**Resources – Disabilities**

The education profession, in general, has come a long way in understanding disabilities and how to support student learning. But, it is simply the nature of most university professor’s training, that unless they’re IN the field of education, they’ll have little experience or understanding of disabilities. If students have been lucky enough to be in an excellent K-12 school and have a disability that is not so severe and is amenable to work-arounds, they may be perfectly capable of doing college work without any special accommodations from their professors. Seated in front of you, these students may choose not to inform you of their disability and they’ll do just fine. But for other students, the more their professors are able to recognize and support students with undiagnosed or newly problematic disabilities, the greater the likelihood that all students will thrive.

In many cases, students come to you with diagnosed disabilities that make specific tasks difficult for them. These are the easy ones. At the University level it is up to the student to proactively go to the disabilities office, submit documentation to acquire the Disability Office’s help and specifically inform individual professors and to give them permission to access records. But student disabilities are always on a spectrum, from mild, specific and minor problems to more generalized and crippling problems. Just as an example, a student with mild executive function disabilities may do fine living at home, driven to soccer practice by parents, settled in their rooms for homework, only to find that the freedom of being at a university bring their innate problems to a destructive level. To a Professor this student may be the one whose work is always late, not quite on target, or having easily discovered and fixed grammar and spelling errors. Recognizing that the student may have a disability and offering them support may open a door for them and get them the minor accommodations that will make all the difference in whether they even continue in school.

SSU provides extensive and specific guidelines for students who want to register. <https://ask.salemstate.edu/kb/learning-disabilities-documentation-guidelines> and more specific guidelines for particular disabilities --

[Psychiatric/Psychological Disabilities Documentation Guidelines](https://ask.salemstate.edu/kb/psychiatricpsychological-disabilities-documentation-guidelines)

[Disability Documentation Guidelines](https://ask.salemstate.edu/kb/disability-documentation-guidelines),

[Head Injury Documentation Guidelines](https://ask.salemstate.edu/kb/head-injury-documentation-guidelines-0)

[Physical Disabilities Documentation Guidelines](https://ask.salemstate.edu/kb/physical-disabilities-documentation-guidelines)

[Blind/Visual Impairment Documentation Guidelines](https://ask.salemstate.edu/kb/blindvisual-impairment-documentation-guidelines)

**Accommodations --**

**As a teacher, you may offer accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Many of these are simple fixes that help students in basic functions. Knowledge of what is available to YOU is important. Read below to understand what some of these accommodations entail.**

Disability Services is introducing **Accommodat**e – an accessibility management system that will streamline student interaction with our office.  Students will use Accommodate to register with our office, request, and view accommodations each semester, and upload documentation! Students will also use this platform to make alternative testing requests!

### Accessing the Accommodate System

[Log into Accommodate](https://salemstate-accommodate.symplicity.com)

If you are connecting with us for the first time, [please fill out our online intake form](https://salemstate-accommodate.symplicity.com/public_accommodation/).

### Disability Services Accommodations

Disability Services works with students on an individual basis to determine what accommodations would be most effective to help them achieve academic success. Some, but not all, of our accommodations are described below.

#### Priority Registration

Priority or pre-registration allows students with documented disabilities who register with disability services to register for classes each semester at the earliest scheduled registration date. [Learn more about priority registration](https://ask.salemstate.edu/kb/priority-registration)

#### Note Takers

Note takers are identified from the student’s classroom. Students may be willing to find a classmate to provide them with copies of their notes.

However, if the student has difficulty finding a note taker, the instructor can assist in identifying potential note takers. Our office also has other note taking options, please contact us to find out more information.

#### Accessible Technology

Disability Services is equipped with adaptive and accessible computer equipment and software. [Learn more about our available technology and how to gain access.](https://ask.salemstate.edu/kb/accessible-technology)

#### Alternative Textbook/Handout Format

Alternative formats for textbooks or handouts can be made available from disability services to students who submit appropriate supporting documentation. [Learn more about available alternative formats and texts.](https://ask.salemstate.edu/kb/alternative-textbookhandout-format)

#### Interpreters

Disability services will coordinate services through freelance interpreters, CART reporters and the Massachusetts Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH), to ensure quality services, depending on your specific interpreting or CART needs. [Learn more about interpreters.](https://ask.salemstate.edu/kb/interpreters)

#### FM Systems

FM Systems are available through Disability Services for use by students. [Contact Disability Services for more information.](mailto:disability-services@salemstate.edu)

#### Scheduling Computers Aided Real Time (CART) Services

Computer aided real time (CART) services are the near verbatim transformation of the spoken word into a visual text display on a computer screen. [Learn more about this service and if it’s right for you.](https://ask.salemstate.edu/kb/scheduling-computer-aided-real-time-cart-services)

### Documentation

In order to receive accommodations, a student must first submit documentation that establishes the presence of a disability.  Types of documentation we accept include, but are not limited to:

* Letter from an appropriate medical or mental health provider that is signed and on official letterhead
* IEP/504 Plan
* Diagnostic Evaluations

[**Find specific documentation requirements for various disabilities here.**](https://ask.salemstate.edu/kb/disability-documentation-guidelines)

For disability services to determine accommodation needs, the student must meet with a disability services counselor and request specific services and accommodations. During this meeting documentation, academic accommodations, and student responsibilities will be discussed. Final decisions regarding academic accommodations will be made with you and your disability services counselor.

#### Intake Meeting

During your intake meeting, your documentation and requested accommodations will be reviewed. You are responsible for connecting with our office each semester to request accommodations.

#### Faculty Notification

Through the interactive process, disability services will determine what types of services or reasonable accommodations are appropriate.  Accommodations are determined on an individual basis. Confidential Accommodation Letters will be sent to each faculty member for courses that accommodations have been approved for.

It is your responsibility as the student to share these letters with your professors, which verify that you have registered, and have appropriate documentation on file with disability services.

### Student Academic Meetings (SAM)

SAM, or student academic meetings, is a service offered at no cost to students who are registered with disability services. SAM is an individualized consultation and skill-building program where the disability services’ academic counselor meets individually with a student, focusing on developing compensatory strategies and skills related to global learning concerns.

### **Confidentiality and Release of Information**

Disability Services is committed to ensuring that all information you provide is maintained as confidential. Any information collected is used for your benefit. [Discover information on confidentiality.](https://ask.salemstate.edu/kb/confidentiality-release-information)