

# About Disability Services

## Mission

The mission of Dabney S. Lancaster College Disability Services is to provide reasonable accommodations and support for students with disabilities intended to facilitate equal access to postsecondary programs, courses, and college-sponsored events.

## Who is eligible for our services?

According to The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act, a student with a disability is someone who has a physical or mental impairment; has a history of impairment; or is believed to have a disability that substantially limits a major life activity such as learning, speaking, seeing, hearing, breathing, walking, caring for one's self, or performing manual tasks.

## Contact Us

**Disability Services Coordinator: Suzanne Ostling**

**Location:** Backels Hall, Student Services

**Phone:** 540-863-2826

**Fax:** 540-863-2915

**Email:** [sostling@dslcc.edu](mailto:sostling@dslcc.edu)

## Accommodation Forms: Understanding the Process

Some students may have had an IEP/504 plan during High School. This plan followed you throughout your High School career and identified the accommodations your teachers/school were expected to provide you. Whether you were accommodated in high school or not, in College you (the student) are expected to *request* your accommodations and *inform* those instructors of your choosing. Perhaps it is only one instructor, perhaps it will be all of them. Planning ahead, starting early, and making a connection with your instructor(s) is key to ensuring you are successfully accommodated in college.

An Accommodation Form is developed after you have submitted documentation of your diagnosis to the Disability Services Coordinator. This form identifies you and lists the specific accommodations you are requesting for your classes. Below is the process a student would follow to access their accommodations.

# **Disability Services**

## **New and/or Current Student Initial Appointment**

Make an appointment with the Disability Services Coordinator by calling 540-863-2820.

1. Provide documentation prepared by a qualified evaluator within the last 3 years:
  - a. Mark – Confidential and fax to attention of Suzanne Ostling at 540-863-2915
  - b. Bring a copy to your first appointment.

## **Accommodations**

During the initial meeting, we will establish the accommodations you are eligible to receive.

### **Requesting Accommodations Each Semester**

1. Register for classes.
2. Request the accommodations for the semester with the Disabilities Coordinator.

### **Letter of Accommodations**

We will prepare your Accommodation Form listing your semester accommodations with copies for each of your instructors.

You will receive an Email in your VCCS Gmail account when your Accommodation Form is ready to be picked up if it is not completed in your initial visit.

### **Implementing Accommodations**

You will give the Accommodations Form to each of your instructors and discuss the accommodations you need for each class.

### **Talking With Your Instructors**

Delivering your Accommodations Form to your instructor is the best opportunity for you to discuss your academic and learning needs. Consider delivering your Form to your instructor during their office hours, early in the semester, where you can have a quiet and private conversation about your needs. If you are a distance learning student, you are still strongly encouraged to connect with your instructor, and to ensure your Accommodation Form has been

received. You are not required to disclose your disability to the instructor, but many students find it helpful to discuss how they learn *best* or what aspects of learning might be difficult for them.

**For example:**

- "I learn best when I *hear* the information as I read from a textbook."
- "Audio-recording your lectures allows me to focus more on what you are saying and less on getting everything you say in my notebook. I can then go back and listen to your lecture while I work on my notes and it's very helpful."
- "Do you have any ideas of how I can turn some of these written concepts into something visual?"
- "When I feel rushed to complete a test, I get very anxious and seem to go *blank*. The additional time on the test is very helpful for me."
- "A private testing space is very calming for me and, at times, I do like to read the questions out loud to better understand what I am reading."
- "I want to be sure my notes for your class are correct, would you mind reviewing them to be sure I have the correct information from your lecture?"

Letting your instructor know how you feel, how you learn best, and what areas of weakness concern you, offers them great insight into what type of learner you are. This information may be helpful in how your instructors encourage you to approach the more difficult course content and tests.

## **Support**

If you have questions or need help implementing your accommodations, please contact Suzanne Ostling at 540-863-2826.

## **Disability Documentation Guidelines**

Students requesting accommodations at DSLCC are required to submit documentation in order to determine eligibility for services, establish functional limitations associated with the disability, and identify appropriate accommodations. Accommodations are determined on a case-by-case through an interactive process between the Disability Services Coordinator and the student who is making the request.

The disability type determines how current the documentation needs to be. Older documentation may be appropriate if it is still relevant to the individual's situation and otherwise meets the guidelines outlined here. Periodic updates of documentation may be requested in certain situations.

All information obtained in diagnostic and medical reports will be maintained and used in accordance with applicable confidentiality requirements.

## General Documentation Guidelines

1. Clearly state the name, title and professional credentials of the evaluator (ex. licensed psychologist), the area of specialization and the state/province in which the individual practices.
2. Write in narrative format and include a description of the diagnostic tests, methods and/or criteria used, the specific results of the diagnostic procedures, and when available, both summary and specific test scores. A diagnosis alone is not sufficient information to establish eligibility or provide accommodations.
3. Describe the current substantial functional impact of the disability on a major life activity.
4. Indicate treatments, medications and/or assistive devices/services currently prescribed or in use and significant side effects that may impact physical, perceptual, behavioral or cognitive performance.
5. Describe the expected progression or stability of the impact of the disability over time, particularly the next five years.
6. Recommend accommodations, including adaptive devices, assistive services, compensatory strategies and/or collateral support services.

## Learning Disabilities

- **Psychological or neuropsychological evaluation.** Documentation of a Learning Disability should be no more than three years old if testing instruments normed for children were used in the evaluation. Evaluations using adult-normed testing instruments are considered current for five years.
- Criterion scores must be used to establish the area(s) of disability. Statements such as “learning differences,” “relative weaknesses,” “appears to have a learning style similar to a person with a learning disability” or “additional testing should be conducted to rule out a learning disability” and academic problems in and of themselves do not substantiate a learning disability.
- A qualified, licensed professional must conduct the evaluation. Qualified professionals generally include a clinical or educational psychologist, neuro-psychologist, and learning disabilities specialist. All reports must be typed, legible, signed by the qualified professional, and submitted on official letterhead.
- Tests used to determine eligibility must be technically sound and normed on the appropriate population. Actual test results must be included in the evaluation with all subtest and standard scores and percentiles listed as appropriate.
- Comprehensive testing that measures both Aptitude and Achievement is required. Appropriate aptitude test instruments may include, but are not limited to: The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS), Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, Stanford Binet Intelligence Test. Appropriate achievement test instruments may include, but are not limited to: Woodcock Johnson Tests of Achievement, Wechsler Individual Achievement Test, Stanford Test of Academic Skills. Specific achievement tests such as the Test of Written Language-2 (TOWL-2), Woodcock Reading Mastery Test, or the Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test may also be included with complete achievement battery.

- The Slosson Intelligence Test, Kauffman Brief Intelligence Test, and the Test of Non-Verbal Intelligence are not sufficient to establish aptitude levels. The Wide Range Achievement Test and The Nelson Denny Reading Test are not sufficient in and of themselves to establish achievement levels.
- Other assessment measures (Visual Motor Integration, Memory, etc.) may be integrated with the above documents.
- Any recommended accommodations by the evaluator(s) should include a detailed explanation as to why each accommodation is needed and must be backed-up by testing data.

### **Developmental Disabilities (including Autism-Spectrum Disorders)**

- A statement of DSM diagnosis and date of onset.
- A narrative summary of the current level of functioning, specifying present symptoms resulting in substantial functional limitations of one or more life functions.
- Medical information to be considered in a college environment, including personal care concerns.
- Suggestions of reasonable accommodations supported by the diagnosis, including assistive devices, techniques, or supports that are essential to the success of the student.

### **Attention Deficit Disorders**

- **A clear statement of the DSM or ICD diagnosis, including pertinent history. A Neuropsychological Evaluation is preferred.**
- Documentation should typically be less than three years old. Updated documentation may periodically be requested to determine current functioning.
- **A narrative summary of the assessment procedures used to come to the diagnosis. Assessment results should be included.**
- A narrative summary of the current level of functioning, specifying present symptoms and fluctuating conditions/symptoms resulting in functional limitations.
- Medical information to be considered in a college environment.
- Suggestions of reasonable accommodations supported by the diagnosis.

### **Psychiatric Disabilities**

- **A clear statement of the DSM or ICD diagnosis, including pertinent history.**
- Documentation should typically be less than one-year old. Updated documentation may periodically be requested to determine current functioning.
- **A narrative summary of the assessment procedures used to come to the diagnosis.**
- A narrative summary of the current level of functioning, specifying present symptoms and fluctuating conditions/symptoms resulting in functional limitations.
- Medical information to be considered in a college environment.
- Suggestions of reasonable accommodations supported by the diagnosis.

### **Deaf/Hard of Hearing**

- An assessment (Audiogram) confirming the diagnosis of hearing impairment and the severity of hearing loss.
- Documentation should be less than three years old. In cases where the hearing loss is static (unchanging), an older audiogram may be presented with a note from a physician confirming that there have been no changes in functioning since the last assessment. If the hearing loss is progressive, updated documentation may periodically be requested. For additional questions or concerns regarding documentation, please contact Disability Support Services.
- Suggestions by the physician of reasonable accommodations supported by the diagnosis are recommended.

### **Blind/Visually Impaired**

- A diagnosis of visual impairment including acuity, prognosis, and prescription of correction and/or low vision aids.
- Documentation should be less than three years old. In cases where the visual impairment is static (unchanging), an older assessment may be presented with a note from a physician confirming that there have been no changes in functioning since the last assessment. If the loss of vision is progressive, updated documentation may periodically be requested. For additional questions or concerns regarding documentation, please contact Disability Support Services.
- A summary of the current level of functioning, specifying areas of functional limitation.
- A summary of the assessment procedures used to come to the diagnosis.
- Suggestions by the physician of reasonable accommodations supported by the diagnosis are recommended.

### **Traumatic Brain Injury/Acquired Head Injury**

- An assessment (Neuropsychological Evaluation or equivalent testing) confirming the diagnosis of a brain injury.
- Documentation should typically be dated no more than 18 months post-injury. If an initial evaluation is presented, a post eighteen-month evaluation will be requested at the end of the following semester or once the 18 month milestone is reached. Post-eighteen month evaluations using testing instruments normed for children must be no more than three years old at the time of intake. Post-eighteen month evaluations using adult-normed testing instruments are considered current for a period of five years.
- A narrative summary of the cognitive and achievement measures and evaluation results, including standardized scores, used to make the diagnosis.
- A narrative summary of the current level of functioning, specifying present residual symptoms resulting in functional limitations.
- Medical information to be considered in a college environment, including personal care concerns.
- Suggestions of reasonable accommodations supported by the diagnosis.

### **Speech Impairment**

- A diagnosis of speech impairment including prognosis from a licensed speech/language clinician.
- Documentation should be less than three years old. In cases where the speech impairment is static (unchanging), an older assessment may be presented with a note from a speech/language clinician confirming that there have been no changes in functioning since the last assessment. If change in functioning is expected, updated documentation may periodically be requested.
- A summary of the current level of functioning, specifying areas of functional limitation.
- A summary of the assessment procedures used to come to the diagnosis.
- Suggestions by the speech/language clinician of reasonable accommodations supported by the diagnosis are recommended.

## **Other Medical Conditions**

- In general, a diagnosis of a medical condition, including prognosis is required. If no specific diagnosis has been made, documentation must demonstrate that present medical symptoms substantially limit one or more major life activities.
- Documentation should be less than three years old. In cases where the impairment is static (unchanging), an older assessment may be presented with a note from a physician confirming that there have been no changes in functioning since the last assessment. If functioning is expected to change during the student's enrollment, updated documentation may periodically be requested. For additional questions or concerns regard documentation, please contact Disability Support Services.
- A summary of the current level of functioning, specifying areas of functional limitation.
- A summary of the assessment procedures used to come to the diagnosis.
- Suggestions by the physician of reasonable accommodations supported by the diagnosis are recommended.
- Other medical information to be considered in a college environment, including personal care concerns.

## **Definition of Terms**

### **Disability**

is defined as a physical or mental condition that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

### **Major life activities**

are defined as functions such as caring for oneself and performing manual tasks including walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working and experiencing leisure.

### **Substantially limits**

is defined as one who is unable to perform a major life activity that the average person can perform; or when one is significantly restricted in the manner or duration under which one can perform a particular major life activity as compared to the average person.

### **Otherwise academically qualified**

is defined as meeting the academic or technical standards for admission for participation in the education program or activity requested. NOVA uses multiple methods to determine whether a student is otherwise academically qualified, including the satisfactory completion of the college's Ability to Benefit, Mathematics and/or English placement tests at the minimum level of instruction offered by the College.

### **Accommodation Plan**

is the official document prepared by the Disabilities Services Coordinator in consultation with the student that lists the approved classroom and testing accommodations. The instructor and test center personnel must have a copy of the plan in order to provide the accommodations. Approved accommodations must be reasonable and must not constitute a fundamental alteration of the course.

## **Disability Services Accommodations**

Accommodation Forms must be requested **each semester** and for **each instructor** of your choosing. Students are strongly encouraged to make this request early in the semester.

Common accommodations provided to students with documented disabilities:

- Extended time on test/quizzes/exams
- Note-taking assistance
- Preferential seating
- Use of assistive technologies

### **Separate Testing Room**

A Separate Testing Room such as the sound proof room may be scheduled for separate testing and class work. Appointments should be made 1 week ahead of time if possible. Please report to the library at the time of your appointment.

### **Instructors & Accommodations**

Please remember that it is your responsibility to provide an Accommodation Form to your instructors and discuss your accommodation needs with them.

### **Request Accommodations**

You will need to request your accommodations each semester:

1. Register for classes
2. Meet with the Disability Services Coordinator as soon as possible to make sure we have time to make the arrangements for you.

## **Assistive Technology**

The following assistive technology is available as needed through documentation:

- Windows 10 Speech Recognition – Converts spoken words into text and allows you to operate a computer hands-free.
- Windows 10 Narrator – Reads aloud any text on the screen.
- Text to Speech – Allows students to use voice to input information into the computer.
- Zoom Text Magnifier Plus Reader- Magnification and screen reading software for people who are visually impaired.

## **Service Animal Guidelines**

Dabney S. Lancaster Community College, in compliance with the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#), does not exclude service dogs from college facilities or activities.

To work on campus, a service dog must be specifically trained to perform a service function. If an animal meets this definition, it is considered a service animal, regardless of whether it has been licensed or certified by a state or local government or a training program. Service animals whose behavior poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others or are disruptive to the campus community may be excluded, regardless of training or certification.

## **Animals Not Permitted**

Companion animals are pets that afford some comfort and security to an individual. These animals are not trained to perform a specific task for an individual.

Therapy animals are owned by a licensed therapist and are used as a part of the therapist's work with individual clients.

These animals do not act in a way that is different from a pet and therefore the campus policy regarding pets should be followed. Thus therapy and companion animals are not permitted on the college campus.

## **Student Responsibilities**

- The student must follow all ADA guidelines.
- Students using a service animal in their classrooms should contact Disability Services before the semester begins so it can be noted in their Letter of Accommodation.
- The animal should be in good health with current records of all appropriate vaccinations.
- The student is responsible for general hygiene of the animal and when possible, for cleaning up after it.
- Students using service dogs are responsible for any damages to property caused by the animal.

- The student must be in full control of the animal at all times.

## **Office of Disability Services**

### **Filing a Grievance**

Students with disabilities who believe they are the subject of discrimination should review the following college policies. If, after reading the assurances listed below, the student believes that discrimination has occurred, the student is entitled to pursue a formal written grievance.

Retaliation against any individual who files a complaint or participates in the grievance process is prohibited.

A grievance is a formal written allegation by a student charging unlawful or unfair treatment with respect to the application of laws, rules, policies, procedures, or regulations under which the College operates; particularly, those laws, rules, policies, procedures, or regulations which may be discriminatory to students with disabilities. Consequently, students who assert violations of the college's policies regarding ADA Amendments Act or 504 are not limited by those listed below.

- The College assures that all qualified students with disabilities are eligible for modifications of the College's academic requirements as are necessary to ensure that requirements do not have the effect of discriminating against them.
- The College assures that alternate testing and evaluation methods for measuring student achievement may be necessary for students with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (except where these are the skills being measured).
- The College assures that auxiliary aids and services will be provided to students when necessary to assure that such students are not denied the benefits of, excluded from participation in, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under the College's programs and activities. All accommodations will be made in the most integrated setting possible.
- The College assures that they will not limit the number of students with disabilities being admitted.
- The College assures that preadmission inquiries as to whether an applicant is disabled are prohibited.
- The College assures that no student may be excluded from any curriculum of study solely on the basis of a disability.
- The College assures that prohibitive rules such as those barring tape recorders from the classroom must be waived for certain students with disabilities.
- The College assures that no student may be excluded from any courses or curriculum of study solely on the basis of a disability, provided the student can perform the essential functions of the course or curriculum with reasonable accommodations.
- The College recognizes that it is discriminatory to counsel students with disabilities toward more restrictive careers than non-disabled students; nevertheless, the College shall provide factual information about licensing and certification requirements that may present obstacles to persons with disabilities in their pursuit of particular careers.
- The College has provided parking facilities for persons with disabilities that are located on the shortest possible accessible circulation route to an accessible entrance of each

building. Standards for parking for individuals with disabilities at Virginia Western Community College comply with the standards of the American National Standards Institute, Inc. and 34 C.F.R. Section 104.23. In addition, the College acknowledges its compliance with, C.F.R. Sections 104.22 and 104.23 for facilities constructed before June 1977 and after June 1977. For facilities constructed after June 1977, the College acknowledges its compliance that each facility and each part of the facility is readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities.

To initiate a formal grievance, students should follow the procedures outlined below:

1. After an alleged violation, the student will report in writing the nature of the grievance and the details of the alleged violation(s) to the Disability Services Coordinator located in Backels Hall.
2. The Disability Services Coordinator will review the student's grievance and will acknowledge in writing the receipt of the student grievance. The Coordinator will arrange for a meeting with the student, the Coordinator and the Director of Student Services to discuss the alleged violation(s) within one calendar week of receipt of the student's written grievance.
3. The meeting between the student, the Disability Services Coordinator, and the Director of Student Services will consist of a review of the alleged violation(s) and any other pertinent information relative to the grievance. After the meeting, a determination will be made by the Coordinator and the Director as to the validity of the alleged violation(s). Appropriate actions will be advised in writing to the student and other college officials involved. This written determination will be provided to the student and Vice President of Academic Affairs no later than ten days after the initial meeting with the student.
4. The institution will have ten days to respond to the alleged violation(s) recommended by the Disability Services Coordinator.
5. The Disability Services Coordinator will then arrange a meeting with the student to review the measures and actions implemented.

In the event that the student grievance cannot be satisfactorily resolved following the procedures outlined above, Section II, General Provisions policy located in the student handbook is to be followed.

### **Authorization to Release Information**

We understand Parents/Guardians/Supporters of young students often appreciate the ability to connect with campus officials regarding their students' academic, financial, and personal school records. In accordance with Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), we must have a signed release giving permission to share such information.