

2.75 Student Disability Accommodation

A. Purpose

To establish the process to provide access for students with disabilities to the college's services, programs, activities, academic resources, and opportunities, and define eligibility for these services.

B. Policy

The college will provide reasonable accommodations in its services, programs, and activities and will make modifications to policies, practice and procedures in order to provide equal access to persons with disabilities pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, and other relevant federal and state laws. Modifications and reasonable accommodations are provided on a case-by-case basis and will not be based on stereotypes about disabilities or individuals with disabilities. Limitations on accommodations include those that would fundamentally alter the nature of the college's services, programs, or activities.

C. Procedures

Documentation for Reasonable Disability Accommodation

A student seeking accommodations for their disability must initiate contact with the disability support services (DSS) office to begin the process for requesting accommodations.

1. The student will register with the DSS office as a person with a disability by presenting medical documentation of a disability that supports requested accommodations. Determination of appropriate documentation will be made by the DSS office.
2. The student will meet with DSS office staff to complete the DSS office application for services, discuss needs, arrangements, responsibilities, etc. This meeting may be conducted in person at a campus, center, training site, or remotely. If, because of the student's disability, clerical or other assistance is required in understanding or preparing the application for DSS office disability support services, this will be provided upon request.
3. Reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Factors to be considered may include but are not limited to:
 - The academic and technical standards required for participation in an education program or service;
 - the educational environment and intended outcome of the program, course, and/or service;
 - the education-related abilities and functional limitations of the applicant or student and whether the accommodations(s) provide a reasonable opportunity for equal access; and
 - the impact of requested accommodations upon the operation and educational mission of the college, including its compliance with federal, state, and local regulations.

Reasonable Accommodation Determinations

When requests are made for modifications to academic requirements, the college will provide individuals who are trained, knowledgeable, and experienced to evaluate if a reasonable adjustment or accommodation is available which would meet those requirements, and if an appropriate alternative is available that meets the underlying reason for the requirement. The determination and supporting reason(s) will be fully documented by the college.

The college is not required to offer or provide a modification or accommodation when:

- An accommodation would substantially alter the educational standards of the college;

- an accommodation would fundamentally alter the nature of the program, course, service and/or activity;
- taking into account the applicant's or student's qualifications along with the requested accommodation, the student is not otherwise qualified to meet the academic, behavioral, and technical standards required for admission or participation in an educational program, course, service and/or activity;
- an accommodation would cause an undue financial or administrative hardship on the college; or
- reasonable accommodation would pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others.

Reasonable accommodation does not negate the following:

- Requirements for successful completion of a program, course, service and/or activity;
- adherence to generally acceptable standards of behavior;
- adherence to the student code of conduct; and,
- adherence to administrative and faculty/staff directions and instructions.

Documentation of Disability

An otherwise qualified student who identifies as having a disability and requests reasonable accommodation will be required to provide appropriate documentation from a licensed provider, which indicates the student's current disability diagnosis and its impact, and demonstrates a substantial limitation in a major life activity such as learning, seeing, walking, hearing, etc. This documentation must be sufficient to establish the need for accommodation as outlined and may be comprised of, but is not limited to, psychoeducational assessment or medical records from a licensed provider. In order to accurately assess a condition and make determinations about reasonable accommodations, it is essential that DSS is provided documentation establishing the presence of a disability and explaining how the disability affects major life activities. The college may request additional medical documentation of the disability and of the need for an accommodation during the interactive process.

A student will complete an application for disability support through the DSS office, and provide appropriate documentation as discussed above. A student will then participate in an intake interview with disability support staff. A student may submit this application at any time during the program of study; however, the college recommends submitting requests as early as possible to allow time to make any necessary arrangements.

Implementation of a written accommodation plan

Once a student has been determined to have a disability and a reasonable accommodation(s) has been established, a written accommodation plan will be developed by the student's disability support counselor. A memo detailing the accommodations will be provided to the student for the purpose of sharing with instructors and necessary college personnel. In order to receive accommodations, the student is responsible for delivering the memo and discussing the requested accommodations with instructors and necessary college personnel. DSS office staff are available to support student efforts to put accommodations in place. It is the student's responsibility to promptly inform the DSS office of problems with their accommodations. The DSS office will maintain a confidential file which includes documentation of the student's disability, the student's written accommodation plan, and historical information documenting the college's response to the student's request for accommodations.

Retroactive accommodations

It is a student's right and personal choice to determine if they choose to disclose their disability. Disclosure can be done at any point in the semester and does not require that accommodations be used.

The DSS office cannot retroactively give accommodations and instructors are not required to adhere to accommodations retroactively if a student does not disclose their disability to the DSS office or to their instructors, even in the case that the student believes work submitted or exam scores received do not accurately reflect their abilities.

Provision of support personnel for college activities and programs

If the DSS office determines that the provision of a support person (interpreter, reader, writer, note taker, lab assistant) is an appropriate and reasonable accommodation, that person must be pre-approved by the DSS office staff in order to gain admittance to the college classroom, program, activity, or service. An exception to this would be a student already enrolled in the course who is acting as a volunteer note taker or lab assistant.

An otherwise qualified student who requires personal care attendant services must arrange to provide for their own personal care attendant service. The college does not assume coordination or financial responsibilities for personal care attendant services.

Denial of Accommodation and Grievance Procedure

Any student who disagrees with the denial of the accommodation or has a concern about the approved accommodation or its implementation is encouraged to discuss their concern with their disability support counselor. If the matter is not resolved through discussions with the disability support counselor, the student should report the grievance in accordance with policy 3.39 Anti-Harassment and Anti-Discrimination. Students should report grievances under this policy to the college director of equity and compliance, who is the ADA/Section 504 coordinator:

Kevin Luebbering
1001 E. Chestnut Expressway
Springfield, MO 65802
417-447-8188
luebberk@otc.edu

D. Definitions

Disability is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

An individual with a disability is a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment.

Interactive process is a process through which the student, healthcare providers, and college each share information about the nature of the disability and the limitations that may affect his or her ability to perform in class and the college makes determinations about approved modifications and reasonable accommodations.

Major life activities are activities that include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, sleeping, eating, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentration, thinking, communicating, and working.

Personal Care Attendant is hired by a student with a disability to provide physical assistance to the student.

Reasonable accommodations are modifications or adjustments to the tasks, environment, or to the way things are usually done that enable individuals with disabilities to have an equal opportunity to participate in an academic program.

Otherwise qualified means a student who, with or without reasonable accommodations, can meet the academic and technical standards required for participation in the educational program or activity.

E. Authority

This policy is maintained under the authority of the vice chancellor for academic affairs and the vice chancellor for student affairs.

F. Related Policies

[3.39 Anti-Harassment and Anti-Discrimination](#)

G. Implementation

Policy approved and adopted by the Board of Trustees on

Purpose, Procedures, Definitions, Authority and Related Policies approved and adopted by the Cabinet

Set the policy for review 2021-2022.