

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Student Disability Center

Room 54 Cowell Building

530-752-3184

sdc@ucdavis.edu

sdc.ucdavis.edu

Jeanne M. Wilson, Director

General Information about Students with Disabilities

- Nationally, 11% of undergraduates have a long-term disability
<http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=60>
- Applicants with disabilities must meet the same criteria as other applicants
- Students with disabilities have the right not to disclose their disability if they choose not to
- But, to receive accommodations, student must disclose disability and submit supporting clinical documentation
- Many students with disabilities do not identify themselves or seek accommodations

Demographics of UC Davis Students with Disabilities

- Most disabilities are not visible (e.g., Autism, Psychological & Learning Disabilities, ADHD, many Medical conditions)
- SDC served 1115 students with disabilities in 2013-14
- 298 others registered with SDC didn't seek accommodations

Disabilities include:

- * Learning Disabilities
- * Blindness/low vision
- * Autism Spectrum Disorders
- * Psychological disabilities (e.g., depression, anxiety)
- * Medical conditions (e.g., cancer, diabetes, asthma, Cerebral Palsy)
- * Mobility
- * Deafness/hard of hearing
- * ADHD

Federal Laws

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
 - Applies to all programs and activities of entities that receive Federal financial assistance

- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)
 - Applies to all services, programs, and activities of public entities

- As a recipient of Federal financial assistance and a public entity, UC Davis must comply with each law.

Accommodating Students with Disabilities

- By law & policy, UC Davis must provide reasonable academic accommodations to students with disabilities
- Students, SDC and faculty share responsibility for ensuring accommodations
- Students with disabilities are exempt from some rules that would limit their participation in academic programs, e.g.,
 - They can record classes
 - They can use guide or service dogs in campus buildings
- Auxiliary aids must be provided as necessary to avoid discriminating against students with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills

Implementing Regulations

- Each Federal law has implementing regulations that require UC Davis to ensure that its academic programs are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.
- For example,
 - “adaptation of the manner in which specific courses are conducted”
 - “changes in the length of time permitted for the completion of degree requirements”
 - “substitution of specific courses required for the completion of degree requirements” (unless this would fundamentally alter the academic program)

Auxiliary Aids

➤ UC Davis must provide necessary auxiliary aids to ensure program accessibility when a disability limits the student's ability to access an academic activity, such as:

- “taped texts” (digital text/eText/Braille/MP3)
- “interpreters [or real-time captioners] or other effective methods of making orally delivered materials available to students with hearing impairments”
- readers
- “classroom equipment adapted for use by students with manual impairments”
- “other similar services and actions”

Not Required:

- To take any action that would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of an academic program.
 - “Academic requirements that the recipient can demonstrate are essential to the instruction being pursued by such student or to any directly related licensing requirement will not be regarded as discriminatory within the meaning of this section.”
 - Burden is on UC Davis to demonstrate that the requested accommodation is a *fundamental alteration* of the academic requirements
- To “provide attendants, individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or other devices or services of a personal nature.”

Two University Policies

- Academic Senate, Davis Division Regulation 538(H)
- University of California Policies Applying to Campus Activities, Organizations, and Students, Section 140

Davis Division Regulation 538(H)

- Section 538 (H) states that faculty have responsibility for providing accommodations authorized by the SDC
- Students requesting accommodations outside of the SDC process should be referred to the SDC
- Faculty are not authorized to decide unilaterally how or whether to provide authorized accommodations
- For instructor questions/concerns about an accommodation, talk with SDC and student
- If instructor, academic department, SDC, and student cannot agree on accommodations, a review committee can be convened by Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

Common Accommodations for College Students with Disabilities

- Students with disabilities may receive one or more accommodation(s), based on documented functional limitations, such as
 - extra time, separate room and/or use of computer for tests
 - Part-time status or waiver of minimum progress
 - Notetakers, eText, or audio recording of lectures
- The SDC authorizes accommodations; provides, assists with, arranges, and/or pays for auxiliary services; and advises students on disability management and compensatory strategies

The SDC Accommodations Process

- Student submits documentation from diagnosing clinician substantiating student's current functional limitations
- Specialist reviews documentation, meets with student to discuss impact of functional limitations on academics
- If Specialist determines that student is eligible, specialist reviews accommodation requests & discusses with student
- Individualized accommodations are authorized based on student's functional limitations in the context of requirements of the academic program/specific course

The Accommodations Process, cont'd

- SDC specialist authorizes appropriate, reasonable, individualized accommodations for student
- SDC issues Letters of Accommodation to students and copies instructors for each course
- If questions arise about accommodations, the SDC facilitates an **interactive process** between student, SDC, instructor, & academic department
- If unsatisfied with accommodations authorized or their implementation, student can appeal to SDC Director
- If student has concerns about implementation of accommodations/unfulfilled accommodations, has option to file discrimination/arbitrary action complaint

Questions?

- For questions, see SDC website at sdc.ucdavis.edu, email the SDC at sdc@ucdavis.edu, or call 530-752-3184
- Also welcome to email Jeanne at jxwilson@ucdavis.edu