

Frequently Asked Questions for Faculty and Staff

1. What Constitutes a Disability?

A disability is defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities. Learning is considered a major life activity. If you have a mental or physical condition, a history of such a condition, or a condition considered to be substantially limiting, you may have a legally defined disability.

2. What do I do when I receive an accommodation request?

First, read the accommodation request carefully. It is a formal notice signifying that the student has furnished the college with appropriate documentation of a disability which he or she feels will impact the teaching or learning situation.

Second, discuss the request with the student in private. The form lists accommodations for which the student has provided proof and the types of adaptations which have been recommended by the Disability Services Office.

Third, remember that the request is just that, not a command. All students, regardless of disability must be able to meet the essential competencies for your course; if the student cannot meet the competencies due to a disability, he/she must be given an opportunity to meet them with reasonable accommodations. Please do not hesitate to contact our office at 903/875-7377 if you have any questions in reference to accommodations for students with disabilities.

3. What if students come to me toward the end of the semester and tell me they have not done well due to a disability?

If students have not identified themselves to the Disability Services Office and presented documentation that they are persons with disabilities, they are not eligible for services. Occasionally, eligible students may have chosen not to use services. Either way, the student must provide you with an accommodation letter to receive any services. An instructor does not have to make any retroactive accommodations for students if they provide a letter late in the semester. The instructor should direct students to the Disability Services Office.

4. Students tell me they need to take their tests in a location other than the classroom. Who is responsible to get tests to this alternative location?

Due to issues of test integrity, instructors must take tests to the Testing Center. It is the students' responsibility to address this issue with their instructors well in advance of the first test. It is also the students' responsibility to remind teachers before the test that they require certain accommodations. Students are required to make test-taking arrangements with the Testing Center at least two days before the test date.

5. If students need note-takers, what do I do?

First of all, do not say to the class, "Mary has a disability and needs a note-taker; any volunteers?" However, you can announce that "If anyone is willing to share their class notes with another student, please see me after class." (A note-taker can be from any section of the same class) After a few classes, through observation, you will probably be able to tell who is taking good notes. Ask the student or students privately if they would take notes for someone in the class who needs additional assistance. If possible, arrange for a private meeting of the student and the note-taker. The Disability Services Office can supply students who need note-takers with additional documentation. Instructors may want to consider giving students copies of their own notes and overheads. The Disability Services Office will assist the volunteer note-taker in making copies of their class notes.

6. What do I do if I don't agree with an accommodation or auxiliary aid?

It is understandable that at times an instructor may question the validity of an accommodation or auxiliary aid. Please address your concerns to the director of the Disability Services Office. Due to issues of confidentiality, the director may not be able to disclose all information about the student. The director may arrange for a meeting with the student, instructor and director to find an accommodation that gives the student access to course material and makes the instructor comfortable.

7. Who assures test integrity?

The Testing Center follows the instructions of the professor in all test-taking situations. If members of the Testing Center become aware that students are cheating, the instructors will be informed immediately.

8. What do I do if students become disruptive in class?

Students who are disruptive are not necessarily students with a disability. However, the existence of a disability does not provide the right for the student to be disruptive. Treat a disruptive disabled student as you would treat any disruptive student. Do not hesitate to call on us for this or any type of support. Disciplinary options include contacting the Dean of Students and/or completing an Early Warning Referral. If the behavior is persistent or unmanageable, ask the student to leave the room. If the student does not comply, the instructor should call the Navarro College Police Department (903/654-3999).

9. What should I do if students have a medical emergency (such as a seizure) in the classroom?

The instructor should notify the Navarro College Police Department (903/654-3999) immediately.

10. How do I deal with Deaf or hard of hearing students who come to class with an interpreter or CART writer?

Offer students preferential seating; students will need a space for the interpreter to sit facing them or the CART writer next to them. When speaking to students, direct all comments to them—not the interpreter. Wait a second or two after using a visual aid before speaking about it. This gives Deaf students time to look at the visual and then back to the interpreter or captioning. Glance at the interpreter occasionally for signs of fatigue; you may need to slow down. When classmates ask questions, indicate who is speaking so Deaf students can follow the conversation. *For additional information you may refer to the Preparing for a Sign Language Interpreter or Preparing for a CART Writer handouts found within Supporting Documentation on the Disability Services Blackboard Community page and within MyNC.*

11. A student with a disability is failing my class. What should I do?

Students with disabilities have the same right to fail classes as any other student. Do what you would normally do with students without disabilities. The Disability Services Office staff is happy to assist you whenever needed. Do not hesitate to call on us for this or any type of support. *For additional information you may refer to the Classroom Best Practices or Principles of Universal Design.*