



# Disability Services Policy and Procedure Manual

## 2016-2017

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## **VISION**

GGC's Office of Disability Services will create a model disability services program in the state of Georgia. We encourage and utilize innovative advances in assistive technology to allow students to be independent and self-reliant. Our highly experienced and committed professionals will make students' needs their first priority. The Office of Disability Services will continually monitor the program for needed improvements and always strive for a motivating and supportive academic environment.

## **MISSION**

The mission and purpose of the Office of Disability Services at Georgia Gwinnett College is to ensure equal access to all educational opportunities, to promote an inclusive college community and to help provide a supportive environment for students with disabilities.

## **Federal Mandates and Laws Governing the Office of Disability Services**

The Office of Disability Services provides assistance to GGC students in compliance with federal mandates regarding individuals with disabilities.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states “No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

Title II of the Americans with Disability Act of 1990 states “Subject to the provisions of this title, no qualified individual with a disability shall by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by such entity.”

### **Request for Services**

At the college level, one must self-identify to the staff at the Office of Disability Services, located in Building D, Suite #1404, in order to receive accommodations. A student must also provide documentation that meets the eligibility criteria set forth by the Office of Disability Services and one’s current level of functioning must be included to determine appropriate accommodations.

Once a student self-identifies and provides appropriate documentation, the student will make an appointment for the initial intake. The student will meet with a disability services provider to fill out required forms and register with the Office of Disability Services. Accommodation letters may be drafted at this time or at a later appointment.

Accommodation letters will be given to the student to provide to his/her instructors for services needed in each course. Students registered with the Office of Disability Services must request services every semester by picking up their accommodation letters and distributing them to their instructors for classroom assistance. Faculty members are not required to provide accommodations if they have not received an accommodation letter prepared by the Office of Disability Services.

For every accommodation, a student must initiate services. He or she must give the accommodation letter to the instructor indicating what his or her needs are. When a test is near and accommodations are allowed, the student must request the desired and appropriate accommodations for each exam from his or her instructor. If needed, the student can make an appointment with the Office of Disability Services (at least 3 days in advance) for those accommodations he or she is requesting. If that student is allowed a notetaker, he or she must communicate to the instructor about how that request is fulfilled.

These guidelines and procedures are provided to help students with disabilities develop self-advocacy skills. If at any time a student feels that he or she is having trouble or did not get what he or she needs, the student should return to the Office of Disability Services for additional assistance.

For any student requests made through the Office of Disability Services, a determination will be made as to whether the requests are "reasonable". Students should be mindful that other alternatives may be offered.

### **Required Documentation**

At GGC, we follow the Regents' Center for Learning Disorders (RCLD) [Guidelines](#).

Forms are available on our website for [medical health \(PDF\)](#) and [mental health \(PDF\)](#) disabilities, or they may be picked up in the Office of Disability Services. This form must be completed by a licensed professional and returned to the Office of Disability Services.

For students who are hard of hearing or deaf, documentation must include an audiogram, a statement on official letterhead describing functional limitations, deficits and recommendations signed by the professional licensed in the field.

For visual impairments or students that are blind, a vision test is required with a statement on official letterhead describing functional limitations, deficits and recommendation signed by the professional licensed in the field.

If it is unclear to the appropriateness of documentation for LD, TBI, ADHD, psychiatric or Asperger's syndrome, the information provided to the Office of Disability Services may be sent to RCLD for review and recommendations.

### **How Accommodations are Determined**

Accommodations are determined by considering the student's self-report, documentation provided, and the academic environment, while at the same time examining the substantial limitations associated with the disability, how it affects the student, and the severity of the disability on the student. The DSP meets with the student, reviews the documentation with the student, consults with other professionals (i.e. Faculty) as needed and collaboratively works with the student to determine appropriate accommodations.

### **Honor Statement**

GGC's honor policy states, "We will not lie, steal, or cheat, nor tolerate the actions of those who do."

Students taking tests in the Office of Disability Services will not give or receive answers to tests or about test materials.

All non-testing items will be placed in the designated area within the disability services office. This will be a separate location from the where the student is testing.

This includes the following items:

- Students will take exams on the same day and time as the scheduled day and time of the given exam. Exceptions may occur as stated below:
  - When the student has a class immediately before and after the class in which there is a test. (If needed, the Office of Disability Services will assist students in considering accommodation prior to class selection each semester. Please make an appointment in advance.)
  - When the Office of Disability Services is not open or cannot accommodate at the given time.
  - If the instructor allows an exam to be given at an alternative time or day. (The student may contact their instructor to discuss their individual circumstances such as illness or unforeseen tragedy.) This would not be a mandate from the Office of Disability Services and would be completely up to the instructor's discretion.
- Students will not discuss test questions with others if taken early or after the scheduled testing time.
- Students will not discuss test format or materials with others if taken at an alternative time.
- Students will not use any materials or devices not approved as an accommodation or approved by their instructor.
- Students will turn off cell phones prior to exams.
- Students may not leave the testing area with the exam or any part of the exam under any circumstances.

All students are held accountable under this policy. If a student is observed violating this policy, the test will be taken up, and the incident will be reported to the instructor. Please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy for Academic Dishonesty Matters in the GGC Student Handbook for further information. All students who are accused of violating any of these policies will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity.

### **Test Policies and Procedures**

The student is responsible for scheduling exams in which he/she wishes to use the Office of Disability Services. An appointment is required. The following guidelines are a minimum standard to obtain services through the Office of Disability Services.

## **Procedures for Scheduling Tests**

- For day classes during regular office hours (Monday through Friday 8:00-5:00) the student must schedule the exam no later than three (3) business days before the exam to receive accommodations.
- The student must give the accommodation letter to his/her faculty member at least one (1) week prior to needing an accommodation and the student must give the faculty reasonable notice of at least three (3) business days for test accommodations needed.
- For evening classes (after office hours), exams will be proctored during office hours as arranged. If special accommodations are absolutely necessary outside of office hours, we will make every effort to be flexible.
- It is the student's responsibility to notify the Office of Disability Services if tests are canceled, if dates change, or if the Office of Disability Services is no longer needed for a particular test. If the student does not show up for the scheduled exam, he/she must make arrangements with the instructor for a make-up test before being allowed to reschedule the test with the Office of Disability Services.

## **Testing Policies**

- No personal items are allowed in testing rooms.
- Before beginning the exam, the student must advise the Disability Services staff member of any personal health needs that will require frequent breaks. The student should prepare ahead for snacks or medications. Extended time stated on the accommodations letter will be allowed.
- Students are to remain in the designated testing room. In case of emergency, the incomplete exam must be returned to the Office of Disability Services staff. If a student leaves the room without informing the Disability Services proctor, the exam will be taken up and returned to the instructor.
- Arriving late will not extend the scheduled ending time for the exam.
- If a student arrives more than 30 minutes late for a scheduled exam or if the student is ill, it is the student's responsibility to speak to the instructor about rescheduling the exam if allowed by the instructor.
- All students are held accountable under the GGC Academic Integrity Policy. If a student is observed violating this policy, the test will be taken up, and the incident will be reported to the instructor and/or the Office of Student Integrity.

## **Provisional Services**

If a student does not have the proper documentation or needs their documentation updated, the Office of Disability Services may provide provisional services on a case by case basis. The Office of Disability Services reserves the right to approve or deny provisional services when sufficient justification has not been provided. Provisional services are an option, not a requirement.

Provisional services may be provided when a diagnosis is on file or there is overwhelming evidence that a student is suspected of having a disability.

Provisional accommodations are generally granted for one semester only.

A provisional services form must be filled out by the Office of Disability Services and signed by the student.

The provisional services form is to reside in the student's file.

### **Foreign Language Course Substitution Policy**

Foreign Language (FL) course substitution may be pursued as long as the FL course is not an essential part of the student's program. GGC does not grant course waivers for FL. A student seeking a substitution for the CPC or college level FL course through disability services must adhere to the steps detailed as follows:

1. Documentation of disability meeting the criteria set forth by GGC and showing evidence that the disability interferes with the student's ability to learn in the FL domain must be submitted with adequate time to process (3 weeks to 1 month)
2. The documentation will be sent to the Regents Center for Learning Disorders (RCLD) for review and recommendation.
3. The RCLD recommendations along with review of the student's file and any other supporting information will be completed by the Director of Disability Services and a determination will be made.
4. If a FL substitution is approved, the student will work with the Office of Disability Services to choose a class to substitute from the approved list of classes.
5. At that time, the course substitution form will be filled out, signed by the Director of Disability Services and sent to the Dean of Liberal Arts, the student's mentor, and the Registrar's office.
6. If the FL substitution is denied, the course substitution form indicating the reason for denial will be placed in the student's file and a copy will be made available to the student.

### **Equipment Check-Out Policy and Procedure**

It is the student's responsibility to request equipment when needed for each semester.

Each subsequent semester that a student needs the equipment, a new Equipment Check Out Form must be filled out and signed.

Student should notify the Office of Disability Services of the equipment reservation at least two (2) weeks prior to the beginning of the semester. Any late requests will be filled as available.

Any damage done to the equipment while checked out is the sole responsibility of the individual who signed the Equipment Checkout Form.

Each semester the equipment must be returned to the Office of Disability Services.

### **Priority Registration Policy and Procedure for Students with Disabilities**

Priority Registration was developed to ensure equal educational access for people with disabilities. Eligibility for priority registration is determined based on the student's substantial limitations as noted in the student's documentation and student's self-report. Early registration may be appropriate for those who need to schedule classes in a restricted time frame, people who have medical issues in which a regimented treatment schedule is required, for those on certain medications that allow for better learning at certain times of day, and/or to ensure accommodations that need significant preparation time. If a student is allowed priority registration and chooses to not use it, he/she may be forfeiting timely accommodations through the Office of Disability Services.

### **Alternative Media Policy and Procedure**

Alternative media is a conversion of hard copy material to an alternate format.

Some examples of Alternative Media include:

- Large Print
- E-text (electronic text on CD or sent via electronic files)
- Braille
- Books on tape or CD

#### *Procedure for Obtaining Alternative Media*

1. Register for classes as early as possible utilizing Priority Registration on the first day available
2. Purchase books
3. Make an appointment with the Office of Disability Services at least a month prior to the beginning of each semester to order the required readings for your courses
  - a. Bring a copy of your books or the E-text Request Form.
  - b. Bring the receipt for each book.
4. *For first time users of AMAC:* Go over the E-text participation policy form with the Office of Disability Services and sign the form to indicate understanding of the information.
5. Order your books using the E-text Request Form or by meeting with the Office of Disability Services to input your books every semester.

#### *Alternative Media Policy*

It is the student's responsibility to request alternative media in a timely manner (at least a month prior to the beginning of the semester) and adhere to the GGC e-text

participation policy. Late requests are accepted but may delay the receipt of the alternative media.

### GGC E-text Participation Policy

If a student requests and is approved books in alternative format, GGC has an agreement with AMAC in order to provide accommodations for students whose requests for books in alternative formats are approved.

The student must:

- Register early (if possible) for the upcoming semester, providing sufficient time for textbooks to be converted
- Request only required readings to be converted into alternative formats
- Purchase a personal copy of any textbook for which alternative formats are requested
- Advise his/her DSP immediately if any of his/her courses are changed or dropped
- Delete all files that may have been downloaded and return all disks, CDs, and other materials provided by AMAC by the last day of the semester during which they were used
- Provide the DSP with a proof of purchase of textbooks (i.e. receipt)

The student understands and agrees to the following:

- Direct communication between the student and AMAC is subject to being shared with GGC's Disability Services Office
- Materials provided by AMAC may not be reproduced or shared in whole or part at any time
- E-text books may take up to a month to reproduce. Braille and other types of media may take even longer
- Disability Services Office will electronically share with AMAC your disability type, accommodation needs, and contact information

## **Volunteer Notetaker Policy**

GGC utilizes volunteer notetakers. Once a faculty gets an accommodation letter with the approved accommodation of notetaker, the student may work with the faculty in identifying a volunteer notetaker (preferably from the class).

A letter describing the process will be provided to the faculty. If the student has a personal notetaker that is not enrolled in the course, he/she may not be present during testing or other graded assignments. Personnel from the Office of Disability Services will assist.

## **Accessible Parking on Campus**

Students, Faculty and Staff who wish to park in an accessible parking space (handicap parking) must obtain a state issued placard or a disabled license plate. Providing a statement or letter from a physician by itself is not sufficient documentation. To obtain the required placard or license plate, please visit your physician and/or your local DMV for further information. Accessible parking spaces are available on a first come, first serve basis.

## **Disability Housing Accommodations**

Georgia Gwinnett College provides reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities in compliance with The Americans with Disability Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation act.

Accommodations are determined on a case by case basis. All requests for disability housing accommodations must go through the Office of Disability Services who will work in collaboration with the Housing Office. Students must complete a *housing accommodations request form* and submit documentation to the Office of Disability Services.

Supporting documentation must be recent in order to determine the current and substantial impact on a major life activity. In addition, the documentation must establish a direct link between the housing accommodation request and the impairment. Lastly, the documentation must also meet the [Office of Disability Services documentation guidelines](#) set forth for the college.

All requests for accommodations should be submitted to the Office of Disability Services at least two (2) months prior to moving into campus housing. Applications for housing accommodations submitted late or during the semester in which the accommodation is needed will be accepted and considered but GGC can not guarantee that we will be able to meet the late applicants' needs without reasonable notice referred to above. The accommodations requested must be reasonable in accordance with applicable ADA standards.

## **Consultation to the Campus Community**

- We work collaboratively with faculty and staff on a need to know basis.
- We consult with faculty staff and students regarding disability related issues and accommodations.
- We collaboratively work with faculty to provide accommodations.
- We educate faculty, staff, and students about disability related issues.
- We advise faculty of their rights and responsibilities.
- We seek the faculty input regarding appropriate accommodations for their courses and subject matter.
- We provide resources to faculty to assist in teaching and instructing students with disabilities.
- We provide classroom disability awareness presentations.
- We provide disability awareness month activities.

For disability services requests not covered under the headings of this policy, the Office of Disability Services shall consider them on a case by case basis.