

**Office of Disability Services**  
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**<http://www3.esu.edu/academics/disabilityservices/index.asp>**

**Rights and Responsibilities**  
TO ASSURE EDUCATIONAL ACCESS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

**Introduction**

Educational access is the provision of classroom accommodations, auxiliary aids and services to ensure equal educational opportunities for all students regardless of disability. Creating equal educational opportunities is a collaborative effort among the student, the faculty member and the Office for Disability Services (ODS).

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 protect students with disabilities from discrimination that may occur as a result of misconceptions, attitudinal barriers, and/or failure of the institution to provide appropriate accommodations, auxiliary aids, or services. Examples of accommodations and auxiliary aids include, but are not limited to: qualified interpreters, note takers, extra time for exams, and educational materials in alternate format (i.e. Braille, audiotape, electronic format, enlarged print).

**Faculty Have The Right To:**

*Documentation verification*

- Request verification of a student's eligibility for any requested accommodations. Such verification will be in the form of a letter written by ODS and delivered by the student. ODS is the only office designated to review disability documentation and determine eligibility for appropriate accommodations. Faculty should not possess this documentation.
- Contact ODS with questions regarding accommodations or access.

*Accommodations requested in advance*

- Expect students to initiate accommodation requests.
- Anticipate that testing accommodation requests will be made in advance of the test date.

**Faculty Have The Responsibility To:**

*Provide accommodations*

- Identify and establish essential functions, abilities, skills, and knowledge of their courses and evaluate students on this basis. Students with disabilities should meet the same course expectations as their peers.
- Provide accommodations only to students who are registered with ODS. It is NOT your responsibility to provide accommodations to students who are not registered with ODS.
- Use a syllabus statement and class announcements to invite students to disclose their needs. An example statement is:

"Any students eligible for classroom accommodations are invited to meet with me to discuss their concerns and to present their letters from the Office of Disability Services. Students are welcome to tape record class lectures."

## *Faculty Facts*

- Act immediately upon getting a student's requests for accommodations by contacting ODS if you have any question and/ or by providing the accommodations as requested. Please have syllabi, textbooks and course handouts available in a timely manner, if a student needs alternative media or print. Alternative media may be print material in Braille, on audiotapes, scanned onto discs, or enlarged. Converting print to alternative media or requesting books from RFBD is time and labor intensive.
- Work to ensure that all audio-visual materials used in class are accessible (e.g., that videos are available with closed captioning for students with hearing impairment, that VCR equipment has captioning capabilities, and that videos include auditory description in some way or that written transcripts will be provided).
- Consider incorporating principles of Universal Design for Learning into your teaching.

### *Maintain confidentiality*

- Treat and protect all disability-related information as confidential medical information. For example, keep printed items, such as accommodation request letters or emails regarding student disability related information in a protected, confidential location.

**Faculty members do NOT have the right to ask students if they have a disability.** For those students with documented disabilities, faculty members do not have the right to ask about the nature of the disability. However, if the students choose to disclose their disability, this information should be treated confidentially.

### **Definitions of Terms**

Alternative media – Print material that has been converted to a format that enables a print impaired person to read the materials. This includes but is not limited to: taped materials, Braille, electronic text, and enlarged print.

Auxiliary aids – Services, equipment, and procedures that allow students with disabilities access to learning and activities in and out of the classroom. They include but are not limited to: sign language interpreters, real time captioning services, adaptive technology, alternative media, exam accommodations, etc.

Exam accommodations – Legally mandated services that allow students with disabilities to exhibit their knowledge on exams in a manner that is not impacted negatively because of their disability by using auxiliary aids which include but are not limited to: extra time, a reader/scribe, computers, large print, CCTV, distraction reduced environment, etc.

Universal design – An approach to designing course instruction, materials, and content to benefit people of all learning styles without adaptation or retrofitting. Universal design provides equal access to learning, not simply equal access to information. Universal design allows the student to control the method of accessing information while the instructor monitors the learning process and initiates any beneficial methods.

*Please contact the Office of Disability Services for further information and/or visit our web page.*