

Shenandoah University Is Committed To Providing Equal Access To University Programs, Events, Activities And Services To All Students With Disabilities.

Our mission is to provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations and support services that will assist students in achieving their academic and professional goals.

Note: If you need this handbook in an alternate format, please call the Office of Learning Resources and Services at (540) 665-4928.

Departmental Goals

- To ensure that reasonable accommodations and services are afforded to students with disabilities such that they have equal opportunities to achieve their academic and professional goals.
- To help foster a campus community that is inclusive of persons with disabilities.
- To encourage students with disabilities to become self-advocates and participate actively in decisions regarding reasonable accommodations and resources.
- To offer students educational opportunities that address self-advocacy skills, curricular and co-curricular experiences, networking and career goal development.

Accommodations Of Persons With Disabilities Policy

As part of Shenandoah University's commitment to upholding the letter and spirit of the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities, the university recognizes and adheres to the mandates of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. It is the policy of Shenandoah University that no otherwise qualified individual is denied reasonable and appropriate access to or participation in any program or activity of the university because of a disability. Pursuant to this policy, the Office of Learning Resources and Services (located in 204 Howe Hall) is a resource for students, faculty and staff. Any individual who believes he or she has a disability covered under disability laws can provide the requisite documentation and request accommodations and resources from Learning Resources and Services.

Admissions Statement

Admission to Shenandoah University is based on requirements outlined in the application and in the university course catalog. Admission decisions are made without regard to disabilities. All applicants to the university are reviewed through the same admission procedure.

Documentation

In order to receive any accommodation, a student must register with Learning Resources and Services and provide documentation of his or her disability. The university is not obligated to provide any accommodation until a student has registered. Students may not receive accommodations retroactively. A student must register with Learning Resources and Services prior to receiving any accommodation. Each student is responsible for obtaining and presenting a copy of such documentation to Disability Services. Any questions regarding submitted documentation will be directed to the student. It is the student's responsibility to acquire additional information or clarification as requested by Disabilities Services staff. The purpose of documentation is to provide verification that the individual has a disability that meets the definition contained in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the ADA.

General Documentation Guidelines

Documentation is necessary to establish the presence of a disability and the need for accommodations. Documentation must indicate that the disability substantially limits a major life activity. As relevant to the disability, the documentation must include the following seven elements:

1. A diagnostic statement identifying the disability, date of the most current diagnostic evaluation and the date of the original diagnosis.
2. A description of the diagnostic tests, methods and/or criteria used including specific test results (including standardized testing scores) and the examiner's narrative.
3. A description of the current functional impact of the disability. This may be in the form of an examiner's narrative and/or an interview, but must have a rational relationship to diagnostic assessments. For learning disabilities, current documentation is defined using adult norms.
4. A statement indicating treatments, medications, or assistive devices/services currently prescribed or in use, with a description of the mediating effects and potential side effects from such treatments.
5. A description of the expected progression or stability of the impact of the disability over time, particularly the next five years.
6. A history of previous accommodations and their impact.
7. The credentials of the diagnosing professional(s). Please note that diagnosing professionals shall not be family members or others with a close personal relationship with the individual being evaluated.

Please note: Documentation prepared for specific non-educational venues (i.e. Social Security Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, etc.) may not meet the criteria as set forth by the Academic Success Center.

IEP or 504 plans will not be considered sufficient documentation unless accompanied by a current and complete evaluation. Beyond these seven elements needed for documentation, recommendations for accommodations, adaptive devices, assistive services, compensatory

strategies and/or collateral support services will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the impact of a particular student's disability within the specific context in which that student must function.

Records

Learning Resources and Services maintains student files for at least three years after the student last attended the university, after which time such records may be destroyed. Students should always retain copies of documentation regarding his or her disability.

Guidelines for Documentation of a Specific Disability Physical, Medical, Psychological

Students with physical or medical impairments and psychological disorders are required to present documentation from physicians, psychiatrists or other qualified persons and agencies to make a diagnosis of the disability. Students with psychological disabilities, certain medical conditions and traumatic brain injury will be asked to update their documentation on a yearly basis in order to justify the need to continue their accommodations.

Learning Disability

Students with a learning disability are required to submit a comprehensive psychological and educational evaluation. Documentation for learning disabilities must include current measures of aptitude (e.g. WAIS-R), achievement (e.g. current levels of functioning in reading, mathematics and written language), and information processing. A qualified professional must conduct the evaluation.

Attention Deficit Disorder (AD/HD)

Students with Attention Deficit Disorder are required to submit comprehensive documentation that substantiates the AD/HD. This documentation should include evidence of early impairment, evidence of current impairment, relevant testing information and an interpretive summary based on a comprehensive evaluation. A qualified professional must conduct the evaluation.

Information On Specific Disabilities

It is important to remember not to assume anything about a particular type of disability. When students with an apparent disability are in a class, the professor may choose to casually approach them after the first class and ask whether there are any specific accommodations they require. Although the professor is not obligated to do this, it is a quick and courteous way to open the door to communication and may help a reluctant student express needs at the beginning. In addition, it is not insulting to the person involved. Many students mention that they often feel invisible and appreciate when a professor approaches them.

Hearing Loss

Characteristics and General Information Students with hearing loss may vary widely in the degree of loss and the means they use to compensate for that loss. Some individuals may be deaf, with little or no useful residual hearing. Many of these individuals do not wear hearing aids because they have so little hearing. Others will wear hearing aids that improve hearing somewhat, but even the latest technology in hearing aids provides the wearer with distorted hearing at best. Some people with a hearing loss will develop lip-reading skills, but even the most skilled lip reader will understand only about 60 to 70 percent of a conversation and even less of a lecture. Students with a hearing loss may have a speaking voice that is quite easy to understand and may choose to communicate orally. Others may be hard to understand and may choose not to use their voices. If a student is not using his or her voice and comes to see a professor without an interpreter, a pen and paper or a computer word processor may be used to communicate with the professor. If the student tries to use his or her voice and the professor does not understand, the professor should tell the student he or she is having trouble and ask the student to repeat or to write down what he or she is saying. Conversely, a student with a hearing loss may nod and appear to understand what the professor is saying but may miss an important point. It is often a good approach to stop frequently to ask the person to repeat what was understood and to clarify any missed information. When a student with a hearing loss identifies himself/herself, the professor needs to determine how best to meet that student's needs. The two should discuss how the class is taught (lecture, board work, group discussion, films or videos), and the student should suggest ways to access the information presented in class. For example,

- Look directly at the student and speak in a normally pitched voice – speaking louder does not help.
- Try not to stand with one's back to the light source or window, which makes it difficult to read lips.
- Address the student even if an interpreter is being used.
- When writing on the blackboard, do not speak with one's back turned. Use overheads when possible.

Professors should keep in mind that students who have been deaf since birth and use sign language have a concept of syntax that is different from that of a native English speaker. This difference may sometimes result in writing that is somewhat awkward, and students may need to be referred to the Writing Center for assistance. It does not mean that they are not intelligent or that they do not know how to write. American Sign Language truly is a foreign language.

Examples of Accommodations

Accommodations may include:

1. Use of a sign language interpreter or an oral interpreter-people with a significant hearing loss who do not know sign language may use an oral interpreter; the interpreter mouths the professor's words for the individual and uses gestures and facial expressions
2. Use of a note taker

3. Use of a phonic ear-the professor wears a wireless microphone and the individual uses a receiver, which allows the person to hear only the professor's voice amplified and screens out background noise that hearing aids would amplify

Methods of Evaluation

Generally, written examinations should not present these students any difficulties, but an oral presentation or a group project may require a different evaluation.

Physical Disabilities Characteristics and General Information

Students with physical disabilities may have multiple disabilities that require a variety of accommodations, or they may need only an accessible classroom location. Students should be asked to describe their needs. For example, many students who appear quite disabled may have complete use of their arms and hands and be able to take notes or written exams, while others who do not appear disabled may have nerve, or other, damage that prevents them from taking notes or written exams.

Types of Physical Disabilities

Students with physical disabilities may include the following:

- Wheelchair users who may have cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, spinal chord injuries or spina bifida
- People with mobility impairments, such as those caused by amputations, arthritis, lupus, diabetes, medical illnesses, cystic fibrosis or multiple sclerosis

Examples of Accommodations

Accommodations may include:

- Relocation of a classroom or activity to ensure physical access (Note: If the class involves any field trips or other off-campus activity, those locations must be physically accessible.)
- Alternatives to in-class writing assignments for a student who cannot write
- A note taker
- A scribe or adaptive computer equipment for examinations
- Ways to include a student who cannot speak in group discussions or other group formats (Student may have a communication device or an aid)
- Extended time for written exams and the use of a word processor in some cases

Blindness And Visual Deficits Characteristics and General Information

Visual deficits can range from minor loss (which is somewhat correctable) to complete blindness. An important fact to keep in mind with students without the ability to read is that many have not been taught Braille; therefore, they must listen to all the material that other students read. This complete reliance on listening poses challenges and may slow down the pace at which they can take in information-it takes longer to listen to a book than to read that same book. In addition, the student probably tapes class lectures instead of taking notes and has to listen to portions of the tapes to review for exams. Therefore, a request for additional time to complete assignments may be legitimate.

Examples of Accommodations

Accommodations may include:

- A list of texts and class syllabi made available in advance for readers and tape recording material
- Taped books and other written materials
- Enlarged print books and written materials
- Extended time for examinations
- Alternative forms of examinations-taped, oral with professor, dictated to a scribe
- Access to adaptive computer equipment
- Consultation with Disability Services to produce diagrams or illustrations using tactile materials
- Special assistance in laboratories and other experiential components of class

Psychiatric Disabilities Characteristics and General Information

Individuals with psychiatric disabilities are becoming more numerous on campuses as medical management of such conditions becomes more sophisticated and societal acceptance of these individuals increases. Most individuals with psychiatric disabilities are involved in therapy outside of Shenandoah University, and many take medications to help manage their conditions. Many students with psychiatric disabilities have previously attended college, and they often have strong intellectual abilities. They may, however, doubt those abilities after their illness. Given some support and classroom accommodations, most students do well.

Types of Disabilities

Some of the more common psychiatric disabilities that students may identify to their professors are bipolar affective disorder, schizophrenia, obsessive-compulsive disorder, personality disorder and clinical depression. For many students, medication often causes thought-processing and expressive abilities to be slower than usual. Sensitivity about in-class assignments, particularly oral presentations, is important.

Examples of Accommodations

Accommodations may include:

- Extended time and a quiet undisturbed environment for exams
- Extended time to complete assignments
- Reduced course load

Learning Disabilities

Characteristics and General Information Learning disabilities is a general term that refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning or mathematical abilities. These disorders are intrinsic to the individual, presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction, and may occur across the life span. Problems in self-regulatory behaviors, social perception, and social interaction may exist with learning disabilities but do not by themselves constitute a learning disability. It is important to remember that a person with a learning disability has probably experienced significant frustration in academic environments. The ways in which a learning disability manifests itself can often cause teachers, parents and others to determine that a person is lazy or not motivated, when in fact the person is struggling without success. Once students are identified as having a learning disability, they can begin to learn compensatory strategies that help them to learn more effectively and partially overcome the deficits. They will, however, always take more time and use more effort to succeed at certain academic tasks.

Common Characteristics

Some possible characteristics of students with learning disabilities are listed below.

- Slow reading rate
- Poor phonics skills, confusion of similar words
- Difficulty comprehending what is read
- Trouble identifying main ideas and determining what is important
- Difficulty remembering what is read
- Difficulty remembering spoken instructions
- Problems describing events or stories in sequence
- Misuse of words-using a similar sounding word for the appropriate one
- Greater problems with grammar or ideas when speaking than when writing
- Problems expressing ideas that he or she understands
- Difficulty recalling basic math operations and facts
- Problems with abstract concepts and reasoning
- Reversals and confusion of numbers and symbols

- Difficulty comprehending word problems
- Problems copying from the board or carrying from one column to another
- Difficulty with time management
- Delay in beginning or following through on assignments
- Lack of organization in note taking and written assignments
- Inefficient use of library resources

Examples of Accommodations

Learning disability accommodations can vary greatly according to the documentation provided, the student's strengths and weaknesses and the recommendations of clinicians and educators. Accommodations may include:

- Extended time for examinations
- A note taker or tape recorder in class
- Alternative forms of testing and expressing knowledge (oral, dictation to a scribe, essay exams instead of short answer or fill-in)
- A word processor for essays or a calculator for math

Important Information For Faculty Who Teach Students With Disabilities Class attendance

While some students with disabilities may have conditions which necessitate occasional absences, class attendance is a required and essential academic component. Learning Resources and Services does not establish class attendance policy. When documentation supports flexibility in attendance, Learning Resources and Services recommends such accommodations for certain students. However, Learning Resources and Services defers to individual class attendance policies. Class attendance policies (when applicable) should be clearly stated in syllabi. These policies should be applied equitably to all students.

Grading scale

Students receiving accommodations are to be graded on the same scale as any other student in the class. Accommodations should neither alter essential elements of the course nor affect the integrity of the course. Students with disabilities should neither be graded at an advantage nor penalized for having received appropriate accommodations.

Accommodations Through Learning Resources and Services (located in Academic Enrichment Center)

Accommodations should not be provided to a student who is not registered with Learning Resources and Services. Faculty should direct students with documented disabilities to Learning

Resources and Services to meet with an advisor to arrange appropriate accommodations. Or, if a faculty member suspects a disability, he or she should discreetly approach the student with his or her observations and suggest that the student contact the Learning Resources and Services to schedule an appointment with an advisor.

Tag lines for syllabi

Faculty is encouraged to include a statement about the Academic Enrichment Center in their syllabi. Example: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact Learning Resources and Services (located the Academic Success Center) at (540) 665-4928. All academic accommodations must be arranged through Learning Resources and Services.

Disagreements with approved accommodations

If faculty disagree with an accommodation approved by Learning Resources and Services (listed on the student's accommodation form), they should contact Holli Phillips at (540) 665-4928. The burden **should not** be placed on the student.

Suggestions For Faculty Who Teach Students With Disabilities

The following suggestions describe possible ways that faculty may address teaching students with various disabilities.

- Make the class syllabus and required texts available during registration when possible. Be available to discuss class content and your teaching style with students with disabilities.
- Begin lectures or discussions with a review of the previous lecture and an overview of topics to be covered that day.
- Use the chalkboard or overhead projector to outline lectured material; when practical, read the outline aloud.
- Emphasize important points, main ideas, and key concepts orally during lectures and highlight them on an overhead or on the board.
- Speak distinctly and at a relaxed pace, pausing occasionally for students to ask questions or catch up on their note taking or for an interpreter to catch up.
- Try to diminish or eliminate auditory and visual classroom distractions, such as noise in the hallway or flickering fluorescent lights.
- Provide opportunities for participation, questions and/or discussion during or at the end of the lecture.
- Ascertain whether students understood material presented by asking volunteers to give examples or summaries.

- Give assignments in writing, as well as orally, and be available for further clarification.
- Provide suggested time lines for long-range assignments, and suggest the submission of rough drafts at appropriate points.
- Provide time during office hours for individual discussion of assignments, questions about lectures, and readings.
- Provide a study guide for the text, study questions, and review sessions to aid in mastering material and preparing for exams.
- Help students form study groups to verbally process and discuss material from class and readings.
- Ask all students who disclose a disability how you, as a professor, can facilitate their learning.
- Encourage students to use the Writing Center, library assistance, tutors, and other academic support.
- Discreetly approach a student whom you suspect may have a disability and discuss with her or him your observations. Suggest that the student contact Learning Resources and Services (located in the Academic Enrichment Center).

Procedures For Registering With The Office Of Learning Resources and Services And Obtaining Accommodations

Prior to receiving accommodations, students must comply with the following procedures:

1. Make an appointment to meet with Learning Resources and Services (located in the Academic Enrichment Center, in Howe Hall 204) at the beginning of each semester to request accommodations. The phone number is (540) 665-4928.
2. Provide Learning Resources and Services with the documentation that verifies the student's disability.
3. Work with Learning Resources and Services to determine needed reasonable accommodations.
4. Obtain accommodation forms from Learning Resources and Services. (These forms explain the need for services to the student's professors.)
5. Meet with professors in a private location away from other students (to protect the student's right to privacy) to discuss accommodations.
6. Obtain professors' signatures on the forms.
7. Return the signed copies of all accommodation forms to Learning Resources and Services. These copies will be placed in the student's file before the middle of the semester.

****IMPORTANT **** Students should also meet with Learning Resources and Services staff prior to the end of the semester.

Temporary Medical Impairment

Temporary medical impairments (injuries, temporary mobility impairments following surgery, etc.) are not covered under Section 504 and the ADA. There is no legal requirement to provide accommodations in these situations. However, Learning Resources and Services may, on a case-by-case basis, assist students with temporary medical impairments with temporary assistance. Students are not guaranteed any assistance in these situations. Students will be seen by Learning Resources and Services for an evaluation of temporary services. Each case is considered individually and signed documentation on letterhead from a qualified professional is required. This letter must include: a diagnosis, functional limitations necessitating temporary services, suggestions for appropriate temporary services and the estimated length of time services will be needed.

Confidentiality

All student records are confidential and shall be kept in a secure area in the Office of Learning Resources and Services.

Requesting Modifications in Specific Courses

A student who needs accommodations in a specific course should contact Learning Resources and Services. The student is responsible for informing the course instructor of the need for accommodations in the class. Learning Resources and Services staff will be available to serve as a liaison between the student and the instructor. If necessary, the student, the director of Learning Resources and Services and the instructor may meet to discuss accommodations or auxiliary aids. Instructors are expected to make reasonable accommodations; however, they are not expected to lower course standards or their expectations for the quality of student work, or fundamentally alter the course requirements.

Approaching Faculty Members

Disclosing a disability to a professor can be a difficult task for students. The decision is up to the student. Students should know that disclosing the disability may make the professor slightly uncomfortable at first if he or she is unfamiliar with disabilities in general. A face-to-face meeting, however, is a good opportunity to educate the professor and make him or her feel at ease.

Other Tips for Students

- Schedule a meeting as early as possible, preferably before the start of the semester. This allows time to work out accommodations and answer any questions.

- Do not go into complete detail about the disability, but tell the professor about the limitations it causes and how it may affect studying and classroom work.
- Explain any weaknesses caused by the disability. The student should also tell the professor his or her strengths.
- Be willing to offer some of the information from the Accommodation Form
- Rely on past experiences. Tell the professor what has worked before. For example, if you have an auditory disability, let the professor know that writing instructions for assignments or tests on a blackboard will help. If you have a visual disability, extra large print handouts or overheads will be valuable.
- Ask the professor if he or she has any ideas. He or she may have worked with students with the same disability in previous classes to develop accommodations that worked.
- Discuss how your work will be evaluated. Clarify whether oral or written work will be evaluated, depending on the disability. Be clear about grading criteria and the type of exams. Also, agree on out-of-class work and what is expected of you.
- Check with Learning Resources and Services if you or the professor are unsure about accommodations.
- Reach an agreement that gives both you and the professor a clear understanding of the accommodations that will be provided and your responsibilities.

Procedures For Obtaining Textbooks And Other Materials In An Alternative Format

In order to receive textbooks and/or other materials in an alternative format, students must:

1. Register with the Office of Learning Resources and Services (located in the Academic Enrichment Center, Howe Hall 204).
2. Complete the Resource Referral Form.
3. Request alternative formats for each semester the student is in need of textbooks, readings, quizzes or exams in alternative formats. Learning Resources and Services will be the contact for these requests and will communicate with the student, professor(s) and staff regarding the student's formatting needs.
4. Pick up the materials from Learning Resources and Services (located in Howe Hall 204). The student will be contacted once the materials are ready.

Testing Accommodation Procedures

It is the responsibility of the student to inform the professor at least four business days before the exam/test that they will need testing accommodations (extended time, distraction reduced area, large print etc.). *The Shenandoah University Honor Code is always in effect.*

Procedures For Drops, Adds And Withdrawals

For information regarding drop and add procedures, consult the most current Shenandoah University schedule of classes. University academic policies regarding elective and semester withdrawals can be found in the current University Catalog.

Grievance Procedure

Any University student who believes that he or she has been subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability by being denied academic access or accommodations required by law shall have the right to invoke the Grievance Procedure. This Grievance Procedure is designed to address disagreements or denials regarding requested services, accommodations or modifications to university academic practices or requirements.

Step One

In the event that specific complaints arise regarding the university's compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the director of disabilities services will, at the request of students, faculty or staff, review the procedures implemented and seek to resolve the matter informally. To the extent that the complaint(s) cannot be resolved informally, the following procedures shall be employed in order to address the grievance formally.

Step Two

1. A student wishing to file a complaint shall submit a written grievance to the director of disabilities services within 30 calendar days of the event(s) triggering the grievance. The written grievance must include:
 - clear statement of the university rule, regulation, policy and/or action of which the student complains;
 - the date of any action which the student is appealing;
 - a summary of the action(s) which the student has taken to resolve the matter informally;
 - documentation which supports the grievance.
2. The Director will forward this to the appropriate administrator as designated by the President.
3. The appropriate administrator shall meet with the student within five class days of the receipt of the grievance to gather data and attempt resolution.
4. If this meeting does not resolve the grievance, the appropriate administrator shall conduct an informal investigation of the grievance. In cases where the grievance is about the conduct or requirements of a course or an academic program, the appropriate administrator shall consult with the faculty member responsible for the affected course or academic program, and meet with and seek advice from the Advisory Committee on Disability Issues, consisting of at least one faculty representative from each school and one student. One of the faculty participants

must be from the school responsible for the course or academic program from which the grievance originated.

5. The appropriate administrator shall furnish a written response to the grievance no later than 15 class days after the meeting with the student. The written response shall be mailed to the student by certified mail, return receipt requested.

Step Three

1. If the student is not satisfied with the written response from the appropriate administrator, he/she may present the grievance in written form to the vice president for academic affairs within 10 class days after the receipt of the response from the appropriate administrator.
2. The vice president for academic affairs or designate shall, within 15 class days after the receipt of the grievance, schedule and conduct a meeting with the student and other persons involved in the grievance.
3. After the investigation is complete, the Vice President for Academic Programs or designate shall issue a written answer to the complainant within 15 class days from completion of the meeting(s) with the student and other persons.
4. If the grievance involved conduct or requirements of a course or academic program, a copy of the written decision of the vice president for academic affairs or designate shall be provided to the Advisory Committee on Disability Issues, the dean and the department head in the school involved and to the professor of the course.
5. The director of disabilities services shall maintain the files and records relating to the complaints filed.
6. The right of a person to prompt and equitable resolution of a grievance shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies such as filing a complaint with a responsible federal department or agency. Although individuals have the right to pursue appeals through external channels, they are encouraged to use internal mechanisms to resolve disagreements.

Step Four

If the Vice President for Academic Programs or designate is unable to offer a satisfactory resolution, the student may appeal to the President of the University, whose decision is final.

Contact Information For State Resources

Dept. for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) 397 Azalea Avenue Richmond, Virginia 23227-3623 Phone (Voice/TTY): (800) 622-2155 or (804) 371-3140

Dept. for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VDDHH) 1602 Rolling Hills Dr, Suite 203
Richmond, Virginia 23229-5012 Phone (Voice/TTY): (804) 662-9502 Toll Free Voice/TTY:
(800) 552-7917

Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) 8004 Franklin Farms Drive Richmond,
VA 23229 Phone (Voice): (804) 662-7000 TTY: (804) 662-9040 Toll Free TTY: (800) 464-9950
Toll Free Voice: (800) 552-5019

Virginia Board for People with Disabilities(VBPD) Council on Human Rights 900 E. Main
Street Pocahontas Building, 4th Floor Richmond, Virginia 23219 Phone: (804) 225-2292

Virginia Disability Services Agencies