

OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES (ODS) FACULTY MANUAL

The LSUHSC-NO Office of Disability Services (ODS) aims to provide equal access in the form of academic accommodations to students with disabilities. ODS also ensures compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the ADA Amendments of 2008. ODS has the authority to determine eligibility and provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities.

Overview of Legal Regulations

- [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) of 1990 & Amendments of 2008](#)
 - Prohibits discrimination based on disability
 - Requires that individuals with disabilities are given equal access to all services, programs, and activities of public entities
 - Applies to employment, housing, public accommodations, education, transportation, communication, recreation, institutionalization, health services, voting, and access to public services
 - Defines **Disability**: a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or major life activities; major life activities include but are not limited to seeing, hearing, walking, standing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, working, and operating major bodily functions
 - Defines **Qualified Individual**: an individual that can meet the essential functions with or without accommodations

- [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#)
 - Prohibits discrimination against students with disabilities
 - Applies to recipients of federal financial assistance including institutions of higher education/postsecondary education; graduate and professional school is considered postsecondary education

ODS Responsibilities

- Ensure compliance with the ADA, Section 504, and other applicable laws and regulations
- Determine eligibility for reasonable accommodations for students
- Conduct intake meetings with students to create accommodation plans
- Provide guidance to faculty and staff regarding disability-related topics

Faculty Responsibilities

- Implement the accommodations outlined in the official accommodation letter
- Keep disability and accommodation information confidential
- Refer students who may need accommodations to ODS
- Provide accessible course documents to students

Student Responsibilities

- Self-identify as a student with a disability requesting accommodations
- Provide detailed and appropriate documentation from healthcare providers to ODS
- Submit official accommodation letters to faculty in a timely manner
- Notify ODS and faculty members of any issues regarding accommodations or if any accommodations are no longer needed in a timely manner

LSUHSC-NO Accommodation Procedure

1. **Self-Identification:** Students self-identify as an individual with a disability by completing the Student Intake Form.
2. **Documentation Submission:** Healthcare professionals provide documentation that identifies a specific diagnosis or health condition, a description of current symptoms and functional limitations encountered, a narrative of how the disability creates a barrier in the learning environment, and a list of recommendations and rationale for reasonable accommodations.
3. **Documentation Review:** ODS reviews the student intake form and the documentation from the healthcare provider to determine eligibility.
4. **Intake Meeting:** The student meets with ODS staff to create an accommodation plan and discuss ODS procedures and any specialized instructions. Accommodation plans are individualized to the student and their functional barriers in the learning environment and not solely on a specific diagnosis. Students may experience different symptoms or varying degrees of the same diagnosis.
5. **Accommodation Letter:** Students must request an accommodation letter each term in which they are enrolled.

Tips if a Student Discloses that They Have a Disability

- Provide information on how they can contact ODS to discuss accommodations
- Do not discourage them from asking for accommodations or implying they aren't necessary since you don't know their specific needs or limitations.
- Do not accept medical documentation or ask them specifics about their disability.
- Remember that you are acting in your capacity as a faculty member and not as their healthcare provider.
- Keep the information private; do not share student names or specific accommodations with anyone that does not have a need to know. Do not discuss specific accommodations or call out students with accommodations during class or testing.

Common Accommodation Myths

MYTH 1: Students with disabilities are not qualified to be admitted into graduate and professional programs.

FACT: Graduate and professional programs are considered part of postsecondary education and subject to ADA requirements. Students are considered qualified if they can meet the admissions requirements and the technical standards of the program with or without accommodations. If reasonable accommodations allow the student to meet the technical standards, then the student is considered qualified.

MYTH 2: Students with accommodations have an unfair advantage over other students.

FACTS: The ADA provides equal access to students with disabilities; it does not ensure success. It provides them with equal opportunity to demonstrate their learning as students without disabilities. Students with disabilities must still be held to the same standards regarding grading and evaluation as well as the conduct standards of the program.

MYTH 3: Students may not be granted accommodations for testing since they are not available for licensing, board, or credentialing exams.

FACT: The ADA explicitly addresses the right to receive testing accommodations on these types of examinations for individuals with disabilities. Visit [ADA Requirements: Testing Accommodations](#) for more detailed information. ODS has compiled a list of exams that our students take and the steps required to request accommodations: [Professional Board & Licensing Exams – Accommodation Information](#).

MYTH 4: Students may not be granted accommodations because accommodations are not available in the “real world” or in the workplace.

FACT: Accommodations may not be denied to qualified students based on “real world” implications. The ADA exists beyond the education environment; it continues through employment. Employees with disabilities also have a right to equal access in their working environment. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) provides detailed guidance on this topic: [Health Care Workers and the Americans with Disabilities Act](#).

Fundamental Alterations

Reasonable accommodations cannot fundamentally alter any program, activity, or service or cause an undue hardship. An undue hardship significantly changes the functions or operations of a program, service, or activity. These cannot be due to inconvenience or personal opinions about a disability. An accommodation would not be considered

reasonable if it would change the essential functions of the program or jeopardize patient or individual safety. Considerations for fundamental alterations would need to be tied to specific learning objectives.

If you think an accommodation could cause a fundamental alteration, you can submit a detailed request for ODS to review that includes the following: the accommodation in question, the specific learning objective impacted, a description of how the program or activity would be altered by the accommodation, documentation regarding the learning objective such as a course syllabus, technical standard documents, etc., and a list of potential alternatives or modifications that could be considered.

Common Accommodations

*Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of possible accommodations; these are considered standard accommodations that are the most common.

- **50% Extended Time on Examinations & Quizzes** (Time and ½) – Half of the expected exam time added to the exam; students may start at an earlier time or finish later than the rest of the class.
- **100% Extended Time on Examinations & Quizzes** (Double) – Double the expected exam time added to the exam; students may start at an earlier time or finish later than the rest of the class.
- **Access to Recorded Lectures** – students are provided with recordings of the lectures if available or they are permitted to record lectures on their own devices to assist with studying and filling in any missing information from lectures.
- **Breaks during Testing** – typically 10 minutes per hour of testing time added to the exam.
- **Consideration of Absences** – modification to the attendance policy due to medical reasons. Amount allowed is dependent on course content or learning objectives.
- **Copies of Notes, Outlines, PowerPoints, etc.** – students are provided materials from the instructors to assist with studying and filling in any missing information from lectures.
- **Low Distraction Testing Environment** – students are placed in a separate room or separate area/configuration with other students who also receive this accommodation; it should be a quieter environment with less noise distractions.
- **Private Room for Testing** – students test alone in a separate room.

About the Director

The Director of Student Advocacy oversees the Office of Disability Services. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and a Master of Arts in Higher Education/Student Affairs. She served as a Student Worker in the Office of Disability Services at the University of Mississippi offering front line support during her undergraduate years. She served as the Coordinator of Disability Services and as the Interim Director of Disability Services at Southeastern Louisiana University prior to joining LSUHSC-New Orleans. She holds a certification in ADA/Section 504 Foundations for Higher Education and is a member of the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD). She receives ongoing training from AHEAD including their Docs with Disabilities initiative focusing specifically on health science programs.



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