

Special Student Services

The purpose of Special Needs Services at Allen University is to provide opportunities for equal access in university programs, services, and activities. The Student Affairs Unit is responsible for facilitating the program, planning, management, and evaluation of Special Needs Services.

Process

Special Needs Services process includes the following:

1. Identifying and initiating action strategies for qualified students with disabilities who request accommodations.
2. Identifying and maintaining an active community resource referral system.
3. Assisting in the delivery of quality educational experiences for students with disabilities.
4. Complying with federal regulations in regards to students with disabilities.
5. Complying with Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (refer to section 3A.SSm Compliance).
6. Recording information regarding students with disabilities in their student information file.

Policy

The University's policy is to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and state and local requirements regarding students and applicants with disabilities. Under these laws, no qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of that disability, be denied access to or participation in the services, programs, and activities of the University.

The policy of the university ensures that qualified students who have disabilities shall be given academic accommodations to ensure access to the university's overall educational program.

The university accommodates students with disabilities on an individual basis. Individual students receive reasonable and effective accommodations based on specific information and assessment data documented by a qualified professional.

To receive appropriate and timely accommodations, students are responsible for requesting accommodations and documenting the nature and extent of this disability in accordance with university procedures, at least one month before the start of the semester.

Identifying the Need for Accommodations

Students who do not request accommodations do not need to disclose their disabilities. Students with disabilities who request accommodations are responsible for making these needs known to the Office of Special Needs Services in a timely fashion, and for providing appropriate documentation and evaluation in applicable cases. The Coordinator has the authority to decide whether accommodations will be granted in individual cases. Information about disabilities in students' records is treated as confidential under applicable laws and is provided to individuals with the written expressed consent of the student, or in such cases by law where the professional service entities and authorities are granted lawful access. Faculty members are advised that information regarding a disability is confidential.

In some cases where only minor accommodations are required (such as requesting to sit in the front row because of a visual or hearing impairment), the student should feel free to simply request this accommodation from the faculty member. If requests are not responded to adequately, the student should make the request known to the Office of Special Needs Services.

How to Obtain Services

Students will make an appointment to meet with the Retention Coordinator. The RC will work with the student to:

- **Review records and documentation:**
The student is responsible for providing current documentation of their disability and the need for accommodations. All documentation must be on letterhead from medical personnel.
- **The following information should be documented and completed within the last three years. Documentation may include a current Individual Educational Plan. (IEP).**
 1. **Administered by one of the following:**
 - Licensed psychologist or neuropsychologist
 - Licensed school psychologist
 - Psychiatrist
 - School psychologist I, II, III, (administered while student was enrolled in the school district where school psychologist was practicing)
 2. **Physical Disability**
 - Diagnosis and date of diagnosis by a medical doctor
 - Dates of treatment and treatment provided, or appropriate report
 - The functional impact of the disability in an educational setting
 - Evaluator's signature and credentials
 3. **Review total needs of the student:**
 - Reasonable and appropriate accommodations specific to individual needs based on the psycho educational assessment or medical documentation
 4. **Arrange accommodation**
 - Upon student request, the RC communicates with instructors to heighten their awareness of the student's needs and his or her request to seek appropriate accommodations.
 - The university provides counseling services to students as needed and provides students with tutorial assistance as needed.

Accommodations

The university will provide effective and reasonable accommodations in a timely manner to ensure access to the university's services, programs, and activities. These accommodations may include, but not limited to, the use of students' personal tape recorders during lectures, enhancements of text, adaptive equipment, note takers, and additional time to complete assignments.

Modification of examinations may also be permitted to overcome limitations of perception of expression imposed by the disability; for example, the duration of examinations may be increased to allow students with neuromuscular problems to write out answers. The purpose of

these modifications is to provide access for qualified students with a disability to participate equally and fairly with other students, not to change the criteria by which the academic performance of students is measured. Accommodations will not be provided if they fundamentally alter the nature of the program or if they would be unduly burdensome either financially or administratively. The University is not equipped at this time to provide services to the blind, wheel chair bound and mentally educable persons. Students requesting accommodations should identify their needs as early as possible to the Retention Coordinator.

Verification of Disabilities

A student with a disability must provide professional verification. Sources of documentation will include Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), state or federal governmental agencies, licensed physicians and psychologists, secondary educational institutions, or other sources deemed appropriate by Special Needs Services. The type of documentation will depend upon the nature of the disability. The student shall provide the necessary documentation to the Retention Coordinator.

Grievance Procedures for Denial of Accommodations

The University encourages students to resolve their complaints informally. The informal grievance procedures are designed to accomplish a quick resolution that is most expeditious and effective. Whenever the informal process does not result in satisfactory resolution, the university's formal grievance procedure is also available.

Informal Grievance Procedure

The student shall initiate the informal process with the student working one-on-one with the Coordinator; this process must be started within thirty (30) calendar days of the denial of the request. A conference with the student will be scheduled as soon as possible and within 5 working days (Monday-Friday) of notice of the student grievance. The intent of these conferences is to ensure an early discussion of the issue, that the issue has been raised in a timely fashion, and that a mutually acceptable resolution can be reached.

A student who feels that the conference would be futile because of that person's involvement or that the concern cannot be resolved, should bring the disagreement in writing to the Coordinator. The conference will be held within 5 working days of notice of the disagreement. Such conferences are to be conducted in proper sequence of supervisors. If the disagreement is not resolved with the Office of Special Needs Services, the student may elect to request a conference with the department head, or the Vice President of Student Affairs and/or Designee.

Formal Grievance Procedure

If a student is not satisfied with the results of the informal process, the student may proceed with the formal grievance as described below.

Students and applicants may appeal decisions regarding their requested accommodations, or qualifications as disabled persons. If the decision is not resolved to the student's satisfaction through the informal procedure, the student shall reduce the grievance to writing. The formal grievance must

- clearly state the facts giving rise to the disagreement.
- describe the efforts to informally resolve the disagreement.
- state the remedy sought by the grievant.
- be signed and dated

Students must file grievances within a reasonable period of time, not to exceed thirty (30) calendar days, after the informal grievance process has been exhausted. Students must file a grievance within (30) days of the end of the term in which the incident occurred.

Original copies of the formal written grievance document shall be filed with the Office of Student Affairs. The Vice President of Student Affairs shall assign a three member Accommodations Review Committee to review and hear the grievance. Replies to the grievance will be provided within 45 working days with the goal of providing an equitable decision for all involved. In individual cases, time for response to appeals may be extended upon written agreement of the parties. The decision of the Committee will be final.