are in place for in-class written work (e.g., allowing the student to use a scribe, to use assistive computer technology, or to complete the assignment outside of class).
- Be flexible with deadlines. Assignments that require library work or access to sites off campus will consume more time for a student with a mobility disability.
- Make arrangements early for field trips and ensure that accommodations will be in place on the given day (e.g., transportation, site accessibility).
- Allow the student the same anonymity as other students (i.e., avoid pointing out the student or the alternative arrangements to the rest of the class).
- When in doubt about how to assist the student, ask him/her.

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<sup>10</sup> Cornell University Student Disability Services, Katherine Fahey (r. 2012). Permission is granted to copy these materials for educational, noncommercial purposes provided the source is acknowledged.

## Typical Accommodations

- Note-takers
  - Accessible classroom/location/furniture
  - Alternative ways of completing assignments
  - Lab or library assistants
  - Assistive computer technology
    - Screen-reading software
    - Voice-activated software
  - Conveniently located parking
  - Exam modifications
    - Extended time
    - A scribe
    - Use of assistive technology
- 

## Psychological Disabilities<sup>11</sup>

Students with psychological disabilities experience chronic symptoms and have been treated professionally. Trauma is not the sole cause of psychological disabilities. Rather, genetics may play a role. With appropriate treatment, which often combines medications, psychotherapy, and support, the majority of psychological disabilities can be controlled. Disruptive behavior is not an attribute of most people with psychological disabilities.

Psychological disabilities can affect people of any age, gender, income group, and intellectual level. The National Institute of Mental Health estimates that one in five people in the United States has some form of psychological disability, but only one in five persons with a diagnosable disorder ever seeks treatment due to the strong stigmatization involved.

### Common Psychological Disabilities

Below is a non-exhaustive list and brief descriptions of some of the more common psychological disabilities experienced by students at GCSC.

Anxiety Disorders

Depression

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

Bipolar Disorder

Eating Disorders

Schizophrenia

Tourette's Syndrome

**Anxiety Disorders** can disrupt a person's ability to concentrate and cause hyperventilation, a racing heart, chest pains, dizziness, panic, and extreme fear.

**Bipolar Disorder (Manic Depressive Disorder)** causes a person to experience intense emotional states that occur in distinct mood episodes. In the manic phase, a person might experience an overexcited state. The depressed phase is marked by extreme sadness and hopelessness.

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<sup>11</sup> Cornell University Student Disability Services, Katherine Fahey (r. 2012). Permission is granted to copy these materials for educational, noncommercial purposes provided the source is acknowledged.

**Depression** is a major disorder that can begin at any age. Chronic depression may be characterized by a depressed mood for much of each day, a lack of pleasure in most activities, thoughts of suicide, sleep problems, and feelings of worthlessness or guilt. Depression is a variable condition that may fluctuate during a person's lifetime. Eighty to ninety percent of people with depression experience relief from symptoms through medication, psychotherapy, or a combination of the two.

**Eating Disorders** are illnesses that cause serious disturbances to one's everyday diet, such as eating extremely small amounts of food or severely overeating. Common eating disorders include anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge-eating disorder. Eating disorders affect both men and women. An eating disorder can be treated with adequate nutrition, reducing excessive exercise, and psychotherapy.

**Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)** is an anxiety disorder in which people have unwanted and repeated thoughts, feelings, ideas, or sensations (obsessions) that make them feel driven to do something (compulsions). This condition can significantly interfere with everyday living. OCD can be treated with medication and therapy.

**Schizophrenia** can cause a person to experience, at some point in the illness, delusions and hallucinations.

**Tourette's Syndrome (TS)** is a neurological disorder characterized by repetitive involuntary movements and vocalizations called tics.

### Applying Universal Design Principles

- Spend extra time with the student, when necessary, and assist the student with planning and time management.
- Clearly define course requirements, the dates of exams, and when assignments are due; provide advance notice of any changes.
- Allow the student to tape-record lectures.
- Allow the student the same anonymity as other students (i.e., avoid pointing out the student or the alternative arrangements to the rest of the class).
- When in doubt about how to assist the student, ask him/her.

### Typical Accommodations

- Taped lectures
- Exam modifications
  - Extended time
  - Reduced-distraction test environment

## Speech and Language Impairments<sup>1213</sup>

The term “Speech and Language Impairment” refers to difficulties in communication and related areas such as oral motor function. These delays and disorders range from simple sound substitutions to the inability to understand or use language or use the oral-motor mechanism for functional speech. Speech and language disorders have many causes including hearing loss, cerebral palsy, learning disabilities, and traumatic brain injuries.

**Speech impairments** refer to difficulties producing speech sounds or problems with voice quality. They might be characterized by an interruption in the flow or rhythm of speech, such as stuttering. Speech disorders may be difficulties with the way sounds are formed, called articulation or phonological disorders, or they may be difficulties with the pitch, volume, or quality of the voice. There may be a combination of several problems. A student may say “see” when they mean “ski” or they may have trouble using other sounds like “l” or “r.”

**Language impairments** are impairments in the ability to understand and/or use words in context, both verbally and nonverbally. Some characteristics of language disorders include improper use of words and their meanings, inability to express ideas, inappropriate grammatical patterns, reduced vocabulary, and inability to follow directions. One or a combination of these characteristics may occur in students who are affected by language learning disabilities or developmental language delay.

Although you may be uncomfortable listening to someone with a speech and language disorder, remember that “your discomfort is not their discomfort.” Make sure you let individuals with speech disorders speak for themselves. Do not finish sentences for them or assume you know what they are going to say.

At the same time, understand that a student with a communication disorder may be self-conscious and hesitant to participate in class. Try to pace discussion so that there is ample time and opportunity to participate.

### Applying Universal Design Principles

- Let the student speak for him or herself, allowing for the time needed to do so.
- When speaking with a student whose speech is difficult to understand, don’t hesitate to ask for clarification, using writing when necessary.
- Allow the student the same anonymity as other students (i.e., avoid pointing out the student or the alternative arrangements to the rest of the class).
- When in doubt about how to assist the student, ask him/her.

### Typical Accommodations

Oral presentations may be a concern for students with speech impairments and their instructors. It is recommended that instructors openly discuss these concerns with the student and come up with adjustments to oral assignments, if needed. Listed below are several possibilities for alterations.

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<sup>12</sup> Gregoria Barazandeh, “Disability Fact Sheet Handbook” at UC Irvine  
[http://www.disability.uci.edu/disability\\_handbook/Speech%20and%20Language/fact\\_sheet.html](http://www.disability.uci.edu/disability_handbook/Speech%20and%20Language/fact_sheet.html) Reprinted with permission.

<sup>13</sup> Cornell University Student Disability Services, Katherine Fahey (r. 2012). Permission is granted to copy these materials for educational, noncommercial purposes provided the source is acknowledged.

- Modifications of oral assignments including the use of a computer with a voice synthesizer or permitting the student to present directly to the faculty member in his/her office.
- Allowing substitutions for oral class reports when the oral report is not fundamental to the class.
- Assigning group projects that allow the student to participate in a reduced capacity in the oral presentation.

## Section VI: Communicating with People with Disabilities

### Speaking About People with Disabilities<sup>14</sup>

Your portrayal of individuals with disabilities can enhance their dignity and promote positive attitudes about their abilities. Let your descriptive words emphasize the person's worth and abilities, not the disabling condition. Avoid references, phrases, and words that suggest restrictions, limitations, or boundaries because these phrases tend to carry stereotypes and contribute to discriminating attitudes. Even if a person with disabilities refers to him or herself in particular ways, using phrases like "confined to a wheelchair" reflects poor judgment on the part of the speaker or writer.

Refer to the person first rather than the disability. The phrase "people with disabilities" is preferred, for instance, over "the disabled" which tends to emphasize disability and to create the image of an unusual and homogeneous group. Here are some examples of people-first language:

#### ***Affirmative phrases***

- Person who is blind; person with low vision
- Person who is deaf; person who is hard of hearing
- Person who has multiple sclerosis
- Person with epilepsy; person with a seizure disorder
- Person who uses a wheelchair
- Person who is unable to speak

#### ***Negative phrases***

- The blind
- Suffers a hearing loss
- Afflicted by MS
- Epileptic
- Wheelchair-bound; confined to a wheelchair
- Dumb; mute
- Courageous (implies the person is a hero or martyr)

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<sup>14</sup> Cornell University Student Disability Services, Katherine Fahey (r. 2012). Permission is granted to copy these materials for educational, noncommercial purposes provided the source is acknowledged.

If you feel awkward about how to refer to a person with disability, it may be best to ask the person.

### **Suggestions for Interacting with Students with Blindness or Low Vision**

- Some students with vision loss use canes or service dogs for mobility purposes; however, many navigate without them. Like anybody, students with low vision appreciate being asked if help is needed before it is given. Ask a student if s/he would like some help and then wait for a response before acting.
- When entering a room, identify yourself to the student. When giving directions, say “left” or “right,” “step up” or “step down.” Convert directions to the student’s perspective.
- When guiding a student (into a room, for example), offer your arm and let him or her take it rather than pulling the person’s sleeve. If a person with blindness uses a sighted guide, s/he generally holds the elbow of the guide.

### **Disability Etiquette<sup>15</sup>**

- Offer assistance as you would to anyone else, for example, to push a wheelchair or to guide a person who is blind. The person will indicate whether or not the help is needed, and “no, thank you” must be respected. Most people who are disabled will not hesitate to ask for needed help and will be specific as to how it should be given; for example, a person who is blind usually prefers to take your proffered arm.
- Noticing an obvious disability is not rude; however, asking personal questions about it is inappropriate.
- Always talk directly to a person who is disabled rather than to the person who may be accompanying him or her. Never talk about a person who is disabled to the person he/she is with as if the person does not exist. This includes an interpreter for a person who is deaf or hearing impaired.
- Do not be concerned if you use the words “walking” or “running” when talking to a person who uses a wheelchair, or “do you see,” when talking to a person who is blind. People with disabilities use these words themselves and think nothing of it.
- Do not avoid using words like blind or deaf when associating with people with these disabilities. People with disabilities are aware of their disabilities and do not need to be shielded from the facts.
- When talking to a person who uses a wheelchair for any length of time, it is better to sit down in order to be at the same eye level. It is very tiring for a person to look up for a long time.
- Be sensitive to architectural barriers in your facility. Be aware of federal and state laws that may apply to eliminating architectural barriers in your establishment. Everyone must be concerned and alert to this very real problem.
- Remember that if a person does not turn around in response to a call, it may be that he/she is deaf or hard of hearing. A light tap on the shoulder to get a person’s attention makes sense.
- Never gesture about a person who is blind to someone else who may be present. This will inevitably be picked up and make the person who is blind feel that you are “talking behind his/her back.”
- Lip reading by persons who are deaf or hard of hearing can be aided by being sure that the light is on your face and not behind you, and by taking all obstructions such as pipes,

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<sup>15</sup> West Georgia Technical College, Zelma Jones (r. 2012). Permission is granted to copy these materials for educational, noncommercial purposes provided the source is acknowledged.

cigarettes or gum out of your mouth, keeping the lips flexible and speaking slowly. Additional communication could include body language, pantomime and gestures of all kinds and written communication if necessary.



## Section VII: Resources

### Guiding Legislation

Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 & 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973:  
<http://www.ada.gov/>

Assistive Technology Act of 1998 <https://www.ataporg.org/legislative.html>

Office of Civil Rights  
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq.html>

Joint DOE/DOJ Dear Colleague Letter Re: Accessible Technology:  
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-20100629.html>

Chafee Amendment  
Fair Use of Print Materials  
<http://itd.athenpro.org/volume9/number1/lingane.html>

### Universal Design

Center for Applied Science and Technology  
<http://www.cast.org/>

Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology (DO-IT)  
<https://www.washington.edu/doiit/programs/center-universal-design-education/introduction-universal-design-education>

9 Principles of Universal Design, University of Connecticut  
<http://udi.uconn.edu/index.php?q=node/12>

Institute for Human Centered Design  
<http://www.adaptenv.org/>

### Web Accessibility

Do-IT  
Accessible Web Design  
<https://www.washington.edu/doiit/Resources/web-design.html>

The Trace Research & Development Center, University of Wisconsin Designing More Useable Websites  
<http://trace.umd.edu/>

National Center on Accessible Information Technology in Education <https://www.washington.edu/doiit/programs/center-universal-design-education/introduction-universal-design-education>

Equal Access to Software and Information (EASI) Barrier-free E-Learning Course Information <http://easi.cc/>

WEB Accessibility in Mind (WEBAIM)  
<http://webaim.org/intro>

## **Person First Language**

Disability Cultural Center, Syracuse University  
An Introductory Guide to Disability Language and Empowerment  
<http://sudcc.syr.edu/LanguageGuide/>

Simi Linton  
Author and Disability Advocate  
[http://www.similinton.com/about\\_claim.htm](http://www.similinton.com/about_claim.htm)

## **Additional Useful Resources**

Refocus  
Drafting Processes that Minimize Extra Efforts for Students with Disabilities  
<http://www.projectshift-refocus.org>

PEPNet  
Resources for Deaf/HH Students  
<http://pepnet.org>

National Women's Law Center  
Accommodations for Pregnancy  
[http://www.nwlc.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/pps\\_faq\\_at\\_dr\\_10.24.12.pdf](http://www.nwlc.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/pps_faq_at_dr_10.24.12.pdf)

Service / Comfort Animals  
FAQ Document  
[http://www.ada.gov/service\\_animals\\_2010.htm](http://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm)

## Appendices

- Appendix A: Confidential Accommodation Letter
- Appendix B: Semester Accommodation Form
- Appendix C: Nursing Semester Accommodation Form
- Appendix D: Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Appendix E: Flexible Attendance Policy
- Appendix F: Testing Guidelines
- Appendix G: Permission to Change Date and/or Time of Quiz/Test/Exam
- Appendix H: Flexible Attendance “How To”

**Disability Support Services  
Confidential Accommodation Letter**

Student's Name:  
Student ID:  
Semester:

GCSC is committed to providing inclusive learning environments. Equal access can often be achieved through course design. However, barriers to learning or assessment may still exist for a student with a disability in your course. The following accommodations may be requested by this student to facilitate access. Contact SAR if the methods listed do not eliminate barriers or are in conflict with essential course function.

The aforementioned student has been approved for the following academic accommodations:

- **Testing Accommodations:**
  
- **Classroom Accommodations:**

SAR staff is available to provide support in designing inclusive, accessible learning experiences for all students. The following are some universal design strategies that can help reduce the need for accommodations for individual students.

- Post PowerPoint slides and class notes on a course Website
- Provide options for students to demonstrate mastery of concepts. Options include group projects, papers, presentations, take-home exams, etc.
- Provide reading materials electronically in accessible formats and use only audio material that is captioned.

Visit the GCSC SAR faculty resources website to learn more about curricular design and the process for implementing accommodations. We also encourage you to read the SAR Faculty and Staff Resource Guide which is located on our website and can be emailed to you by request.

Your cooperation in providing equal educational opportunities for students with disabilities is critical and greatly valued. Please contact our office if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Disability Support Services  
Student Union East, Room 60  
(P) 850-747-3243 or Ext. 3243  
(E) SAR@gulfcoast.edu

**Confidential**

The information is provided by Disability Support Services for the purpose of educational planning. We appreciate the respect for the student's confidentiality and your understanding that state and federal laws prohibit the release of this information to any other person or agency or for use in any manner for any other purpose.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am requesting academic accommodations for your course.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am **not** requesting academic accommodations for your course.

The student should discuss academic accommodations with his or her instructor as soon as possible and should be done in a private meeting with the instructor.

The student does not waive their right to accommodations by refusing academic accommodations for a particular course. If the student wishes to receive academic accommodations after refusal, the student should contact SAR for a new Confidential Accommodation Letter.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Disability Support Services Semester Accommodation Plan

Semester: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_ GCSC ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

### ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS – CLASSROOM

- \_\_\_\_\_ Copies of Notes/Note-Taker/Recorder/SmartPen/Sonocent
- \_\_\_\_\_ Textbooks in Alternate Format or Audio Books
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sign Language Interpreters
- \_\_\_\_\_ Preferential Seating
- \_\_\_\_\_ Accessible Work Station/Desk/Adaptive Furniture
- \_\_\_\_\_ Enlargement of Classroom Materials
- \_\_\_\_\_ Use of Spell Checker/Word Processor/Dictionary/Calculator for In-class Assignments
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

### ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS – TESTING

- \_\_\_\_\_ Time and an Half (1.5x) Extended Time for Tests
- \_\_\_\_\_ Double Time (2x) Extended Time for Tests
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reader for Tests
- \_\_\_\_\_ Oral Response to Test Questions
- \_\_\_\_\_ Scribe to Record Test Responses
- \_\_\_\_\_ Quiet/Nondistracting Testing Environment (out of classroom)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Alternative Test Formats (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Direct Response on Test Protocol
- \_\_\_\_\_ Enlargement of Test
- \_\_\_\_\_ Use of Spell Checker/Word Processor/Dictionary/Calculator
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

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Student Signature

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Date

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Disability Support Services Staff Signature

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Date

## Disability Support Services Semester Accommodation Plan

Semester: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_ GCSC ID #:

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Course: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

The aforementioned student is registered with Disability Support Services and requires specific academic accommodations based on the documentation provided to the institution. Academic adjustments and accommodations are rights ensured under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Your cooperation and assistance are essential in ensuring the student's equal access while enrolled at Gulf Coast State College. The following designated accommodations are requested to minimize the impact of the student's specific disability:

### ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS – CLASSROOM

- \_\_\_\_\_ Copies of Notes/Note-Taker/Recorder/SmartPen/Sonocent
- \_\_\_\_\_ Textbooks in Alternate Format or Audio Books
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sign Language Interpreters
- \_\_\_\_\_ Preferential Seating
- \_\_\_\_\_ Accessible Work Station/Desk/Adaptive Furniture
- \_\_\_\_\_ Enlargement of Classroom Materials
- \_\_\_\_\_ Use of Spell Checker/Word Processor/Dictionary/Calculator for In-class Assignments
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

### ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS – TESTING

- \_\_\_\_\_ Time and an Half (1.5x) Extended Time for Tests
- \_\_\_\_\_ Double Time (2x) Extended Time for Tests
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reader for Tests
- \_\_\_\_\_ Oral Response to Test Questions
- \_\_\_\_\_ Scribe to Record Test Responses
- \_\_\_\_\_ Quiet/Nondistracting Testing Environment (out of classroom)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Alternative Test Formats (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Direct Response on Test Protocol
- \_\_\_\_\_ Enlargement of Test
- \_\_\_\_\_ Use of Spell Checker/Word Processor/Dictionary/Calculator
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the accommodation plan, please contact Disability Support Services at ext. 3243. Thank you for your cooperation.



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Student Signature

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Date

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Disability Support Services Staff Signature

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Date



## STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students with documented disabilities at GCSC have the right to:

- Equal access to educational and co-curricular programs, services, and activities facilitated by GCSC.
- Equal opportunity to learn and receive reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids and services as supported by their documentation, which do not represent a fundamental alteration of the essential educational components of the academic programs.
- Confidential treatment of disability-related records that is housed at Disability Support Services. Only persons working at, or in collaboration with SAR have access to these records. Some level of disclosure to faculty may be necessary to coordinate requested accommodation(s). Disability documentation that is submitted to SAR are not a part of the student's permanent academic record.

Students with documented disabilities at GCSC are responsible for:

- Meeting qualifications and maintaining academic, technical, and institutional standards for courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities.
- Providing current and appropriate disability documentation in accordance with established GCSC guidelines. Typically, Individualized Education Plans (IEP), 504 Plans from a secondary school, or notes on physician prescription pads do not provide thorough information for the documentation of disability. However, such materials will be accepted as supplemental information.
- Initiating and following established procedure for obtaining reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services in a timely manner.
- Completing the Semester Accommodation Plan at the beginning of each new semester.
- Facilitating discussion with instructors regarding registration with SAR and eligible accommodations.

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Student Signature and Date

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SAR Representative Signature and Date



## **GCSC CLASS ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Regular class attendance and participation are significant factors that help to promote success in college. Students are expected to attend all class meetings of all courses for which they are registered.

You are expected to know the instructor's specific attendance policy, as stated in the syllabus for each course. In the event of absence, you should contact your instructor as soon as possible to indicate the reason and to inquire whether make-up work is possible. (Make-up work is offered solely at the discretion of your professor.)

If your absences in a class become excessive, as stated in the course syllabus, your professor may contact you, indicating that further absence may result in your withdrawal from the course. Your professor can withdraw you from a course for excessive absences without your permission.

Instructors will monitor attendance at the beginning of each semester. If you are not in attendance during this period, you may be withdrawn from the course. You will be financially responsible for the course and a "W" will appear on your transcript. Withdrawal from a course may also have implications for financial aid.

## **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND FLEXIBILITY OF ATTENDANCE**

Regardless of a disability, all students are responsible for fulfilling the essential requirements of courses/programs/degrees for which they are enrolled, including attendance expectations. However, when a student has a chronic condition with random or cyclical acute episodes, modifications to attendance policies may be reasonable. Student must provide disability documentation that supports this accommodation request.

Disability Support Services (SAR) can provide verification of a disability which may address the legitimacy of absences, but not necessarily excuse it. SAR cannot officially excuse absences; the ultimate decision regarding absences and the resulting influence those absences have on grade is at the discretion of the instructor after close examination of the essential course requirements. Faculty are not required to lower or effect substantial modifications of standards for accommodation purposes. Attendance flexibility is not a waiver of attendance policies.

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

- Meet with faculty to develop a contingency plan (e.g. establish a pre-determined number of additional absences in order to avoid any misconceptions about the number of absences allowed) to accommodate any disability-related absences that may occur. Accommodations cannot be granted retroactively.
- Contact faculty every time a disability-related absence occurs and informing them when student will return. It is essential to maintain regular communication with faculty and keep faculty informed of student's status.
- Material covered or work completed during disability related absences. Student is responsible for obtaining lecture notes and missed materials.
- Neither extension of deadlines for assignments due nor arrangements for making up missed tests or quizzes are included in accommodation and must be negotiated individually with each instructor during the initial meeting with faculty to develop a contingency plan.

PLEASE NOTE: If any instructor believes attendance flexibility is not feasible because it will alter the fundamental nature or jeopardize the learning objectives for their class, the student may request that SAR re-assess the individual circumstances surrounding this request.

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Student Signature

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Date

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Disability Support Services Staff Signature

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Date

## Appendix F: Testing Accommodation Guidelines



### TESTING ACCOMMODATION GUIDELINES

Testing accommodations are provided to students who are registered with Disability Support Services and have been approved for this accommodation.

#### Requesting Testing Accommodations

- In order for SAR to provide instructor with verification of student's eligibility for academic accommodations, student must submit the Semester Accommodation Plan each semester.
- It is the student's responsibility to meet with each instructor at the beginning of the semester to discuss academic accommodations in the course including appropriate testing accommodations.
- If the instructor is unable to provide testing accommodations in the classroom, the student must register for their test through Register Blast on the GCSC website **at least 48 business hours prior to the exam date/time**.
- Exams are administered at the Testing Center in Student Union West, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, during the scheduled class time unless prior notification of a different date/time is approved by the instructor.

#### Register Blast – How to Register for Your Test

The last testing appointment time on Mondays–Thursdays is 5:30 p.m.; Fridays, 1:30 p.m. You must schedule your exam appointment so that you can complete your exam prior to the Testing Center's closing times (Mondays–Thursdays, 7:30 p.m.; Fridays, 3:30 p.m.).

To schedule an exam appointment in Register Blast:

- Go to the Gulf Coast State College homepage ([www.gulfcoast.edu](http://www.gulfcoast.edu)).
- At the top of the homepage, click on the link named "Current Students."
- Scroll down until you see the "Testing" link on the left side of the screen.
- Click on the link and then click "Register Blast" from the drop down menu.
- Click on the "Schedule Your Exam" link at the bottom of the page.
- Select "SAR" under the first two drop down menus and the correct date and time. Then fill out the appropriate fields.
- Select the "Reader/Scribe" button only if you receive either of those as an accommodation and are requesting them for this test.
- After all of the information is provided, select "Add to Cart" at the bottom of the page. If you want to add more tests, select "+ Add Another Exam." If you are done, select "COMPLETE REGISTRATION."
- Once you have clicked "COMPLETE REGISTRATION," your email confirmation receipt will appear. Print the receipt for your records.

### Day of Exam Instructions

- Report to the Testing Center at the scheduled time of exam. Any unexcused lateness will result in a reduction in the total amount of time allotted to complete the exam unless student has contacted the Testing Center and SAR in advance.
- Surrender to the proctor all materials that have not been approved by the professor on the Exam Coversheet (backpacks, note-cards, cell phones, Mp3 players, etc.). Lockers are available upon request.
- Review format of the examination with a member of the testing center staff.
- Ask questions directly to the testing center staff. If a staff member is unable to answer questions, the staff will arrange for you to ask questions of your professor (when possible).
- Take examination according to approved testing accommodations.
  - All exams will be monitored by recorded video, physical walk-through and/or observation windows.
  - Any student suspected of cheating will be required to stop testing. The exam and other materials will be collected by a Testing Center Staff member and the instructor will be notified immediately.
  - Communication to other students, leaving the testing space and frequent bathroom breaks are prohibited.
- Return completed exam to the testing center staff. All scrap paper and worksheets must be returned with the exam.

### Online Exam Accommodations

- It is the student's responsibility to meet with each instructor at the beginning of the semester to discuss academic accommodations in the course including appropriate testing accommodations.
- Send the instructor an email at least two days prior to the test/quiz to remind him/her of your approved extended time. SAR has instructions on how to extend the time for online tests if the instructor is unfamiliar with how to add time to a test.
- If the online test must be proctored, follow the steps for Requesting Testing Accommodations instructions and Register Blast instructions.

I understand and agree to follow the testing guidelines stated above. I also understand that neither SAR nor the instructor is obligated to provide the accommodations if I fail to comply with these procedures.

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Student Signature and Date

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SAR Representative Signature and Date



**Disability Support Services  
Permission to Change Date and/or Time of Quiz/Test/Exam**

Approval by an instructor **MUST** be given before a test can be given at a different date or time. If a student is requesting to take his/her exam on a different date/time, the student must receive approval from his/her instructor. The instructor must sign this form and send through campus mail or email [SAR@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:SAR@gulfcoast.edu) and James Smith ([jsmith@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:jsmith@gulfcoast.edu)) with the approval. Students who do not have approval will be sent back to class and the instructor will be contacted.

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Course: \_\_\_\_\_

Test Date and Time: \_\_\_\_\_

The above referenced student has my permission to take his or her quiz/test/exam (circle one) on the following alternative time or date:

Name of Exam: \_\_\_\_\_

Reschedule Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Information (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

By signing this form, I understand that the student and I have made an agreement to allow a change in the scheduled date and/or time of the above referenced quiz/test/exam.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Instructor's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

SAR Office Use Only:

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Received By: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix H: Flexible Attendance “How to”

What Does Flexibility Regarding Attendance Mean? A Guide for Implementation.

We have learned that faculty and students would like more guidance regarding the accommodation "flexibility regarding attendance." This information is designed to help faculty in assessing how to implement this accommodation in the classroom. Also, this guide is intended to assist students in discussing this accommodation with faculty. In this guide, we outline factors for faculty to consider, the process, responsibilities, and some common scenarios. Please see "frequently asked questions" for more information regarding this accommodation.

When is flexibility appropriate? Some factors for faculty to consider:

Generally students are expected to follow established classroom attendance policies. However, some disabilities are episodic in nature and as a result, a student may have to miss class for medical concerns. While we want to encourage faculty to be flexible with the attendance policy, you are not required to alter any essential functions of the course.

You may find it helpful to consider the following when determining whether attendance is an essential function of a course:

- Is there classroom interaction between the instructor and students and among students?
- Do student contributions in class constitute a significant component of the learning process?
- 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?
- What method is used to calculate the final grade?
- What are the classroom practices and policies regarding attendance?

What is the process?

1. The Disability Support Services office determines that the accommodation is reasonable. We explain to students that this does not mean that they can miss as many classes as they want. Also, the student is responsible for completing all coursework. Finally, we explain that it is student responsibility to discuss this accommodation with the professor.
2. The student is responsible to initiate the conversation about this accommodation early in the semester. This accommodation cannot be provided without a discussion between the professor and student. Some students register late in the semester and some wait to give professors Confidential Accommodation Letter (aka Faculty



Notification Letters). In these cases, professors are not expected to provide any retroactive accommodations. However, it may still be helpful to have this information, even at a late point in the semester.

3. The professor can assess the impact of attendance on class and determine what accommodations can be made. There are some classes in which this accommodation is not appropriate. These tend to be classes when the student learning is being assessed in the classroom or when allowing an absence would place an undue burden on the professor. The professor and student can use the discussion points at the end of this guide to address all aspects of the course, including how attendance can be accommodated when the student misses homework and exams. It is also important to discuss professor expectations of the student when the student misses class. The key to implementing this accommodation successfully is for faculty to be very clear about expectations.
4. The Disability Support Services (SAR) office is available to provide support for faculty and students regarding this accommodation. Feel free to contact us at any point in the process.

#### Student Responsibilities:

- Initiate conversation early with faculty. Be clear in communications. Understand that not all classes can offer flexible attendance. Do not just hand your professor your Confidential Accommodation Letter and expect to receive the accommodation. A conversation must occur between you and your professor.
- You are still required to complete all coursework. When you miss class, notify your professor immediately. The accommodation of flexibility regarding attendance does not mean that you will automatically get an extension for work that is due on a day that you are absent. You should still make every attempt to turn your work in via email. If you will not be able to turn in a homework assignment or if you miss a quiz or exam, it will be your responsibility to contact your professor to ask if you will be allowed to make up the work.
- Keep your SAR Coordinator updated and informed if you are missing class. If your professor contacts the SAR office, it is helpful for your Coordinator to know about your situation.

#### Professor Responsibilities:

- Be available to discuss the accommodation with the student.
- Determine how essential attendance is to your course. If you determine, through a deliberative consideration (using the bullet points listed above), that attendance is an essential requirement, this accommodation may not be applicable.
- Be very clear in your expectations when you meet with the student. You may choose to use the discussion points at the end of this guide to assist in this conversation. Feel free to contact the SAR office for assistance with this discussion.

- Sometimes student absences become excessive. While this should always be addressed first between you and the student, you are welcome to contact us to help address the concern.

#### Disability Support Services Office Responsibilities:

- Approve this accommodation only when appropriate.
- Provide student with letters, guidelines, and information about his or her responsibilities.
- Provide assistance for faculty in determining how to implement this accommodation in the class.
- Provide support to student and faculty when questions or difficulties arise due to this accommodation.

#### Scenarios:

1. Professor allows 3 absences and then students' grades drop by a letter grade. A student with flexibility regarding attendance may be allowed 6 absences and 24 hours to make up any work missed.
2. In a foreign language course, a student is told at the start of the semester that the professor cannot allow much flexibility regarding attendance as much learning depends on classroom interactions. However, the professor will keep the student's accommodation in mind. Student is hospitalized for a week at the end of the semester and cannot complete a presentation. Professor allows the student to make the presentation up with only the professor as this does not essentially alter the course objectives.
3. Professor gives clicker points for attendance. Professor allows student to respond to questions via email. However, student must contact professor and answer questions within 24 hours of class.
4. Student and professor agree that student can miss class more often than classmates as long as all of the work is completed. However, it is nearing the end of the semester and student has not turned in assignments, has not been in contact with the professor, and has not attended class. In this case, the professor would not be expected to extend deadlines as student has not taken responsibility for maintaining communication and is not completing coursework.

#### Discussion Points for Flexibility Regarding Attendance:

These discussion points can serve as a resource for the faculty member and student outlining how classroom attendance, exams and quizzes, assignment due dates, and instructor notification are to be handled in case of absences.

Classroom Attendance: Is there an attendance policy? Is there room for flexibility? Are there a maximum number of absences allowed?

Exams and Quizzes: Will student be allowed make ups? Is there a timeframe within which make ups must be completed?

Assignment Due Dates: Would student be able to turn in work electronically? Will there be flexibility if a student is absent on a day that an assignment is due?

Instructor Notification: How does the professor prefer to be notified? Do notifications need to occur in advance of an absence?

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