

The Accessibility Services Office

Accommodations with Regard to Faculty Rights and Responsibilities

The Director of Accessibility Services reviews disability documentation and determines eligibility and appropriate accommodations. Determining reasonable accommodation is a multi-step process and a joint responsibility shared by the Director of Accessibility Services, students, and instructors. The guidelines below will help you understand the accommodation process and your rights and responsibilities as Ohio Wesleyan faculty members.

What is the Accommodation Process?

Students provide the Director of Accessibility Services with documentation of the disability that substantiates their eligibility for protection by the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and reasonable accommodations. Documentation should be submitted before the semester begins or in the first two weeks of classes, if possible. However, please understand students can request accommodations at any point in the semester. This documentation is confidential, so faculty should not request to see it.

1. Students are required to communicate with the Director of Accessibility Services each semester in the first or second week of classes to request accommodations for their courses and request their current "ASO Registration/Faculty Notification Letter."
2. Students contact professors and arrange a time to meet to discuss accommodation needs. Students who request accommodations without verification should be referred to the Accessibility Services Office.
3. Faculty are not required to provide accommodations if students have not registered with the Accessibility Services Office.
4. Faculty may be required to complete an agreement form for students needing reasonable flexibility with attendance and deadlines.
5. Students are responsible for scheduling exams with the OWU Testing Center or with the instructor/department, should the instructor be proctoring the exam.

Note: If you suspect one of your students may have an undiagnosed learning disability, asking the following questions may help you to understand his or her learning needs without referring to, or asking directly about, a possible disability.

- How did you handle this type of challenge in high school?
- How did you perform in these classes in the past?
- Did you receive any help in high school for any of your classes?

- What type of strategies helped you learn this type of material in the past?
- Are you aware of the support services in the Sagan Academic Resource Center?
- Refer to Departmental Tutoring if applicable (<http://arc.owu.edu/>)

What Are Faculty Rights and Responsibilities?

Faculty Rights

Faculty members have the right to

- Require students to provide a copy of the ASO Registration/Faculty Notification Letter confirming their need for accommodations.
- Deny accommodations requests if students do not provide verification from the Accessibility Services Office.
- Request that students meet with them to discuss the students' need for reasonable accommodations, academic modifications, and/or auxiliary aids.
- Determine course content and decide the best method for instructing students and assessing their learning.
- Question accommodations that fundamentally alter academic standards or compromise core pedagogical components of a course.
- Deny requests for accommodations, academic modifications, and/or auxiliary aids if they are unreasonable for one or more of the following reasons: **a)** Posing a direct threat to the health and safety of others, **b)** Constituting a substantial change or alterations to an essential element of a course or program, **c)** Posing undue financial or administrative burden on the university

Faculty Responsibilities

Faculty members have the responsibility to

- Refer students to the Accessibility Services Office if they mention a disability and the need for accommodations.
- Inform students about OWU's procedures for accommodating students with disabilities (outlined above).

- Meet with students in a timely manner to discuss accommodations and to implement accommodation plans.
- Work with the Director of Accessibility Services to determine reasonable accommodations and academic adjustments, which may not be the students' or faculty members' first or preferred choice.
- Provide students with equitable access to educational programs and opportunities.
- Submit course textbook orders in a timely manner for materials to be reproduced in accessible formats; Provide students with a list of course texts on request (for the purpose identified above).
- Maintain confidentiality by protecting students' anonymity and keeping disability information and materials in a secure place.
- Contact the Director of Accessibility Services if questions or concerns arise regarding the appropriateness or implementation of accommodations.
- Not to assess appropriate career goals for students with disabilities based on what *might* happen in their future.
- Include a statement in your course syllabus to encourage students to disclose their disability and accommodation needs and to inform them about the procedure for requesting academic accommodations. The wording of a syllabus statement may vary from one course to the next but each should inform students about three primary responsibilities: **1)** Registering with the Accessibility Services Office; **2)** Meeting with you to discuss accommodation needs; and **3)** Requesting accommodation needs in a timely manner.

Sample Syllabus Statement

If you have a disability that may impact your work in this course, please register with the Accessibility Services Office as soon as possible, if you have not done so already, and then meet with me in my office as soon as possible to discuss your accommodation needs. The Accessibility Services Office is located in the Sagan Academic Resource Center, Hamilton-Williams Campus Center, Suite 324 (740-368-3990; aso@owu.edu).

Please contact the Director of Accessibility Services if you have questions or concerns about the accommodation process or a student who has discussed disability-related needs with you.

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