



Office of Accessibility Services

STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES MANUAL

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Gwynedd Mercy University Mission Statement

Gwynedd Mercy University is a Catholic higher-education institution founded and sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy. Its mission is to create a learning community rooted in Gospel values and rich in the liberal arts. In an atmosphere of inquiry and dialogue, the institution seeks to combine education for professional competency with the Mercy tradition of service to society.

Introduction

The Office of Accessibility Services serves to coordinate the needs of students with documented disabilities with faculty, staff and administration to ensure equal educational access. The purpose of this manual is to provide information and guidelines about Student Accessibility Services policies, procedures and practices for students, faculty, staff and administration at Gwynedd Mercy University.

Student Accessibility Services are available through the Office of Accessibility Services. At the time of a student's acceptance to Gwynedd Mercy University, or anytime thereafter, a request can be made for accommodations for learning, psychological, and physical disabilities. The Office of Accessibility Services works collaboratively with the student, faculty, and other University resources to ensure that accommodations are provided for students with a qualified disability. Gwynedd Mercy University is committed to collaborating with students, staff, and faculty to find reasonable accommodations to meet the specific needs of the student, which may, at times, include referrals to outside sources. Within the bounds of its resources, Gwynedd Mercy University provides reasonable accommodations to meet those challenges and needs so that all students accepted into a program of study can have equal opportunity to reach their academic and personal goals. Accommodations are assessed on a case-by-case basis and are individualized based on the students' unique needs. Examples of common accommodations include, but are not limited to, extended testing time, testing in a distraction reduced environment, note takers, and permission to record lectures.

Questions about this manual and its contents can be made to the Director of Accessibility Services, Zack Hulings, Hulings.z@gmercyu.edu

Disability Law

Gwynedd Mercy University is committed to providing equal educational opportunity for persons with disabilities in accordance with the Nondiscrimination Policy of the University in addition to compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the American's with Disabilities Amendment Act (ADAA) of 2008. In general, these laws protect individuals with disabilities from discrimination, allow access to all programs and services, and give some direction as to whom these laws apply and under what conditions. Together, they define a qualified person as one.... "who meets the academic and technical standards requisite to admission or participation in the education program or activity." Further, they stipulate that "[a] qualified (disabled) person may not be denied admission or recruitment on the basis of a disability." The laws also guide students in their responsibilities such as the responsibility to self-identify, provide documentation, and request reasonable accommodations.

Definition of Disability

A person with a disability includes.... "any person (1) who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities [including walking seeing hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working caring for oneself, and performing manual tasks], (2) has a record of such an impairment, or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment."

The ADAA further expanded the definition of major life activities to include activities such as concentrating, sleeping, thinking, eating, and includes major bodily functions such as neurological, digestive, endocrine, and reproductive functions. A substantial limitation means that the person experiences a significant or total limitation on the activity as compared to other individuals engaged in the same activity. Only one major life activity needs to be substantially limiting, and the law also gives consideration to those conditions that are episodic. Episodic conditions or those in remission are considered disabilities if they would substantially limit a major life activity when active.

Reasonable Accommodations

Qualified students with disabilities are entitled to receive approved modifications of programs, appropriate academic adjustments, or auxiliary aids that enable them to participate in and benefit from all educational programs or activities. Gwynedd Mercy University is required to provide reasonable accommodations for the known physical or mental limitations of a student with a disability so that they may participate in the programs and services (educational and otherwise) that are available at Gwynedd Mercy University. Accommodations are considered unreasonable if they fundamentally alter the nature of the course or program of study. Accommodations are intended to guarantee access to programs and services but are not intended to guarantee success.

Policies and Procedures

At the time of a student's acceptance to Gwynedd Mercy University, or anytime thereafter, a request can be made for accommodations for learning, psychological and physical disabilities. It is important for students to allow sufficient time for administrative processing of requests. Within the bounds of its resources, Gwynedd Mercy University intends to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities to provide an equal opportunity and access to educational programs.

Eligibility

Each student requesting accommodations is assessed on a case by case basis. Accommodations are determined by an interactive and collaborative process between the student, the Director of Accessibility Services, and other relevant experts. The student's individual needs, requested accommodations, documentation, disability, strengths, functional limitations, past supports used, recommended accommodations stated in and supported by the documentation, and available options and University resources are considered in during the application process. Students must complete this process before the University can make any accommodation. Gwynedd Mercy University will collaborate with students to find reasonable accommodations to meet the specific needs of the student, which may, at times, include referrals to outside sources. Students must meet with the Director of Accessibility Services each semester and provide a copy of their course schedule which includes each course's number and title, and the instructor's name.

For students determined to have a qualified disability, Gwynedd Mercy University provides accommodations to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to participate in all Gwynedd-Mercy programs, services, and activities. The purpose of an accommodation is not to ensure success, but to provide access.

1. Determination of eligibility and accommodations will be based on the following:
 - The documentation provided by the student
 - The completion of the Student Accessibility Services Accommodation Application
 - Consultation with relevant parties including , but not limited to: student, appropriate experts, qualified professionals, and parents
 - The academic course, program, and requirements in question
2. Accommodations will not be provided retroactively.
 - Students who are approved to receive accommodations through the Office of Accessibility Services are eligible to receive those accommodations from the time that they are approved. To assure the use of accommodations, students are asked to give faculty reasonable notification of such eligibility, defined as a minimum of one week prior to the time of intended use of the accommodation. If faculty is notified in less time, and due to the many factors that may be involved, some accommodations may be delayed. However, involved parties will make a good faith effort to provide the accommodation in a timely manner.

Course work completed before a student discloses a documented disability will not be reexamined even if the student can establish that they had a disability at the time of the course in question.

3. All accommodation requests may not be granted.
 - Gwynedd Mercy University will provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations based upon the review of the factors described in the above section of eligibility. Thus a student may not necessarily be provided with all the accommodations recommended in their documentation. Some reasons why an accommodation may not be approved include:
 - Providing the accommodation would fundamentally alter the program, course or activity.
 - The accommodation being requested is not supported by the documentation, or is unreasonable.
 - Providing the accommodation would pose a direct threat to the student or others.
 - Providing the accommodation would constitute an undue administrative or financial burden pursuant to criteria established under the ADA and/or Section 504.
4. Students must supply the eligibility requirements.
 - It is the responsibility of the student requesting the accommodations and services to document the disability. As such, the cost of the evaluations required pursuant to this Manual is to be borne by the student.
5. The Director of Accessibility Services will only share your actual documentation with those professional staff assisting in evaluating your accommodation requests.

General Procedures

At the time of a student's acceptance to Gwynedd Mercy University, or anytime thereafter, a request can be made for accommodations pertaining to learning, psychological, and/or physical disabilities. This request must be made by the student directly to the Director of Accessibility Services. Request must be made by the student to the Director of Accessibility Services in person, by email, or by receipt of the Student Accessibility Services Accommodation Application. Other forms of contact such as phone calls or disclosure to other University staff or faculty are not recognized as requests for accommodations. A student who self-identifies as having a disability and requests accommodations is responsible for submitting appropriate documentation and following the procedures as listed on the [Student Accessibility Services](#) web page. No accommodation can be made by Gwynedd Mercy University without completing this process.

All information provided to the Director of Accessibility Services confidential is in accordance with FERPA. It is important to allow sufficient time for administrative processing of the application. In addition, accommodation requests are assessed on a

case-by-case basis and the accommodations are based on each student's individual and unique needs.

A student who self-identifies as having a disability and requests accommodations is responsible for submitting appropriate documentation and following the procedures as listed below. Through an interactive process, the University will make every effort to collaborate with students in finding reasonable accommodations to meet specific needs, which may include referrals to community-based resources.

Application Procedures for accommodation requests

Please follow the steps below to apply for accommodations:

1. Contact the Director of Accessibility Services, Zack Hulings, to discuss your request. Incoming and current students may email Mr. Hulings directly at Hulings.z@gmercyu.edu
2. If this is your first time requesting accommodations from The Office of Accessibility Services, please complete the Student Accessibility Services Accommodation Application.
 - The Health Care Professional Form section must be completed by an appropriate, certified professional and not a family member.
 - Gwynedd Mercy University reserves the right to request additional documentation.
3. All completed documentation should be submitted to the Director of Accessibility Services at Hulings.z@gmercyu.edu
4. The Director of Accessibility Services will contact you once documentation has been received and reviewed to request a meeting. At the intake meeting, you will have an opportunity to discuss your experiences and how your disability impacts your education. You can also discuss some accommodations you find helpful. This meeting is a collaborative and individualized process.
 - Please be aware the review, approval, and orientation process can take up to six weeks. It will benefit you to submit your application and documentation at least six to eight weeks before the start of your first course. If all documentation is not submitted, additional time may be needed.
 - Accommodations are not retroactive and cannot be applied to previous tests or assignments.
5. The Director of Accessibility Services will review the documentation, and the student will be notified when a decision has been made regarding the accommodation request.
6. If a student qualifies for specific accommodation(s), a letter outlining the approved accommodation will be developed and given to the student either in person or electronically.
 - The Director of Accessibility Services will forward letters to students for all of their classes and instruct students to give each of their professors a letter.
 - Students must provide their letters to their professors to activate their accommodations. Not all accommodations may be approved for all courses;

some accommodations are unique to a specific course or prohibited in a certain course.

7. Students should meet privately with their professors to explain their needs and accommodations for each individual course.
8. If the Director of Accessibility Services determines the student does not qualify for an accommodation, a letter outlining the decision and reason for the decision will be developed and forwarded to the student.
9. If the student disagrees with the decision regarding eligibility or the reasonable accommodation offered, then the student can discuss their concerns with the Director of Accessibility Services.

If they would like to file a formal complaint, a student may choose this option if attempts at prior resolution have been unsuccessful. A signed, written summary of events must be submitted to the Dean of Student Success within 30 days of the initiation of the grievance process (see Undergraduate Catalog for the process).

Documentation Requirements for Students

Each request is reviewed on a case-by-case basis. All documentation should be reflective of the current, functional impact of the condition or impairment. Testing and evaluations should have been completed within the past three to five years. Updated documentation may be requested in some circumstances where documentation is outdated or when ongoing treatment is being provided. Interviews with the student and other involved persons are viewed as an important part of the process and can provide valuable information to augment the documentation.

Documentation for Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Physical, Neurological or Psychological disabilities require:

- Health Care Professional Form found in the Disability Application OR an original letter from the evaluating professional that includes the following areas: a clearly stated, specific diagnosis; a description of the symptoms; a description of the current functional limitations of the condition; an explanation of the impact of the condition on the academic and/or housing environment; and recommendations of appropriate accommodations.
- A written evaluation by a psychiatrist, neurologist, licensed psychologist, or other qualified professional.

Documentation for Learning Disability:

- Comprehensive Psycho-educational Evaluation Report by a school district, neurologist, licensed psychologist, or other qualified professional; the report should include results of psycho-educational testing.
- An IEP, Summary of Performance, or 504 plan will be accepted as supplemental information only and not the primary supporting document.

The AHEAD Best Practices: Disability Documentation in Higher Education was used in developing these guidelines. For further reference, please visit the [AHEAD web page](#).

Disability-Related Housing Accommodation Policy and Procedure

Please note: This policy and procedure is NOT a housing application but a request for disability-related housing accommodations only. Applicants must also comply with Resident Life housing applications, guidelines, forms, and deadlines to apply for on-campus housing.

Gwynedd Mercy University is committed to providing accessibility to all residence Halls for students with registered disabilities. To register as a student with a disability, a student must complete the Student Accessibility Services Application which includes documentation from a health care professional. Students are encouraged to submit this application as soon as an acceptance letter from the Admissions Office is received. The documentation guidelines can be found on the [Student Accessibility Services](#) web page. In addition, further information and recommendations from a professional are welcome and will be considered during the review process.

All documentation is kept confidential in accordance with guidelines set forth by FERPA. Requests for disability-related housing accommodations are reviewed by the Director of Accessibility Services and the Director of the Health and Wellness Center. Each request is reviewed and determined on a case-by-case basis. Determinations are based on the documentation and information received. Complete applications should be submitted by the identified deadline date. An application that is incomplete or received after the deadline may result in a housing assignment that does not meet the applicant's needs.

Factors given consideration for special housing requests:

1. Is the impact of the condition life threatening if the request is not met?
2. Is the request an integral component of a treatment plan prescribed by a medical professional for the condition in question?
3. Is space available to meet the students' needs?
4. Can space be adapted without creating a safety hazard?
5. Are there other effective means that would achieve similar benefits to the requested accommodation?
6. How does meeting the documented need impact housing commitments for other students?
7. Is the cost of meeting the need prohibitive?
8. Was the request made by the deadline?

Please note: Private room accommodations are rare. We make every attempt to find reasonable accommodations for those conditions that are covered under the ADA.

Once a determination is made, written notification will be sent to the applicant. This notification should be reviewed and signed by the applicant and then returned to the

Director of Accessibility Services. Students approved for housing accommodations must meet with the Director of Accessibility Services annually to renew their request. All questions regarding this application process or accommodations should be directed to the Director of Accessibility Services.

Completed applications should be mailed to the Director of Accessibility Services before **May 1**.

A complete application includes:

1. Student Accessibility Services Accommodation Application
2. Gwynedd Mercy University Health Care Professional Form
 - a Completed by your physician or other qualified professional

Forms and documentation guidelines can be found on the [Student Accessibility Services](#) web page. All questions regarding this application process or disability-related accommodations should be directed to the Director of Accessibility Services, Zack Hulings Hulings.z@gmercyu.edu, 215-646-7300 x21033.

Notification of Confidentiality

The Office of Accessibility Services is committed to ensuring that all information and communication pertaining to a student's disability is maintained as confidential as required or permitted by law. The following guidelines about the treatment of such information have been adopted by the Office of Accessibility Services and will be shared with students. These guidelines incorporate relevant state and federal regulations.

1. This information is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). As such, all records received and kept by the Director of Accessibility Services are considered educational records. All documentation is secured with access limited to the Dean of Student Success to whom the Director reports.
2. No one will have immediate access to the Office of Accessibility Services files except authorized staff. Any information regarding a disability is considered confidential and will be shared only with others within Gwynedd Mercy University who have a legitimate educational interest.
3. Sensitive information in student disability files will not be released except in accordance with federal and state laws.
4. A student's file may be released pursuant to a court order or subpoena.
5. The student's disability file is separate from the student's educational record. If a student wishes to have information about his/her disability shared with others outside the institution, the student must provide written authorization to the Director of Accessibility Services to release the information. Before giving such authorization, the

student should understand the purpose of the release and to whom the information is being released.

6. The student should understand that there may be occasions when the Director of Accessibility Services will share information regarding a student's disability at his/her discretion if circumstances necessitate the sharing of information and the Director of Accessibility Services has determined that there is an appropriate, legitimate, educational need to know.
7. A student has the right to review his/her own Student Accessibility Services file with reasonable notification.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Role and Responsibility of the University

Gwynedd Mercy University has a responsibility to identify and maintain the academic and technical standards that are fundamental in providing quality academic programs while ensuring access to students with disabilities. In meeting these obligations, the University:

- Has the responsibility to inform its applicants and students about the availability and range of accommodations.
- Has the responsibility to ensure that all of its programs (not necessarily all physical facilities) are accessible.
- Has the responsibility to make reasonable adjustments in the delivery, instructional method and evaluation system for a course to accommodate the specific manifestation of the disability.
- Has the right to identify and establish the abilities, skills, and knowledge necessary for successful entrance into its programs and to evaluate applicants on that basis.
- Has the right to identify and establish the abilities, skills, and knowledge that are fundamental to academic programs/courses and to evaluate each student's performance on that basis.
- Has the right to request and review documentation in support of accommodation requests. Based on this review by appropriately designated individuals, the University has the right to refuse an unsupported or unreasonable request.
- Has the right to refuse an accommodation for the following reasons: undue hardship as determined by designated University officials (e.g. a major structural renovation), the request is unsupported by the documentation, or the request is unreasonable.

The University has an **Accessibility Awareness Committee** that meets two to three times per year. The Committee works to identify ways to address barriers to accessibility in

addition to making recommendations to improve the campus environment for the entire University community.

The Role of the Office of Accessibility Services

The Office of Accessibility Services is devoted to providing academic support, accommodations, advocacy, and referrals for students with disabilities. The Office of Accessibility Services is housed within the Student Success Center.

The Office of Accessibility Services intends to:

- Acquire documentation of a disability, evaluate students' eligibility for accommodations, and assess the reasonableness of the accommodation requested.
- Request additional testing/documentation if the information provided is inadequate or outdated.
- Engage in an interactive process with students to identify appropriate and reasonable accommodations.
- Provide Letters of Accommodation to students.
- Assist instructors with information regarding the implementation of specific accommodations
- Assist in resolving student issues, complaints, and/or grievances.
- Assist students with assistive technology.
- Advocate for the rights of students with disabilities.
- Educate the University community regarding disability issues and services. Act as a referral source for resources on and off the campus. Assist students with self-advocacy within the academic process.
- Support students' efforts to reach their educational goals.
- Support instructors, advisors, and staff in developing inclusive and accessible programs and content.
- Serve as a member on the University's Accessibility Awareness Committee.

The Role and Responsibilities of Staff and Faculty

- To create an open and inclusive atmosphere in your classroom for students with disabilities. For example, placing a disabilities statement on your syllabus.
- To uphold the confidentiality of students' disability-related issues and discuss student's disability issues privately.
- To ask how the disability impacts on student learning.
- To discuss the accommodations being requested.
- To be familiar with the student's responsibilities.
- To hold students with disabilities to the same academic and behavioral standards as all students.
- To ensure that the proposed accommodation does not substantially alter curricular standards.
- To provide the accommodation(s) listed on the Letter of Accommodation.

- To contact the Director of Accessibility Services if there are questions about the appropriateness of a required accommodation.
 - To continue to provide the accommodation until a resolution has been determined.
 - To not implement accommodations without an accommodation letter from the Director of Accessibility Services.
 - To assist the student in contacting the Director of Accessibility Services when a student requests an accommodation without a Letter of Accommodation.
- Due to the difficulty some students may have with self-identifying as having a disability, it is recommended to include a statement in all syllabi regarding the willingness to accommodate students with disabilities:

Suggested Syllabus Statement

Gwynedd Mercy University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. If you have a disability-related need for modifications or reasonable accommodations in this course, please contact Zack Hulings, Director of Accessibility Services, at Hulings.z@gmercyu.edu or visit the [Student Accessibility Services](#) web page. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, the Office of Accessibility Services will provide you with an accommodation letter. Please share this letter with me as early in the course as possible so that we may discuss the accommodations.

The Role and Responsibilities of Students with Disabilities

Qualified students with disabilities have the right to an equal opportunity to participate in programs offered at Gwynedd Mercy University. Students who exercise these rights also undertake the responsibility to initiate and participate in the accommodation process. Recognizing this, students:

- Have a responsibility to self-identify as needing accommodations. Please be aware that the amount of time for administrative processing may vary depending on the type of accommodation.
- Have a responsibility to document their disability and the functional impact.
- Have a responsibility to actively participate in the accommodation process.
- Have a responsibility to explain how the disability affects their learning.
- Have a responsibility to pick up Letters of Accommodation and give these letters to each course instructor where accommodations are to be used.
- Have a responsibility to read and be familiar with the contents of the Student Accessibility Services Manual.
- Have the responsibility to inform their instructors about the use of accommodations in the course. The student should discuss the accommodation(s) to be used and how it compensates in the classroom.
- Have a responsibility to inform their instructors of the use of accommodations in a timely manner. Requests that do not give a reasonable time frame may not be able to be arranged.

- Have the responsibility to turn in the Letter of Accommodation to the Testing Coordinator if using the Testing Center for testing accommodations.
- Have the responsibility to follow the guidelines given for testing at the Testing Center. However, there may be circumstances that affect the timeliness of the request. In those circumstances, staff will make a good faith effort to accommodate a student's request for test accommodations. Multiple factors such as scheduling, space, the nature of the accommodation etc. may affect the ability to fulfill the request.
- Have the same obligation as any student to meet and maintain the institution's academic standards.
- Have the responsibility to meet with the Director of Accessibility Services each semester to request and review accommodations.

Establishing Accommodations

Once accommodations are approved and the student has picked up their Letters of Accommodation, the student should promptly meet with the faculty members who teach their course(s) or the staff member who will be overseeing the implementation of the accommodation. With the letter of accommodation prepared by the Director of Accessibility Services, students should then discuss the accommodations and how they may be used. Students are not advised to discuss accommodations with faculty prior to completing the application process with the Director of Accessibility Services. However, any faculty or staff member may be able to direct you to the Director of Accessibility Services to begin the process.

Students have the responsibility to play an active role in implementing their accommodations. Knowing those responsibilities is only one part of an ongoing process. To ensure that accommodations are used in an effective manner, it is advised that each student give advanced notice to faculty and staff. Gwynedd Mercy University defines advanced notice as a week's notice prior to the use of accommodations as some accommodations may take time to coordinate. Students should be aware that if less time is given, a good faith effort will be made to accommodate, however, there may be factors that impede the fulfillment of the request.

When meeting with a faculty or staff member, a student should:

- Provide the instructor with the Letter of Accommodation from the Director of Accessibility Services.
- Discuss with the faculty or staff member details with each accommodation. How the accommodations be provided? Who will provide it? Which ones are to be used or not used?
- Be informed about your disability and the ways that your disability impacts your functioning (academic, daily living). It is advised to make your needs known, describe functional limitations, and how accommodations help. As a student, you

are have the right to privacy and thus do not have to disclose what your specific disability is.

- Be on time for a scheduled appointment.
- Be flexible. There is often more than one right way to provide an accommodation. If you cannot immediately identify a solution, participate in problem solving with the faculty or staff member with an open mind.
- If a faculty or staff member is unwilling to provide an accommodation which is specified in the Letter of Accommodation, you should not argue with the faculty or staff member, but should contact the Director of Accessibility Services for assistance.
- Be patient. The faculty and staff member you are dealing with may not have experience with working with disabilities or your particular disability.
- Be calm and courteous. Treat faculty and staff with respect. If you are unable to make arrangements for an accommodation, the next step is to contact the Director of Accessibility Services to discuss the issue.
- Request only those accommodations that are listed in the Letter of Accommodation.

When Meeting with a student, faculty or staff should:

- Assist the student in contacting the Director of Accessibility Services when they request an accommodation without a Letter of Accommodation (LOA)
- **Not allow use of accommodations without an LOA from the student each semester regardless of any prior knowledge or prior LOAs from that student.**
- Implement accommodations only after receipt of the Letter of Accommodation from student.
- Meet as quickly as possible with students who provide a Letter of accommodation from the Director of Accessibility Services. Students should initiate this meeting but faculty can take the initiative if needed.
- Be confidential with the information and in meeting with the student. Information about a student's disability or accommodations should not be disclosed without the student's permission.
- Ensure meetings pertaining to accommodations are held in a confidential manner. It may be helpful to have these discussions during office hours. Unless agreed to by the student, discussions in hallways or in the classroom after class should be avoided as they have the potential to breach FERPA.
- Use caution to avoid inadvertently identifying a student with a disability to classmates or other faculty. Violation of confidentiality can present a legal risk to faculty and the institution.
- Read the Letter of Accommodation carefully. Some accommodations are specific, for example, "all tests should be in 16 font."
- Discuss how the disability impacts on learning and classroom performance.
- Be aware that not all students use every accommodation in every class.
- Not ask the student to identify the specific disability for which they have registered.
- Hold students with disabilities to the same academic and behavioral standards as all students.

- Ensure that the proposed accommodation does not substantially alter curricular standards.
- Contact the Director of Accessibility Services if there are questions about the appropriateness of a required accommodation. Continue to provide the accommodation until a resolution has been determined.
- Contact the Director of Accessibility Services as soon as possible if problems or questions arise.

Priority Registration

Priority Registration is an accommodation that allows students to register early. Priority registration is granted to students with disabilities on a case-by-case basis when there is a disability-related need. All priority registration requests must be reviewed and approved by the Director of Accessibility Services. Early registration gives the Director of Accessibility Services time to set up accommodations that take time to implement, such as interpreting, books in alternative format, equipment, and others. It also gives students an opportunity to accommodate themselves through flexibility in creating their individual class schedule.

Reasons for approval of this accommodation include, but are not limited to the following examples:

- Use of Interpreters and/or Transcribers
- Need for alternative formats of materials
- Need to ensure appropriate physical access
- Need to adjust class schedule due to medical issues

Please note that Priority Registration simply allows you to register early, it does not give you access to classes once they are already full. Once registration has begun, priority registration cannot occur. If you do not use the accommodation, you may register on the regular registration date that has been assigned to you. If a class is full, you may be placed on a waitlist. Priority Registration does not give you priority over other students on the wait list or allow you access to classes that are full.

Student Responsibilities

- 1) Students must be registered with the Director of Accessibility Services as having a disability and have Priority registration as an accommodation.
- 2) Students must provide the name of their Academic Advisor to the Director of Accessibility Services. If a student's Academic Advisor changes at any time, it is the student's responsibility to inform the Director of Accessibility Services of this change immediately.
- 3) Students must submit the Letter of Accommodation to their Academic Advisor.
- 4) Students need to know the date registration begins each semester.
- 5) Students must make appointments with their Academic Advisor prior to the start of registration. Students should review and discuss their academic needs and agree upon a course schedule.

Other information

Provided the student and the adviser have met and agreed on a course schedule, advisers will fill out the registration form and turn it in to the Campbell Solution Center.

Registration forms are available at the [registrar's web page](#). The Registrar will then input the student's classes manually the day prior to registration. After registration begins and if changes in schedules occur either by the student or other factors, there is no guarantee that that the student's course schedule can be accommodated.

Flexible Attendance

Recognizing that some faculty have established strictly enforced policies regarding the number of absences that will be allowed before a student faces sanctions, and that some students with disabilities have medically-related conditions of an episodic nature or other established reasons that their disability may make it difficult for them to fulfill the typical attendance requirements, the Director of Accessibility Services has established the following procedure for considering/granting requests for leniency in such classroom attendance policies:

- 1) Students with disabilities must request consideration of this accommodation from the Director of Accessibility Services. Documentation must be provided that indicates both why the student may need to miss classes and to what extent. While it is understood that the student cannot always predict accurately the number or percent of absences anticipated, the student is asked to provide some indication of the scope of the request.
- 2) The Office of Accessibility Services will evaluate the request and the documentation provided to determine whether the student has provided justifiable disability-based reasons for requesting consideration in attendance requirements. Documentation will be held in the Office of Accessibility Services and will be considered confidential. The student will be notified if it is determined that the reasons provided do not constitute a need for the accommodation in this regard.
- 3) If it is determined that the request is justified by impact of the student's disability, then faculty from each class in which the student is enrolled for that semester will be contacted by the Director of Accessibility Services to request information on any established attendance policies for the class and the importance of attendance/participation to the curricular integrity and learning process. Class attendance for traditionally offered classes is considered a significant aspect of participatory learning. All requests for extension or leniency in attendance requirements will be evaluated carefully, with due consideration given to information offered by faculty. Questions to faculty include but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Is there regular classroom interaction between the instructor and students and among the students themselves?

- b. Do student contributions in class constitute a significant component of the learning process?
- c. Does the fundamental nature of the course rely upon student participation as an essential method of learning?
- d. To what degree does a student's failure to attend class constitute a significant loss of the educational experience of other students in the class?
- e. What does the course description and syllabus say regarding attendance?
- f. What is the method by which the final course grade is calculated?
- g. How many classes has the student missed this semester, if any?

4) If it is determined that it is not possible to consider leniency regarding attendance policies for a given course, the student will be so informed and will be given the opportunity to discuss other accommodation options; if the accommodation is deemed appropriate, the Director of Accessibility Services and faculty member will work together to find a reasonable modification to the attendance policy and how best to communicate absences. The student and the faculty member will be provided with a letter explaining both the established boundaries of the accommodation and the responsibilities of both faculty and student in carrying out this accommodation.

Specifically,

a) Students are responsible for contacting the faculty member as soon as possible when a disability-related absence will occur/has occurred and, as necessary, informing the faculty member as to when the student will return to class. If the student is unable to reach the faculty

member directly, the student or someone acting on his/her behalf may contact the Director of Accessibility Services. Information will then be relayed to the faculty member through the Director of Accessibility Services.

b) This accommodation potentially provides relief from requirements for physical attendance in classes. The student is responsible for any material covered or work done during such disability-necessitated absences; neither extension of deadlines for assignments due, nor arrangements for making up tests and exams missed during such absence are to be assumed in this assigned accommodation. These must be negotiated individually with faculty as need arises.

c) If, at any time, the faculty member believes that the student's absences from class threaten the academic integrity of the curriculum or the accomplishment of learning objectives, the faculty member should contact the Director of Accessibility Services AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. After consulting with the faculty member, the Director of Accessibility Services will contact the student to review available options.

5) Accommodations are not retroactive. Absences that have already occurred are subject to the attendance policy as stated in the course syllabus.

Volunteer Note Taker Accommodation

Why is this a reasonable accommodation?

An accommodation of a note taker can be approved when a student's disability interferes with their ability to take adequate notes in lecture classes. Some reasons a note taker may be necessary include but are not limited to: cognitive processing issues, attention difficulties, traumatic brain injury, and physical, visual or hearing impairments. In most cases, the notes are supplemental and are not intended to be a substitute for a student's own notes nor for their attendance in class.

Student responsibilities with note taker accommodation:

Students using this accommodation are expected to assume an active role and work with the Director of Accessibility Services as well as class instructors. Delays in requesting the accommodation, working with the DA, or completing your responsibilities may result in delays implementing and using the accommodation.

Students using a note taker accommodation have the following responsibilities. A student will:

- Request a note taker and work with the Director of Accessibility Services each semester the accommodation is needed.
- Review your course schedule with the Director of Accessibility Services and determine, with Director of Accessibility Services, which classes a note taker is needed. If a student is uncertain which class will require a note taker, a student is encouraged to attend the class for 1-2 sessions and then inform the Director of Accessibility Services if a note taker will be needed.
- Determine how you would like to secure a note taker from the following options:
 - Find your own: A student may know or observe a peer in class who takes comprehensive notes. The student can ask the individual if they are willing to serve as a note taker. If they agree, the note taker should be given the "Volunteer Note Taker Instructions." The Director of Accessibility Services should be informed of the volunteer's name and contact information.
 - **OR**
 - Get assistance: The student may be unable to secure a volunteer or feel uncomfortable approaching another student in which case the class instructor or Director of Accessibility Services can assist. Turn in your Letter of Accommodation to your instructor and inform them you intend on using a note taker. The instructor will address the class, in person or through email/blackboard, requesting the assistance of a volunteer to be a note taker without identifying the student who needs the accommodation. Once a volunteer has come forward, the instructor will provide the note taker with the "Volunteer Note Taker Instructions." Additionally, the

instructor will contact the Director of Accessibility Services with the volunteer's name and contact information.

- Submit and discuss the Letter of Accommodation and “Volunteer Note Taker Instructions” with the instructor. Notify the instructor of the following: a) that you want to use a note taker for this class (see above), b) that you have located your own note taker, or c) that you do not intend on using a note taker for that class.
- Attend each class. Note taking assistance is not a substitute for attending class. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get those notes (not part of your accommodation).
- You remain responsible for knowing deadlines, assignments, and other course information delivered in lecture or in the syllabus, even if the information is not in your notes.
- Review the notes as you receive them in case you have any concerns. Notes received may have a different format than your own as notes and note taking is a subjective matter.
- Use other options such as a tape recorder or another student who will take notes in case the volunteer is not present.
- Copied notes can be available for you within a reasonable time frame following your class (up to 5 weekdays).
- Notify the Director of Accessibility Services as soon as you are no longer in need of a note taker for a particular class.
- Contact the Director of Accessibility Services immediately if you have any issues with the notes and/or do not receive notes for a class where the note taker accommodation has been established.

Volunteer note taker responsibilities

- Email the Director of Accessibility Services (Hulings.z@gmercyu.edu) as soon after this class as is possible and confirm that you have volunteered. Please include the course title, number (example FYE1000), and the day and time of your class.
- Attendance and promptness are essential. Try to identify a back-up person in case you are ill and unable to attend class on a given day. Sometimes a classmate is willing to share their notes. Notify the Director of Accessibility Services if you are not able to get coverage of notes for a class you are not able to attend.
- Try to take legible, accurate, and complete notes of every class, lecture, and discussion session.
- Provide legible copies of your notes to the Director of Accessibility Services in a timely manner. It is recommended you copy the notes immediately after class.
- If the student using your services has identified him/herself to you, and is absent on a given day, you are not required to share/copy your notes for that day.

Fundamental Alteration of a Course or Program

There may be times that the student and/or the ADA Panel request an accommodation that a professor believes may compromise the academic integrity or create a fundamental alteration of the course and/or program. To determine whether an accommodation fundamentally alters the nature of a course, instructional staff members who teach or who have taught the course should:

1. Identify the essential academic standards of the course; requirements that go to the very nature of the subject matter or that are of the utmost importance in achieving the course/program objective.
2. Articulate specific requirements that individual instructors believe are fundamental to teaching the course/program, taking academic freedom into consideration.
3. Identify the unique qualities of the course/program in relation to its overall objectives and any program in which the course is required.
4. Engage in "reasoned deliberation" as to whether modification of the course/program would change the fundamental academic standards, and
5. Determine whether there are any options to the fundamental requirements of the course/program.
6. Why is the standard that the instructor believes will be lowered important to the course/program?
7. Is the standard the better way (or the only way) to achieve the desired academic objective?
8. Will the requested accommodation lower the academic standards of the course/program?
9. Can a different method or requirement that will not be altered by the accommodation achieve the required academic or pedagogical result?
10. If not, why not?

The decision to deny an accommodation should not be taken lightly. Institutions have found themselves in legal trouble for devoting insufficient thought to the conclusion that a requested accommodation should be denied. Answering the above questions and documenting the process will allow instructors to establish that they have carefully evaluated the awarded accommodation and the course/program objectives. Failure to provide a reasonable accommodation to a student with a disability is a violation of law, putting in jeopardy an institution's federal funding.

However, disability laws also require that students with disabilities meet the "essential," "academic," and "technical" standards of the class/program/University.

Food Allergy Accommodation Protocol

Students wishing to make a request for reasonable accommodations due to a food allergy are strongly encouraged to contact SAS as early as possible, ensuring that sufficient time is available to allow for the deliberative process necessary to consider the student's request.

If a student wishes to request a disability-related accommodation pertaining to a food allergy, please note the following:

- 1) Contact the Director of Accessibility Services.
- 2) Submit the Student Accessibility Services Application to request an accommodation.
- 3) Submit current documentation supporting your request.
- 4) Meet with the Director of Accessibility Services to discuss your request.
- 5) If a disability is determined, that the Director of Accessibility Services and student may meet with a representative from dining services to discuss accommodations and appropriate arrangements. This may be one or several meetings at which the following will be discussed:
 - i. the student's complete history of the foods that can and cannot be tolerated.
 - ii. all of the food options and allergy-alternative food products available at Gwynedd Mercy University
 - iii. introduction to Dining Services staff that work with students to meet their food allergy needs.
- 6) Decisions on requests will be made through a deliberative process and may, as appropriate, involve university personnel with expertise on a subject, including, but not limited to the Health and Wellness Center professional medical staff, the Director of Dining Services, the Dining Services registered dietician.
- 7) The student will be notified by the Director of Accessibility Services if the request is granted, the parameters of the accommodation, if an alternative is proposed, or if the request is denied.
- 8) If a request for accommodation is denied, the student may elect to utilize the grievance procedure as outlined in the Student Accessibility Services Manual located on the [Student Accessibility Services web page](#).

Alternative Text Requests

The Alternative Texts (Alt-Text) are provided to students to ensure equal access. ALT-Text are available to current students registered with the Office of Accessibility Services at Gwynedd Mercy University and who have the approved accommodation. Alt-Text formats for required, school related texts include but may not be limited to formats such as PDF, MS Word, and braille.

WHAT: "School related texts" most typically include required textbooks. Requests for other required class materials must be made by the student to the Director of Accessibility Services. What are not included are class notes taken by you or another student, suggested books or articles (which are not required for the class). We try to provide the most accessible version of the material as possible, but that can vary depending on the source material. If you have specific requirements (such as brailled print), inform the Director of Accessibility Services of those specific needs. Requests are student specific and will be requested from the publisher for each student. The Director of Accessibility Services A and Gwynedd Mercy University must adhere to all applicable

copyright laws and will not release texts or engage in any violation of these requirements.

WHERE: We highly suggest you utilize independent resources as much as possible. Other resources for Alt-Text include but may not be limited to BookShare, Learning Ally, or Café Scribe. You can save yourself time and effort by utilizing these resources yourself. Also, remember that we can only provide services for required readings. Make all requests to the Director of Accessibility Services as soon as possible. Delays can occur if requests are not made in a timely manner.

HOW: As soon as you know what required materials are needed, email the information to the DA. For a text book: Title, Author(s), Edition number, and ISBN are required for each of the texts needed. Books typically will be requested in PDF format. If other formats are needed, please specify prior to the request being made from the publisher. The Director of Accessibility Services will email you notifications throughout the process.

THEN: You do still need to buy your required textbooks. Legally, we are only providing an accessible copy of material you already own! Stop by and drop off a copy of your receipt for your textbooks, or email a scan/photo of them to the Director of Accessibility Services. The Director of Accessibility Services will not release books to you without a receipt! This may not apply for other materials, but is mandatory for textbooks. You will be notified when your book is ready by email. Always remember that these materials are for your use only and that you may not give or sell them to anyone.

THE RULES:

1. Only books, readings and other material required for class can be provided for you in alternative formats.
2. You must purchase the required materials and provide a receipt to the Director of Accessibility Services to receive Alt-Text.
3. You may not sell, share, loan or give the accessible copy to anyone. It is for your use only!
4. You have a responsibility to keep in communication with the Director of Accessibility Services. Informing the Director of Accessibility Services of changes to class schedule such as dropping a class is your responsibility.
5. Be proactive in making your request for Alt-Txt. The sooner you get your requests in, the faster it can be provided to you. Waiting until the second or third week of classes, could mean significant delays in getting the request processed. You can always request books long before you buy them, we only need the receipt once it is ready for you. The best plan is to request books at the same time you sign up for classes, or as soon as the class syllabus is made available to you via Blackboard.

Service Animals

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act and applicable Commonwealth of Pennsylvania laws, and Montgomery County Codes, dogs that provide

a trained service to students with certain disabilities are permitted on the Gwynedd Mercy University campus in all areas open to the public.

All students attending Gwynedd Mercy University who utilize a Service Animal are encouraged but not required to meet with the Director of Accessibility Services to request and address the need for accommodations.

A “service animal” means any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the person’s disability. The provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship does not constitute work or tasks for the purpose of this definition. Species other than dogs or, in some cases, miniature horses, are not considered service animals for the purpose of this definition of a service animal.

Service animals will be permitted to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of the university facilities, including on campus housing, where students, members of the public, and other participants in services, programs or activities are allowed to go. The university does not require documentation, such as proof that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed as a service animal. Individuals accompanied by a service animal on campus but who do not need any disability-related accommodations are not required to register with the Office of Accessibility Services, nor is such individual required to submit a request for a reasonable accommodation to receive access of his or her service animal.

Additionally, university staff, faculty and employees cannot ask about the nature or extent of a person’s disability to determine whether a person’s animal qualifies as a service animal. However, when it is not readily apparent that a dog is a service animal, staff may make two inquiries to determine whether the dog qualifies as a service animal, which are:

- Is the dog required because of a disability?
- What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?

A service animal must be housebroken (i.e., trained so that it controls its waste elimination, absent illness or accident) and must be kept under control by a harness, leash, or other tether, unless the person is unable to hold those, or such use would interfere with the service animal’s performance of work or tasks. In such instances, the service animal must be kept under control by voice, signals, or other effective means.

The service animal is expected to display reasonable behavior and not be disruptive. If disruptive behavior occurs, owners are expected to utilize appropriate techniques to deal with the behavior. Students using a service animal must also be aware of the Student Code of Conduct and Residence Life policies applicable to student behavior and conduct as these may also apply. Disruptive behavior can be grounds for removal of the service animal from campus.

Service Animals within Residence Halls

Students with Service Animals living in Residence Halls or applying to live in a Residence Hall must inform Resident Life as soon as possible prior to attending Gwynedd Mercy University in order to give Residence Life adequate time to address any issues or concerns that may arise.

Grievance Policy and Procedure

Accessibility Services Grievance Procedure

Grievances falling under the scope of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the ADA Amendment Act of 2008 should be made according to the following procedure. This procedure is applicable only to students who have previously registered with the Office of Accessibility Services, regardless of their experience in the classroom to date. A student who has a grievance/concern regarding their disability status, accommodations/modifications or lack thereof, the “reasonableness” presented by the University, or any decisions based on their presentation by faculty, staff or a department; or has been subjected to discrimination or harassment on the basis of disability should first contact the Director of Accessibility Services. The Director may be able to assist in the informal resolution of the issue, and/or serve as a liaison to the faculty/staff member or department. In instances which directly involve the Director as an integral party to the grievance/concern, the student should contact the Dean of Student Success for attempts at informal mediation/negotiation. To increase the likelihood of successful resolution, such processes must be initiated at the time of conflict. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of this process, they may proceed to a Formal Complaint. Retaliation against anyone who files a grievance or cooperates in the investigation or a grievance is prohibited.

Formal Complaint: A student may choose this option if attempts at prior resolution have been unsuccessful. A signed, written summary of events must be submitted to the Dean of Student Success within 30 days of the initiation of the grievance process. The summary should include the following:

1. The specifics of the concern include any applicable sections of the above laws.
2. The steps already taken by the student to resolve the issue.
3. The outcomes of those steps
4. The requested resolution to the concern.

The Dean of Student Success will, as expeditiously as possible, present the complaint to a committee comprised of representatives from Health Services, Counseling Services, the academic program the student is pursuing or other faculty/staff on campus with relevant expertise, Student Success Center, and Institutional Technology, for a full investigation. The Dean of Student Success may also include or consult with an external professional with expertise in disability support services and the presenting concern. Confidentiality will be maintained for everyone involved, in so far as possible. Only those persons who have a “need to know” within the investigation and resolution of complaints are entitled to information regarding a complaint. The Dean of Student Success may meet with the Director of Accessibility Services for a briefing on information relevant to the case. This communication may occur through a verbal account and/or through review of material documentation previously submitted to the Director, which shall then be permissible in the investigation process. A written report regarding findings will be provided by the

committee to the complainant and any involved parties, if action is required on their part. The Dean of Student Success may wish to meet with the complainant to discuss alternate ways of meeting the student's concern determined by the committee, if the requested resolution is not deemed appropriate and/or necessary. If the student remains unsatisfied with the outcome, they may appeal to the Vice President for Student Services and Dean of Students with an updated version of the Summary of Events specifying the current area of discontent, for review. If the student remains unsatisfied with the outcome, they may pursue other federal or state remedies. The above process should not be considered a pre-requisite to such external remedies. Students may opt to contact the Office of Civil Rights.

FAQ's

What does "a good faith effort" mean?

An accepted definition of "good faith effort" would be a sincere and honest intention to make reasonable efforts to accommodate regardless of the outcome of the action.

The student gave me a Letter of Accommodation but did not discuss the accommodations with me. Does this mean the student will use all of the accommodations listed?

The Director of Accessibility Services instructs each student to discuss the accommodations with their staff/faculty because it is not enough just to hand in the Letter of Accommodation. Not all students will use all approved accommodations in every class and there is no way for you to know which accommodation the student intends to use without this discussion. Instructors are asked to make an announcement during the first week of classes inviting students with accommodation needs to meet them in their offices to discuss these needs privately. You could also mention privately, such as an email, to the student to meet and discuss the accommodations because you need clarification. Make note of this offer and then it is up to the student to follow through.

The student is requesting extra time for tests and I have not received a Letter of Accommodation. I have no problem giving any student extended time. Should I insist the student see the Director of Accessibility Services?

No, if you give all students extended time, then the student should not be required to do something extra like contacting the Director of Accessibility Services. If you do not give all students extended time, the student with a disability is then asking for an accommodation and you, as the instructor, have the right to require that the student go to the Director of Accessibility Services and get a Letter of Accommodation. By following this procedure, you are assuring that all accommodations are appropriate and consistent throughout the campus.

Campus Resources

For more information regarding services for students with disabilities, please contact the Office of Accessibility Services at Gwynedd Mercy University or one of the resources listed below.

Any questions regarding this manual can be directed to Zack Hulings, Director of Accessibility Services, Hulings.z@gmercyu.edu, 215-646-7300 x21033

Student Success Center

1st floor of the library
215-646-7300, ext. 21370

Campus Ministry

Visitation House
Off campus- 215-641-5590 On campus- ext. 21590

Computer Labs

Fall/Spring Hours: M-Th 8AM-10:30PM, Fri 8AM-4PM
Summer Hours: M-Th 8AM-6PM, Fri 8AM-4PM
Locations: Fatima Hall Room 3; St. Bernards Rooms 14 and 16; and three other Labs for CLL locations

Counseling Services

2nd floor of the Griffin Complex
Off campus- 215-641-5571 or 215-646-7300, ext. 21427
On campus- ext. 21571 and ext. 21427

The Office of Accessibility Services

See [The Office of Accessibility Services web page](#) for full information.

Testing Center

2nd Floor of Keiss Library
Hours: M-F – 8:30am-4:30pm

Keiss Library

Hours M, W - 8:30AM-9PM and T, Th, F - 8:30-4:30PM

Food Services

Waldron Center
Off campus- 215-646-7300, ext. 243 On campus- ext. 21243

Health and Wellness Center

Loyola Hall
Off campus- 215-646-7300, ext. 486 On campus- ext. 21486

Public Safety

Saint Brigid's's Hall

Off campus- 215-641-5522

On campus- ext. 522 or ext. 111 for emergency

Residence Life

Loyola Hall

Off campus- 215-646-7300, ext. 21298 On campus- ext. 21298

Online Resources

Find the Student Accessibility Resource page from the [Office of Accessibility Services web page](#)

Addendum I

Office of Accessibility Services Test Accommodation Procedures

Attention: Use of the Testing Center is for students registered with The Office of Accessibility Services and who have turned in a Letter of Accommodation to the Testing Coordinator and their course instructors.

If students have a disability and have not registered with the Office of Accessibility Services, they must contact Zack Hulings, the Director of Accessibility Services, Hulings.z@gmercyu.edu, 215-646-7300 x21033, or visit the [Student Accessibility Services web page](#)

Accessing Testing Accommodations

All students seeking testing accommodations must have an accommodation letter from the Office of Accessibility Services specifying the approved testing accommodations, and turn the letter in to their course instructors and Testing Coordinator. Please note that the Testing Center will make every effort to meet each individual student's needs. However, due to scheduling and volume, students should be aware that private testing rooms may not be available. Remote proctoring via Zoom is also available.

Using Testing Accommodations

When using testing accommodations, students must first submit an accommodation letter to each course instructor and to the Testing Coordinator. The Office of Accessibility Services will provide one letter per course and for the Testing Coordinator to each student. Students must inform their course instructors of their intent to use testing accommodations in an alternative testing room at the Testing Center. This must be done for each test or quiz to be taken in the Testing Center.

Students have the responsibility to:

- email their Letter of Accommodation to the Testing Coordinator at the beginning of every semester prior to the first scheduled test. Students will not be allowed testing accommodations at the Testing Center without the Testing Coordinator receiving the Letter of Accommodation.
- inform their course instructors of their intent to use testing accommodations in an alternative testing room in the Testing Center.
- schedule a testing date and time with the Testing Coordinator at least one week prior to the testing date.
- inform their instructor of the testing date/time. Emailing the instructor is advised.
- schedule tests for the same day and time as the regularly scheduled class unless otherwise approved by their instructor.
- arrive on time for the test. No further scheduling will be made without prior approval from the instructor (See section: No Show, Cancellation, or Rescheduling).
- present identification prior to taking an exam.

- turn cell phone completely off and place in bag/backpack along with smartwatches, ear buds, and any class materials, etc.
- return paper tests to the Testing Coordinator, or in the case of a computer test inform a proctor so they can be sure the test has been properly submitted.
- return ALL used scrap paper to the test proctor after completing any test.

Students have the right to:

- know what accommodations they are receiving for the test.
- ask about their testing accommodations.
- refuse to take the test if their accommodations are not known or not in place at the time of the exam.
- waive their accommodations at any time and take the test without them.

Faculty has the responsibility to:

- fully complete the Testing Accommodation form for each exam for each student (email testingaccommodations@gmercyu.edu for the most recent form).
- discuss with the student what materials are allowed for the test e.g. notes, text, calculator etc. and document these on the form.
- submit the testing accommodation form with exam attached at least one day prior to student's appointment. Tests can be emailed to the Testing Coordinator at testingaccommodations@gmercyu.edu. In the case of computer tests, the accommodations form should be emailed or dropped off at least one day prior to the student's appointment.
- drop off and pick up the exam (if a paper test) from the Testing Coordinator on the second floor of Keiss Library. The Testing Coordinator can print paper tests and scan completed tests back to instructors as well. *Please do not leave exams with Library staff.*

Faculty members are responsible for the delivery and pick-up of the exam.

Students should call the Testing Coordinator (215-646-7300, x21463), or email testingaccommodations@gmercyu.edu at least one week in advance to make an appointment to take the exam within the required time. Space is limited, so students will be scheduled in an alternative testing room on a first come, first serve basis. Students will be monitored by a proctor and video surveillance during the testing time. The room can accommodate students needing extended time, distraction reduced environments, or use of a screen reader. We may not be able to process accommodation requests the same day of the test; most testing dates are on your syllabus, so please plan ahead.

Time Allotted for Test

Students are given the time indicated on the Testing Accommodation Form for completing an exam. The test will stop at the designated end time.

Arrive On Time

Please arrive on time for your testing appointment, or preferably 5-10 minutes before your scheduled start time. This will give you time to get setup, use the restroom, and ask questions if needed.

No Show, Cancellation, or Rescheduling

A "no show" is anyone not arriving or arriving 30 minutes or later to the exam. If a student does not show for an exam, the unused test will be returned to the instructor. Contact your instructor immediately. Making up an exam is at the instructor's discretion. If a makeup time is approved, the instructor must fill out another testing accommodation form, and the student must contact the Testing Center to schedule an appointment.

Unscheduled and Late Requests

Students have the responsibility to follow the rules given for testing. However, there may be circumstances that affect the timeliness of the request. In those circumstances, the Testing Center staff will make a good faith effort to accommodate a student's request for test accommodations. However, multiple factors such as scheduling, space, the nature of the accommodation etc. may affect the ability to fulfill the request.

Breaks

If you have breaks as an accommodation, you are not permitted to leave the second floor of the Library, to use any computer, mobile device, phone, smartwatch, or any class/personal items. You are not permitted to talk to other students who are studying or meeting in the quiet area. You may sit in any of the chairs outside of the testing rooms if you desire. To avoid any issues it is advised to take a break at the desk in the testing room. **It is strongly recommended that you use the restroom before starting your exam.** However, if you need a bathroom break, you must advise the testing center staff and if applicable allow them to hold your test until you return. Testing time is not extended unless it is part of the accommodation.

Unfinished exams

If you cannot finish an exam for any reason, it will be reported to and handled by the course instructor.

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to follow the appropriate Code of Conduct during an exam. Please refer to the Student Handbook for more information. The instructor indicates on the testing accommodation form what aids may be used for each test. The use of any unauthorized aids such as, but not limited to, texts, notes, "cheat sheets," cell phones/smart phones, smartwatches, computers, and/or calculators to gain an advantage on a test will be reported to the instructor. At your instructor's discretion, sanctions will be applied according to the student handbook.

All books, back packs, cell phones and other unauthorized materials will be kept in the Testing Coordinator's office or other secured area until the end of the testing period. At the time of the test, students must show the Testing Coordinator that they have turned off their cell phones and placed them in their backpack, along with any other personal items.

Any student caught violating these rules will be subject to the Student Code of Conduct and reported to the Dean of Students. When the student either returns the completed test to the proctor or finishes the computer test and is logged out, all belongings will be returned to the student, and the student may not see or alter the test after this point without prior instructor permission. The computer lab, lab conference room, and all testing rooms are monitored by security cameras/video surveillance.

Testing Center Location

Testing Accommodations are administered on the second floor of Keiss Library. Paper tests and/or access codes are secured by the Testing Center staff.

***SPECIAL NOTE PERTAINING TO NURSING STUDENTS WITH ACCOMMODATIONS:**

Please download Exemplify tests prior to your scheduled start time, but do not attempt to start it. Not following these rules may prevent the ability to take the test and may cause technical difficulties.

Hours of Operation for Testing Center

Regular Fall and Spring Semesters

Monday-Friday: 8:30am – 4:30pm

Additional hours in evenings and on weekends are available by request. Contact the Testing Coordinator (x21463) or email testingaccommodations@gmercy.edu for information.