



ACCOMMODATIVE SERVICES

A Handbook for Students with Disabilities

***To promote shared responsibility with
student, instructor, and college staff for
college success.***



Mission Statement

Through its actions, the Office of Accommodative Services seeks to create a climate at Guam Community College where all students regardless of accommodative needs become increasingly active participants in their educational experience.

Guam Community College
Accommodative Services
for Students with Disabilities

Policy and Procedures

OUR COMMITMENT TO SERVING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Guam Community College (GCC) is committed to achieving equal educational opportunity and full participation for individuals with disabilities. It is the institution's policy that no qualified person be excluded from participating in a college program or activity, be denied the benefits of any program or activity, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination with regard to any program or activity. This policy derives from the College's commitment to non-discrimination for all persons in employment, access to facilities, student programs, activities and services.

The College's efforts to accommodate individuals with disabilities must be measured against the goal of full participation and integration. Services and programs to promote the benefits for individuals with disabilities shall complement and support, but not duplicate, the institution's regular services and programs. Achieving full participation and integration for individuals with disabilities requires the cooperative efforts of all of the College's departments, offices, and personnel. To this end, the College will continue to strive to achieve excellence in its services and to assure that its services are delivered equitably and efficiently to all of its members.

PURPOSES OF OUR PROGRAM

1. Provide services and accommodations to students with disabilities.
2. Work closely with faculty and staff in an advisory capacity.
3. Assist in the development of reasonable accommodations for students.
4. Provide equal access for "otherwise qualified" individuals with disabilities.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF HIGHER EDUCATION RELATED TO LEGISLATIVE MANDATE

Civil Rights Act of 1964:

No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal Financial assistance,

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 is a civil rights statute. It requires that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be denied access to, the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination by any program or activity provided by any institution or entity receiving federal financial assistance. **Subpart E** of Section 504 deals specifically with institutions of higher education.

It requires that an institution (public or private) be prepared to make appropriate academic adjustments and reasonable modifications to policies and practices in order to allow the full participation of students with disabilities in the same programs and activities available to non-disabled students.

The Americans with Disabilities Act

Introduction

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 reinforces the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act by requiring that all public facilities, services, and communications be accessible to persons with disabilities and that auxiliary aids and services be provided unless an undue burden would result.

Who is protected?

Qualified individuals with disabilities are protected under the ADA. The definition contains two parts. First, the person must be an individual with a disability as defined under the ADA; second, that person must be otherwise qualified.

A “qualified individual with a disability” means:

1. With respect to educational opportunities, a disabled person who meets the technical and academic standards for admission or participation in an educational program or activity.
2. With respect to other services, a disabled person who meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of such services.

An individual with a disability is defined as someone who has a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such impairment. Individuals with disabilities may include persons who are mobility impaired, cosmetically disfigured, mentally ill, mentally disabled, emotionally troubled, or learning disabled. “Major life activities” include caring for self, performing manual tasks, walking, sitting, standing, lifting, reaching, seeing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.

Standards of Access

The standard for access to programs and services under the ADA for public institutions is that all programs must be readily accessible to, and usable by, qualified persons with disabilities. In addition, qualified students with disabilities must be provided equal services in a setting that is as integrated as possible. The determination of what is an equal and integrated setting will be made on a case-by-case basis. What is appropriate for one person with a specific impairment may not be useful or appropriate for another person with the same impairment.

Academic Standards Not Affected

The ADA does not require colleges or universities to lower academic standards or fundamentally alter the nature of the programs provided. As such, reasonable accommodations does not negate requirements for successful completion of courses and

programs, adherence to generally acceptable standards of behavior and the College’s code of conduct, and adherence to faculty directions and instructions.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of educational records and to establish the right of students to inspect and review their educational records. Records maintained at GCC for the purpose of coordinating services for students with disabilities, including any medical or clinical records, are considered educational records as defined by FERPA and **may** be disclosed to other school officials with a legitimate educational interest. For example, the provision of academic adjustments is not limited to the Office of Accommodative Services, but rather a coordinated effort between the student, faculty, and staff. Therefore, in the course of providing services, it **may** be necessary for disability-related information to be shared with other college personnel properly involved in evaluating and responding to requests for accommodations (i.e. instructor, Dean, and Department Chair). The Office of Accommodative Services will make every effort to limit disclosure of information to a student’s identity, learning preferences, functional limitations, and explanation of recommended accommodations.

OUR INSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

GCC neither imposes accommodations on students nor preempts a student’s responsibility to disclose and define his or her disability. Asking for accommodations is a personal decision. If a student requests accommodations at GCC, he or she is responsible for completing the accommodation process that begins with informing the Accommodative Services Coordinator. Not every impairment, however, qualifies as a disability protected under the ADA because not every impairment is substantially limiting. In order for an individual to be eligible for accommodations, the ADA stipulates that the disability must “substantially limit” a major life activity. **Although the Accommodative Services Coordinator assists students with disabilities with many tasks, it is the responsibility of students to take the initiative and remain actively involved in the accommodation process.** If there are concerns about this process or advice is needed in coming to a decision as to whether to seek accommodations, the Office of Accommodative Services (OAS) encourages students to call or visit the office for a confidential review of the options available to them. Should a student then prefer not to self-identify, that decision will be understood, respected, and supported.

OUR INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Maintain the College’s essential academic standards. Ensure that the College courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities, when viewed in their entirety, are offered in the most integrated and appropriate settings.
2. Request current documentation from a student completed by an appropriate professional source to verify the need for reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids.

3. Discuss a student's need for reasonable accommodations, adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids with the professional source on his/her documentation with the student's signed consent authorizing such discussion.
4. Select among equally effective and appropriate accommodations, adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids in consultation with students with disabilities.
5. Deny a request for accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or aids if the documentation does not identify a specific disability; the documentation fails to verify the need for the requested services, or the documentation is not provided in a timely manner.
6. Refuse to provide an accommodation, adjustment, and/or auxiliary aid that is inappropriate or unreasonable including any that:
 - Poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others.
 - Constitute a substantive change or alteration to an essential element of a course or program, or
 - Poses undue financial or administrative burden on the College.
7. Assist students with disabilities who self-identify and meet criteria to receive appropriate accommodations, adjustments, and aids, determined on a case-by-case basis.
8. Assure confidentiality of all information pertaining to a student's disability.
9. Provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities within two weeks upon complete submission of required documentation.
10. Provide information regarding policies and procedures to students with disabilities.

STUDENT RIGHTS

1. Full and equal access to the same educational experience as students without disabilities.
2. Have an equal opportunity to learn, and to receive reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Students must self-identify their disability and provide professional and appropriate documentation of the disability. Students must complete the Request for Accommodations and Release of Information forms.
2. Students must consult with the Accommodative Services Coordinator to discuss services and determine reasonable accommodations prior to the beginning of the semester. Accommodations are not retroactive.
3. Students will be notified to pick up their Approved Academic Accommodations Form (AAAF) through their "MyGCC" email account. Students must pick up their AAAF and provide them to their instructors in order for accommodations to be provided. In the event the AAAF has not been picked up, the Office of Accommodative Services will make an attempt to hand deliver the documents to students.

4. Students will approach instructors at the beginning of each semester to discuss accommodation needs in a confidential setting. Students must provide instructors with the AAAF.
5. Students must give the AAAF to the teacher. The teacher must sign off on the Faculty Acknowledgement Form, acknowledging receipt, and then the student MUST return the signed certification to the Accommodative Services Office.
6. Students must adhere to the Student Code of Conduct established by the College.
7. Students must secure their tuition, fees, textbooks, educational supplies, and personal equipment needs. Students can pursue financial aid and support from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the College may provide assistance in obtaining external support. Students are not required to obtain academic adjustments and auxiliary aids and services or other disability-related accommodations from outside funding sources, except for those aids that are personal in nature.
8. Students must notify the Office of Accommodative Services of pre-registered classes for the following semester so the Accommodative Services Coordinator can prepare the AAAF for Faculty Notice in advance as well as secure auxiliary aid(s) accordingly. The Office of Accommodative Services should be notified if there is a schedule change.
9. Students must regularly check their email at the address provided by the College for updates or notices sent by the Office of Accommodative Services.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

The purpose of objective evidence (documentation) of a disability in a postsecondary environment is two-fold: (1) to establish protection from discrimination and (2) to determine the accommodations which the individual may be entitled to receive.

Students requesting accommodations and/or support services under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 must provide documentation of the existence of a disability that substantially limits a major life activity. To determine the appropriate accommodations, the documentation should be current, within the past three years. In some cases, it may be appropriate to extend the testing limit to five years if the testing is reflective of the adult's current functioning.

DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES SHOULD INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING

1. THE CREDENTIALS OF THE EVALUATOR(S)

Quality documentation will be provided by a licensed or otherwise properly credential professional that has undergone appropriate training, has relevant experience, and has no personal relationship with the client.

2. A DIAGNOSTIC STATEMENT IDENTIFYING THE DISABILITY

A clear diagnostic statement will describe how the condition was diagnosed, provide information on the functional impact, and detail the typical progression or prognosis of the condition. Diagnosis codes are helpful but not required

- 3. A DESCRIPTION OF THE DIAGNOSTIC METHODOLOGY USED** Quality documentation will include a description of the diagnosis criteria, evaluation methods, procedures, tests, and dates of administration, along with a clinical narrative, observation, and specific results. Where appropriate to the nature of the disability, having both summary data and specific test scores is expected.

- 4. A DESCRIPTION OF THE CURRENT FUNCTIONAL LIMITATIONS** A description of how the disabling condition(s) currently impacts the individual for the purpose of establishing a disability and identifying possible accommodations. The best quality documentation is thorough enough to demonstrate whether and how a major life activity is substantially limited by providing a clear sense of the severity, frequency, and pervasiveness of the condition. Major life activities consist of caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.

5. A DESCRIPTION OF THE EXPECTED PROGRESSION OR STABILITY OF THE DISABILITY

Documentation is helpful when it provides information on expected changes in the functional impact of the disability over time and context. Descriptions of the cyclical or episodic nature of the disability and known or suspected environment triggers to episodes provide opportunities to anticipate and plan for varying functional impacts.

6. A DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT AND/OR PAST ACCOMMODATIONS, SERVICES, AND/OR MEDICATIONS

Complete documentation includes a description of both current and past medications, auxiliary aids, assistive devices, support services, and accommodations, including their effectiveness in alleviating functional impacts of the disability.

7. REQUEST FOR FURTHER TESTING

The College may require a student to undergo further testing and/or evaluation by a medical or other licensed professional to verify or establish the claimed disability and the need for an accommodation. Appropriate accommodations can then be developed or implemented.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACCOMMODATIONS

This can include recommendations for accommodations, adaptive devices, assistive services, compensatory strategies, and/or collateral support as appropriate to the functional limitations. While the postsecondary institution has no obligation to provide or adopt

recommendations made by outside entities, those that are congruent with the programs, services and benefits offered by the College or program may be appropriate. When recommendations go beyond equitable and inclusive services and benefits, they may still be useful in suggesting alternative accommodations and/or services.

9. DOCUMENTATION FOR LEARNING DISABILITY

Diagnosis by a qualified professional

- Recent data to provide a current “picture” of the individual. (usually within three years)
- Assessment information, including:
 1. Diagnosis Interview
 2. Intellectual Assessment
 - ❖ Aptitude/Information Processing using adult norms
 - ❖ Academic Achievement levels
 - ❖ Standard scores or percentiles should be reported for all normed measures
 - ❖ Clinical Summary indicating substantial limitations to learning or other major life activities
 - ❖ Any record of prior accommodations used
- Recommendations and rationale for accommodations

10. DOCUMENTATION FOR ATTENTION DEFICIT/HYPERACTIVE DISORDER

Diagnosis by a qualified professional

- Recent data to provide a current “picture” of the individual, usually within three years.
 1. Assessment information, includes evidence of early impairment which, by definition in the latest edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, is first exhibited in childhood and manifests itself in more than one setting.

It is important to realize that accommodations can change over time and with differing environmental demands. It is also important to note that accommodations provided in higher education institutions will be granted **ONLY** if directly related to the disability (ies) documented.

Any individual with a documented disability is eligible to receive services. The purpose of accommodations and modifications is to reduce or eliminate any disadvantages that may exist because of an individual’s disability. The law doesn’t require institutions to waive specific courses or academic requirements considered essential to a particular program or degree. Rather, they are mandated to modify existing requirements on a case-by-case basis in order to ensure that individuals are not discriminated against on the basis of their disability. Students wanting to access services must self-identify and provide appropriate verification of their disability. Eligibility for reasonable and appropriate accommodations will be determined on an individual basis.

REQUEST FOR SERVICES

Accommodations for qualified students provided through the Office of Accommodative Services may include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Approved Academic Accommodations Form (AAAF)

The Office of Accommodative Services will prepare the AAAF for students to deliver to Faculty about the students' needing academic accommodations within ten working days of complete submission of required documentation. It is the student's responsibility to pick up the AAAF from the Office of Accommodative Services. The AAAF indicates appropriate and reasonable accommodations that must be made upon request. Accommodations are not retroactive. Students are encouraged to discuss their request for accommodations with instructors during their office hours. Faculty members can request further information regarding accommodations. It is up to the individual student whether they would like to disclose the exact nature of their disability to their professor when they discuss their accommodations.

2. Auxiliary Aids

Digital voice recorder, magnifier, and/or ergonomic keyboard, etc. can be requested through the Office of Accommodative Services. Students are required to submit their requests at least ten working days before the service or aid is needed.

Through the Gannett Grant, the Learning Resource Center is equipped with five desktop computers, five foot stools, five lumbar supports, and five reading pens, and an ergonomic mouse. Students are permitted to use these aids only in the library. The student must request for any of these aids at the front desk in the Learning Resource Center.

3. Desktop Computers

Desktop computers are available for student use in the Computer Lab in the Student Center Building and the Learning Resource Center.

4. Sign Language Interpreter

Deaf and hard of hearing students may request for a sign language interpreter. It is recommended that the request should be submitted to the office at least two weeks prior to the start of a semester. The Office of Accommodative Services will provide an interpreter for those students who request for this service.

Should an interpreter be needed for student advisement and/or meetings, the Office of Accommodative Services should be given prior notice, preferably two weeks as well. If there is a schedule change, students must inform the Office of Accommodative Services so the Office can plan accordingly.

5. Placard

A placard for accessible parking can be obtained through the Department of Revenue & Taxation, Motor Vehicle Division.

6. Test Proctoring

Faculty can make arrangements with the Office of Accommodative Services and/or their Department Chairperson to have their student take his/her tests in a non-distracting environment.

7. Note Takers

Note Takers may be provided to any student who has difficulty taking lecture notes because of a documented physical or learning disability. The College believes that student participation is essential for a quality educational experience. This accommodation is in no way meant to replace classroom attendance. Students who volunteer and/or are designated to take notes in class will be highly encouraged to participate in an hour-long training through PEPNet. The student will become a certified note taker at the end of the training.

Notes will be provided to the student. Student notes can be photocopied in the Student Support Office, Office of Accommodative Services, and/or the Learning Resource Center without cost.

8. Electronic Textbooks (e-books)

If reasonable, arrangements can be made for students with visual impairments or learning disabilities to obtain textbooks on tape through Benetech Technology Inc. This accommodation is only for students with disabilities and provided through the Office of Accommodative Services. Students need to inform the Accommodative Services Coordinator prior to the beginning of each semester so that arrangements can be made accordingly. Students receiving e-books are held to the same copyrighting laws as students using word format textbooks. If e-books are part of a student's academic accommodation, the student is responsible to pick up the items within 48 hours of notification from the Office of Accommodative Services. Notification will be made through the campus email system. It is the student's responsibility to consistently check his or her campus email address.

9. Tutoring

Students can receive tutoring services through Project Aim. Students must qualify to receive the service. Tutors are also available to assist students one-on-one through various resources on campus. For further information please call, (671) 735-5594.

10. Tape Recording Agreement

Students with disabilities who are unable to take or read notes have the right to tape record class lectures for their personal study only. (84.44 of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, P.L. 93-12, amended P.L. 93-516). Students must obtain the “Tape Recording Agreement” from the Office of Accommodative Services.

11. Service Providers

Students in need of a mobility assistant, reader, and/or scribe are required to submit their request at least ten working days before the service or aid is needed.

12. Support

The faculty at GCC is very supportive of students with special needs. If at any time, a student may need assistance in obtaining an appropriate accommodation, the Office of Accommodative Services will serve as an advocate.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

GCC strives to resolve conflicts at the lowest level possible. When a question arises about the denial or appropriateness of an accommodation, it is the responsibility of the faculty member and student with disabilities to first consult with the Accommodative Services Coordinator in a timely manner.

The Accommodative Services Coordinator will work with faculty and the students to resolve accommodations disagreements. Faculty members who question the legitimacy of the Office of Accommodative Services recommendations should continue to afford the accommodation to the student while the appeal procedures are implemented. If the dispute over the accommodation cannot be resolved at that level, students should utilize the grievance procedure established by the College. This procedure can be found in the Guam Community College Student Handbook.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How are services for students with disabilities at Guam Community College different from services provided in high school or from other institutions?

Students should not assume that accommodations provided at one school will be provided at Guam Community College. Accommodations are approved on a case-by-case basis and must be consistent with the College’s academic goals and standards. A student’s request, documentation, and past educational experiences will all be taken into consideration when determining the appropriate accommodations. Ultimately, college students are solely responsible for the success of their college career.

2. Are 504 Plans and IEP's (Individualized Education Plans) acceptable documentation of a disability at the College level?

504 Plans and IEP's are not considered acceptable documentation, but are useful in understanding prior academic experiences of the student. Testing used to document a disability must be current (usually within the past three years) and administered by a qualified professional. Testing evaluation determining a substantially limiting disability must meet the Documentation Guidelines as outlined in this handbook and deemed adequate by the College.

3. What is considered acceptable documentation?

Documentation must be current, be completed by a qualified professional, and explain the "substantial limitations" as a result of the disability, and provide accommodation recommendations. If you are unsure whether your documentation is current, please consult with the Accommodative Services Coordinator. Guam Community College reserves the right to determine the adequacy of submitted documentation and to require additional documentation and/or testing. All costs incurred for obtaining appropriate documentation are the student's responsibility.

4. I believe I have a disability but no current documentation. What should I do?

If you have not received an evaluation or your documentation is determined to be outdated, Guam Community College can assist you in obtaining information about local practitioners or community agencies that can perform the evaluation. All costs incurred for obtaining appropriate documentation are the student's responsibility.

5. Who do I share my disability documentation with and when?

Guam Community College students should contact the Accommodative Services Coordinator as soon as possible to determine what services and accommodations may be available or appropriate. If you are a prospective student to the College, you should arrange a meeting with a staff member of the program to discuss your documentation and potential services available. Students with disabilities accepted to Guam Community College should contact the Office of Accommodative Services as soon as possible to discuss the coordination of services.

6. Is my parent/guardian permitted to advocate for me?

Unless your parent/guardian has an "Order Appointing Guardians" from Superior Court of Guam and/or another legal establishment, administrators, staff, and faculty, ARE NOT permitted to discuss any information about you with your parent.

7. What types of classroom accommodations are considered?

Accommodations may include but are not limited to, extended time or alternative testing formats, note takers, test proctoring, and textbooks on tape (e-books). At Guam Community College, tutoring services, various academic enrichment activities

(workshops on study skills, test taking, etc.) and counseling and support are available to all students free of charge.

8. I think I have a disability that interferes with my academic performance but I have never been tested. What should I do?

The Accommodative Services Coordinator can help students by discussing what the interferences are and whether possible study or time-management strategies may help. If necessary, the Coordinator can refer the student to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation for further assessments and evaluation

(telephone number 671-475-5735/38).

9. Are there special disability advisors or academic coaches for students with disabilities at Guam Community College?

The College does not have special disability advisors or academic coaches. The Accommodative Services Coordinator, however, can meet one-on-one with any student upon request. The Coordinator can refer the student to see any one of the counselors or the student's assigned advisor.

10. Need to file a complaint? Refer to the Student Grievance procedure in the Guam Community College Student Handbook.

Students who encounter problems, which cannot be resolved directly with the College instructor or other personnel involved, or who feel they have been discriminated against on the basis of color, age, sex, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, political affiliation or disability condition should refer to the Student Handbook for appropriate procedures. This procedure can be found in the Guam Community College Student Handbook .

11. Complaint not resolved?

If the complaint is not resolved at the College level, a student may choose to file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights. The following entity will take complaints and will investigate when appropriate.

**Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
915 Second Avenue, Room 3310
Seattle, WA. 98174-1009**

Email: OCR.Seattle@ed.gov

Telephone: (206) 607-1600

Telecommunications for the Deaf: (206) 607-1647

Facsimile: (206) 607-1601

Information compiled in this handbook was adapted from various sources, like the following:

**Association of Higher Education and Disabilities
Coe's College, Iowa
Brown University, Rhode Island
Evangel University, Missouri
Lock Haven University, Pennsylvania
Louisiana State University in Shreveport, Louisiana**

STEPS TO ACCESS INFORMATION FOR
THE OFFICE OF ACCOMMODATIVE SERVICES
ON "My GCC" WEBSITE

STEP 1: Log on to www.guamcc.edu

STEP 2: Click on the "Student Services" tab, located at the top of the "My GCC" homepage.

STEP 3: Under the "Student Services" tab, click on the option "Accommodative Services".

OFFICE OF ACCOMMODATIVE SERVICES

***1st floor Student Services & Administration Building
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