



# Office of Disability Services



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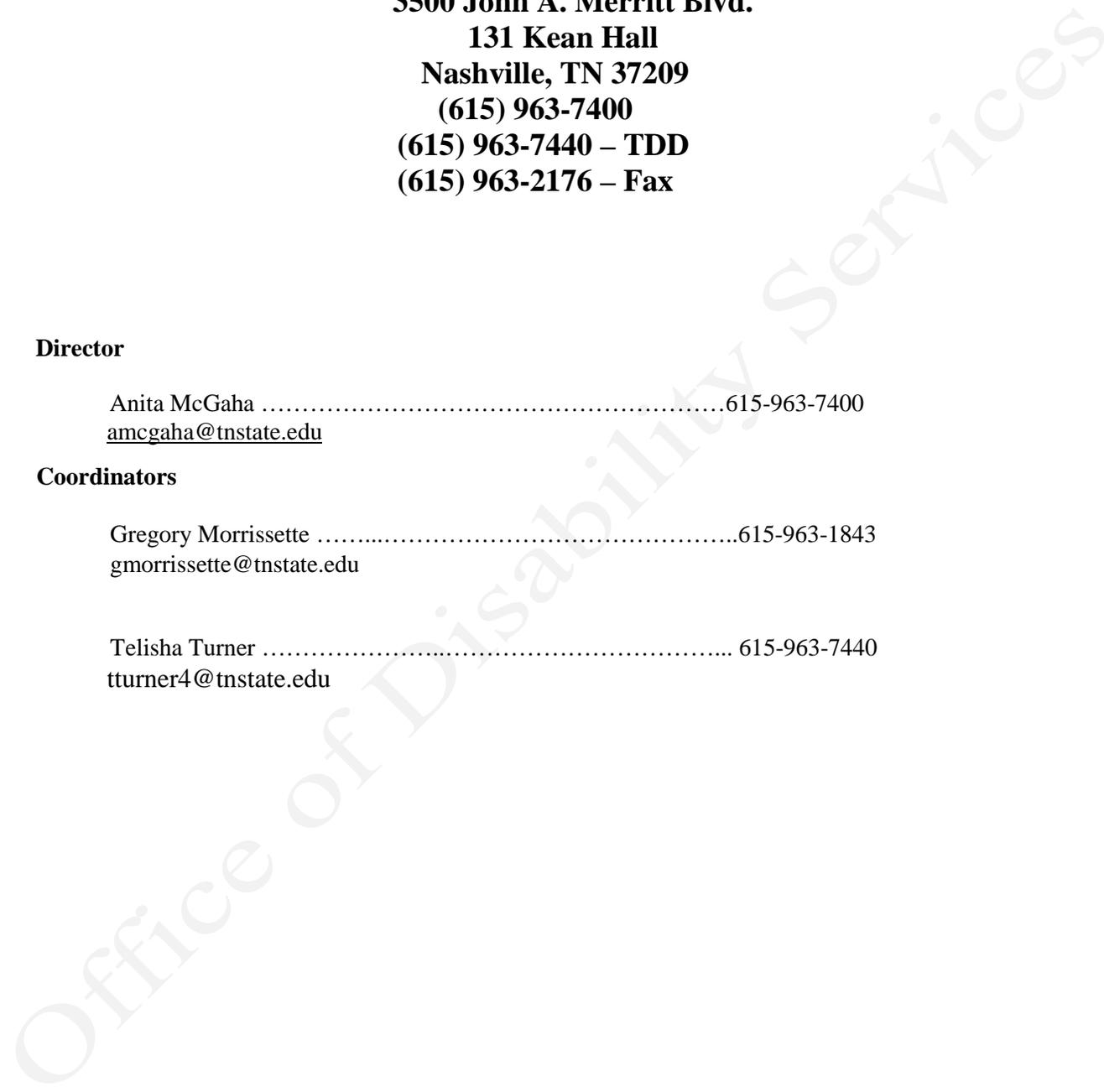
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## **DISABILITY SERVICES GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **GOALS**

Raise the level of educational development for students with disabilities.

Improve understanding of and support from the University community for students with disabilities.

### **OBJECTIVES**

Enhance and refine within the Office of Disability Services, a basic service program focused on students with disabilities.

Place emphasis on orientation and survival skills for new students and others who might benefit from these experiences.

Enrich and expand the learning disabilities tutoring programs.

Monitor development of the physical plant to ensure accessibility and opportunity for students with disabilities.

Help faculty and staff better understand physical and learning disabilities and provide them with effective methods of working with students with disabilities.

Use every available opportunity to advocate for the special needs of students with disabilities and to seek a means to better those services.

## **THE LAW AT A GLANCE**

### **DEFINITIONS**

**Disability** is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities; a record of such an impairment or being regarded as having such an impairment.

**Qualified individual with a disability** is defined as an individual who, with or without reasonable modifications and accommodations, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the programs, services, and activities offered by the University.

**An individual with a physical or mental impairment** is defined as one who has a history of or has been classified as having a mental or history impairment that substantially limits one or more life activities.

**Reasonable accommodations are defined** as modifications or adjustments to requirements for qualified individuals with known physical or mental limitations, which ensure that the requirements do not discriminate based on the disability. The reasonable accommodation should reduce or eliminate unnecessary barriers between the individual's abilities and the requirements for performance unless the requirement demonstrated is essential to the program of instruction being pursued by the student to any directly related licensing requirement.

**Note: It is the obligation of the qualified individual to request a reasonable accommodation.**

# **DISABILITY SERVICES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Office of Disability Services (ODS), in collaboration with other university departments, is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to all registered disabled students in an effort to ensure their full participation in all activities, programs, and services at the university. ODS is dedicated to promoting the self-advocacy of students with disabilities, and is committed to their academic success utilizing a holistic approach

In an effort to assess its facilities, programs, activities, and services to identify, prevent and/or remedy discriminatory barriers and practices related to the reasonable accommodation and equal access of qualified disabled students in University programs, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 the following policy is set forth.

All services, programs and activities offered by the University are to be administered in the most integrated setting appropriate to the qualified students with disabilities. It is permissible to develop separate or different programs only when necessary to provide an equally effective program for individuals with disabilities as that provided to others (e.g. activities, sports, events, physical education or other programs). Even when separate programs are permitted, students with disabilities cannot be denied the opportunity to participate in programs that are not separate and different. Students with disabilities may not be required to accept an accommodation, service, aid, and separate program designed for them, even when the benefit to do so may be obvious. Such services are to be accepted strictly on a voluntary basis.

Disability Services (DS) personnel will take measures appropriate to the individual needs in communicating information to persons with sensory impairments including readers, qualified interpreters, written material, notepad, pen or other special devices. With advance notice, information in the University publications will be made available in alternate format upon request by qualified students with the disability.

Campus buildings, walkways, parking and other physical facilities at TSU are to be accessible to an extent that no individual with a disability is denied access. Suitable methods to achieve accessibility to classrooms, labs, lectures or other events can be to relocate to an accessibility location. The student is responsible for making physical access needs known with reasonable advance notice to allow time for relocation. Requests for physical access, grievances or complaints should be made in writing to the ODS.

## **HOW DO I KNOW IF I QUALIFY FOR DISABILITY SERVICES?**

All colleges and universities have an obligation to provide access to students with disabilities in all institutional programs and activities. This obligation is articulated in:

- [The American's with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended](#)  
[Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#)  
[Dear Colleague letters issued by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, and/or the U.S. Department of Justice](#)

The Office of Disability Services will be glad to discuss any concerns about your disability and make appropriate referrals for further evaluations, testing, or agency support services in the community.

## **APPLICATION FOR SERVICES**

Application for receiving services through the ODS consists of three things:

1. Admission to TSU approved
2. Complete a registration form in the Office Disability Services
3. Supply the Office of Disability with current documentation of disability

## **ROLES ARE DEFINED**

### **Students with Disabilities**

- Students should self-identify themselves to the Office of Office of Disability Services if they are requesting accommodations.
- The student must provide documentation of the qualified disability to the ODS.
- Diagnosis of the disability is kept confidential, but the student must confirm with the instructor receipt of ODS the accommodation memorandum sent via email before expecting accommodations.
- If instructor is not in receipt of accommodation memorandum, student must provide a copy of the email sent to the instructor from the DS Coordinator and copied to the student.
- Students should request and advocate for accommodations from faculty, staff or administration in a timely manner.
- Students must notify the ODS of any changes, difficulties, or problems that occur during the semester.
- Students are expected to meet the academic performance standards for the class after an accommodation is provided.

### **The Office of Disability Services**

- ODS stores records of students with disabilities, including their evaluations and accommodations.
- ODS monitors and documents verification of disability.
- ODS provides the verification of the disability and the accommodation considered appropriate to the instructor, and works together with the student and faculty members to make the activities involved successful.
- ODS encourages students to advocate for themselves.
- ODS will refer to other TSU departments/personnel students with disabilities who require additional assistance that is not provided through the ODS.
- ODS evaluates the physical facilities throughout the campus and reports needed improvements for compliance with the ADA.
- ODS performs awareness training for faculty, staff, students and administration.

### **Faculty and Staff**

- Faculty and staff will coordinate with the DS to accommodate students.
- Faculty and staff will provide a reasonable accommodation as determined by DS.
- Faculty and staff should not ask the student about the nature of the disability – if questions exist you can call the ODS at ext. 7400
- **Faculty must maintain expectation of academic standards.**

## PERSONS OVER 65 YEARS OF AGE AND TOTALLY DISABLED PERSONS

In accordance with T.C.A. § 49-7-113 and TBR Guideline B-060, disabled persons suffering from a permanent disability, which totally incapacitates them from employment and persons over 60 years of age may AUDIT Courses without the payment of course fees. However, this privilege may be limited or denied by the University on an individual classroom basis, according to space availability. Prior to admittance, the University may require an affidavit or certificate from the agency charged with compensating the disabled person or adjudicating the permanent total disability of the person who is requesting admittance to classes, to confirm that such person is permanently and totally disabled.

Disabled persons suffering from a permanent disability, which totally incapacitates them from employment and persons 65 years of age or older, may enroll for CREDIT Courses for a required \$70 service fee per semester. The fee is charged to persons with a permanent, total disability; persons who will become 65 years of age or older during the academic semester in which they begin classes and who are domiciled in Tennessee. This fee includes maintenance fees, student activity fees, technology access fees, and registration fees; it does not preclude an application fee, late fee, change-of-course fee, parking fee, special course fee, etc.). This only applies to enrollment on a space available basis, which permits registration no earlier than four (4) weeks prior to the first day of classes. Acceptable documentation of disability and age is required. All required forms must be submitted and said student must complete the intake process.

### DOCUMENTATION

- Documentation **must be current (no more than 3 years old)**.
- Documentation is kept confidential.
- Students with **physical disabilities** must provide the Office of Disability Services (ODS) with a physician report stating the diagnosis, academic/physical recommendations, physical limitations and medications currently being taken. **Only a manual signature of physician is acceptable.** Prescription pads are not acceptable.
- Students with **learning disabilities** must provide the ODS with documentation of a psycho educational evaluation. The evaluation must include:  
Diagnostic Interview - may include a description of the presenting problem(s); developmental, medical, psychosocial and employment histories; family history; and a discussion of dual diagnosis where indicated.

#### Assessment

1. Aptitude – A complete intellectual assessment with all subtests and standard scores reported.
2. Academic Achievement – The battery of subtest should include current levels of academic functioning in relevant areas such as reading, mathematics and oral and written language.
3. Information Processing – Specific areas of information processing (e.g., short- and long-term memory, sequential memory, auditory and visual perception/processing, processing speed, executive functioning and motor ability) should be assessed.
4. Specific Diagnosis
5. Test Scores – Standard scores and/or percentiles should be provided for all normed measures.
6. Clinical Summary
7. Recommendations for Accommodations
  - Students with **Attention Disorders or Psychological Disorders** must provide the ODS with documentation from a qualified professional (e.g. psychiatrist, psychologist) that describes how the impairment significantly limits a major life activity in the educational setting. Also, in the report the treating professional should include the following: longevity of the condition; effectiveness of current treatment/medications/assistance and recommendations for accommodations.

## TEACHING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ACADEMIC

### ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with disabilities often bring diverse and unique strengths and experiences to the campus. Although some of them learn in different ways, these differences do not mean that they have inferior capacities. While there is no need to dilute curriculum, lower standards or fundamentally alter a course for them, the following factors may need to be considered:

- Physical accessibility
- How to provide access to information
- How to provide opportunity for meaningful participation in certain activities such as labs, and
- How to fairly evaluate on the basis of achievement rather than disability

Not all students with disabilities need special academic considerations, but appropriate accommodations are crucial to the educational opportunity of those who do. The need for accommodation depends on the nature and extent of functional limitation resulting from a disability and the required activities of the particular course. Depending on the specific course requirements and a professor's methods of instruction and evaluation, it is possible that a student might need accommodation for one class and not for another. Because of individual differences in functional abilities, it is also possible for two students with the same disability to need different kinds of accommodations.

#### Some General Suggestions

1. It is helpful for professors to include a statement on their course syllabus that states ***"If a student has a disability that may require accommodation, please make an appointment to discuss any special needs during my office hours."***
2. It is inappropriate to single out students with disabilities and discuss their personal situation in front of the class.
3. The accommodations recommended on the memos from the ODS are based on legitimate needs of verified disabilities. Professors who have questions or concerns about an accommodation request are encouraged to contact the director of DS for guidance.
4. The most typical testing accommodations are extended time, readers, writers, private low stimulus environment and alternate test formats. Testing accommodations will equalize opportunity rather than provide competitive advantage over other students. The ODS will be glad to assist instructors in proctoring exams for students with disabilities.

### HOW TO REQUEST ACCOMMODATIONS

The following procedures should insure that you receive appropriate and reasonable accommodations:

1. As early in the semester as possible (preferably within the first two weeks of the semester), you should initiate contact with Office of Disability Services to request accommodations. At this time, if you have not already done so, you should provide DS with current documentation regarding your disability.
2. You should then plan on meeting with ODS to review how the disability substantially limits you and determine what reasonable accommodations would be appropriate for you. Recommendations from documentation and consultation with the student are both used to determine accommodations. Final determination of accommodations rests with the University.

3. **Each semester** accommodations are wanted or needed in classes, it is your (the student's) responsibility to check ODS to receive an **Accommodation Letter** from the ODS via email.
4. It is then your (the student's) responsibility to ensure the Accommodation Letters to your professors were received via email, meet with them privately, raise their level of understanding of your strengths and disability, and work out the logistics of providing the approved accommodation. Since the primary relationship in the learning process is with the professor, we strongly encourage you to take the initiative within the first two weeks of the semester, or earlier, to develop that relationship.
5. If difficulties occur in the actual provision of approved classroom or testing accommodations and you are unsuccessful in resolving those issues with the professor, then you may request assistance from ODS with securing the approved accommodations. Requests for assistance should be made as soon as any difficulties arise. ODS will work with both the student and the faculty member, or department, to arrive at an appropriate resolution.

## **ACCOMMODATIONS INSTRUCTIONS LETTER**

### **Student's Responsibility:**

Each semester, it is the student's responsibility to request accommodations for that semester.

It is then the student's responsibility to present the **Accommodations Instructions Letter** to their professors, meet with them, raise their level of understanding of their strengths and disability, and work out the logistics of providing the approved accommodation(s). Since the primary relationship in the learning process is with the professor, we strongly encourage the student to take the initiative within the first two weeks of the semester, or earlier, as appropriate, to develop that relationship.

If the faculty member is unable to provide the recommended accommodations for testing, ODS can assist in providing an alternative testing environment. It then becomes the student's responsibility to advise faculty members of any scheduled testing appointments with ODS.

If difficulties occur in the actual provision of approved accommodations and the student is unsuccessful in resolving those issues, then the student may appeal to ODS and request assistance with securing the appropriate accommodations. Appeals and requests for assistance should be made as soon as any difficulties arise (within 5 days). ODS will work with both the student and the faculty member, or department, to arrive at an appropriate resolve.

### **Questions?**

If the faculty member has questions about specific accommodations or is unable to comply with the Accommodation Instructions, please contact one of the ODS Coordinators or the Director as listed on page 2 or the Disability Services website at – [www.tnstate.edu/disability](http://www.tnstate.edu/disability) .

**Faculty Responsibility:**

Faculty will provide required accommodations. ODS should be contacted for assistance if there are questions about an accommodation, or how to provide the accommodation. Faculty may not question the student regarding the nature of the disability or whether a disability exists when accommodations have been authorized by the university. Faculty may not request to examine the student's documentation without written consent by the student.

If the faculty member is unable to provide the recommended accommodations for testing, ODS can assist in providing an alternative testing environment. It then becomes the student's responsibility to work with faculty members for any scheduled testing with ODS.

**All Accommodations Instructions Letters** are emailed to the faculty, including courses taught online and we ask that you reply with a confirmation receipt of email.

Office of Disability Services

## SAMPLE OF AN ACCOMMODATION LETTER

To: TSU Professor

From: \_\_\_\_\_, ODS Coordinator Student

Re: Name ID#

Date: XX/XX/XX

The Office of Disability Services (ODS) has medical documentation on file, which legally entitles this student to certain accommodations. The items checked below are recommended by this office as generally appropriate for this student. At times, it may be necessary to adjust the recommended accommodations because of the nature of a specific course or variables in teaching and evaluation methods. We encourage you and the student to discuss the course requirements relative to disability limitations and adjustments that may be needed for this course. Your responsibility is to allow reasonable accommodations that will provide equal opportunity for the student to meet the course requirements without lowering standards or waiving essential elements. If you have questions or need assistance, or if the recommended accommodations are adjusted, please call the Director at 963-7480 or call one of the ODS Coordinators at x1843 or 7440.

### CLASSROOM CONSIDERATIONS

- Tape record lectures
- Front row seating
- Clear view of teacher's face
- Additional clarification of material
- Large print hand outs
- Closest seat to the door
- Food and beverage
- Handouts of slide shows
- Frequent breaks during class

### TEST CONSIDERATIONS

- Time and half (if needed)
- Test in minimal distraction area
- Test in closed environment
- Noise reduction headphones
- Writer/transcriber
- Word processor (if needed)
- Large print test
- Braille Test
- Non-Scientific Calculator
- Oral testing (if necessary)

### AUXILIARY CONSIDERATIONS

- Extra 1 hr. with writing lab tutor
- Extra 1 hr. with reading lab tutor
- Extra 1 hr. with Math lab tutor

Comments:

**The student is responsible for notifying the Office of Disability Services if the marked accommodation(s) are not provided as indicated in this memorandum. Notification should take place no later than five days of failure to receive the needed accommodations.**

## SUPPORT SERVICES

**Academic Planning and Counseling:** Students meet with the coordinator of Disability Services to determine scheduling needs prior to registration.

**Tutoring:** Tutors work with students on a one-to-one basis primarily. Students with disabilities requesting tutoring are encouraged to apply early. Students are encouraged to seek academic assistance across campus when needed. Tutors are available in the Success Center to provide college level assistance in the following areas. In addition, tutoring is often available in most academic departments.

Students with disabilities requesting tutoring are encouraged to seek assistance early.

**Test Proctoring:** Students may receive extended time for tests. Proctoring may take place in alternative testing sights on the need of the student and Professor.

**Books in Alternative Formats:** Textbooks are available from Access Text (formerly recording for the Blind and Dyslexic). If books in alternative format are anticipated, it is important to register with Access Text as soon as possible. Receipt of books takes 7-10 days when ordering from outside sources.

**Assistive Technology:** The ODS strongly emphasizes the use of the computers and technology as tools of personal empowerment and independence. Some of the computer and assistive aids available to students include:

- Kurzweil 3000
- Thomas Braille,
- Magnification devices
- Zoom Text
- JAWS for Windows
- CCTV's
- Digital recorder

## ANNUAL AND TEMPORARY HANDICAP PARKING

The University requires all students, faculty or staff who have a state-issued disability permit to obtain a Tennessee State University-issued disability-parking permit. Both permits must be properly displayed when parking on campus.

Students, faculty and staff applying for a disability-parking permit must bring in their actual:

- Disabled placard (provided by the State),
- Disabled permit registration form,
- Vehicle registration form and driver's license when obtaining your University-issued disability parking permit.

For all questions regarding parking, please contact the Parking Office at 615-963-1482 or go to [www.tnstate.edu/parking](http://www.tnstate.edu/parking). The Parking Office is located in Hankle Hall

## HOUSING REQUESTS BASED ON MEDICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL OR DISABILITY RELATED NEEDS

The learning environment and residential living are central to the Tennessee State University experience. It should be noted that living within the community and learning to share space and be considerate of others is part of that learning experience. Requests for single rooms (as an accommodation) based solely on a desire to have a "quiet, undisturbed place to study" will be granted only in unusual circumstances. By virtue of the shared facilities, resources, and number of people living under one roof, it is not logical to assume that having a private room would provide for such quiet, distraction-free space to any appreciable degree beyond living in a standard double room. Students who make requests for single rooms solely for these reasons may be given priority on the rooming list in terms of attaining a single room assignment (regardless of seniority) but will be held responsible for paying the differential between single/double room fees. We evaluate requests for exceptions carefully. To aid this process, requests (*submitted yearly*) should include:

1. Documentation of the condition or need that is the basis of the request;
2. A clear description of the desired housing configuration;
3. An explanation of how the request relates to the impact of the condition;
4. An indication of the level of need for the recommended configuration (and the consequences of not receiving);
5. Possible alternatives if the recommended configuration is not possible.

To evaluate requests based on medical, psychological or disability related conditions accurately and equitably, **TSU will need documentation. Documentation consists of an evaluation by an appropriate professional that relates the current impact of the condition to the request.** Documentation supporting a request will be reviewed by the Coordinator or the Director of Disability Services. All documentation will be maintained by those offices. All Information is considered confidential.

### EVALUATION OF HOUSING REQUESTS BASED ON MEDICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL OR DISABILITY RELATED NEEDS

Housing assignments and the residential learning environment are integral parts of Tennessee State University. We evaluate all requests for need-based housing assignments carefully. Below is a summary of the factors considered when evaluating housing requests.

## SEVERITY OF THE CONDITION

1. Is impact of the condition life threatening if the request is not met?
2. Is there a negative health impact that may be permanent if the request is not met?
3. Is the request an integral component of a treatment plan for the condition in question?
4. What is the likely impact on academic performance if the request is not met?
5. What is the likely impact on social development if the request is not met?
6. What Is the likely impact on the student's level of comfort if the request is not met?

## TIMING OF THE REQUEST

1. Was the request made with initial housing request?
2. Was the request made before the deadline for housing requests for the semester in question?
3. Was the request made as soon as possible after identifying the need? (Based on date of diagnosis, receipt of housing assignment, change in status, etc.)

## FEASIBILITY & AVAILABILITY

1. Is space available that meets the students' needs?
2. Can space be adapted to provide the requested configuration without creating a safety hazard (electrical load, emergency egress, etc.)?
3. Are there other effective methods or housing configurations that would achieve similar benefits as the requested configuration?
4. How does meeting this request impact housing commitments to other students?

## SPECIAL REQUESTS BASED ON DIETARY NEEDS

You must register with Disability Services if you have special dietary needs.

You will need to provide a report from your treating physician, which should include:

- The diagnosis and resulting complications/symptoms
- The accommodations requested and the reason the proposed accommodations are necessary.
- The complications that could arise if the accommodations are not provided.

Food Services will be presented with the information regarding any special diet needs to determine whether or not they can provide for these needs. Reduced meal plans, as a rule, will **not** be approved unless Food Services are unable to provide the necessary modifications.

## COMMUNICATION

### Language

People who have a disability are not defined by their disability and should not be referred to as “disabled people”. While “politically correct” language is always changing and evolving we should all be sensitive to terminology that is considered insulting or degrading.

Disability language, historically, has been heavily influenced by legal and medical terminology, with little consideration of its negative social impact. The use of proper words can dramatically affect communication with and about persons with disabilities. In social and business communications the

language should accurately portray the situation, emphasize the person over the disability and reflect a positive attitude that maintains the dignity of the individual.

The following guidelines are excerpts from the pamphlet *“Talking About Disability: A Guide to Using Appropriate Language,”* published by the Coalition for Tennesseans with Disabilities.

### **People-First Language Guidelines**

1. Do not refer to a person’s disability unless it is relevant.
2. Use “disability” rather than “handicap” to refer to a person’s disability.

It is acceptable to use “handicap” to describe accessibility accommodations, such as handicap parking, though “accessible” parking is preferred. It is also acceptable to say that a person is handicapped by architectural barriers or attitudes of ignorant people. Never use “crippled” in any reference to disability.

3. Use “people first” language when referring to one’s disability.

Say “person with a disability” rather than “disabled person” or “man who is blind” rather than “blind man.”

4. Avoid referring to people with disabilities as “the disabled”, “the deaf”, “epileptics”, or “a quadriplegic”.

5. Avoid negative or sensational descriptions of a person’s disability.

Terms such as “suffers from,” “a victim of,” “afflicted with” and “invalid” elicit unwanted sympathy and pity toward individuals with disabilities when they would rather have respect and acceptance. Also, persons with disabilities should not be referred to as “patients” unless they are receiving treatment in a medical facility.

6. Don’t portray people with disabilities as overly courageous, brave, special, or superhuman.

Such emphasis implies that it is unusual for people with disabilities to have talents or skills.

7. Don’t use “normal” to describe people who do not have disabilities; instead, say “people without disabilities” or “typical” if comparisons are necessary.

“Normal” in this context implies that people with disabilities are abnormal.

8. Never say “wheel-chair-bound” or “confined to a wheel chair”.

Mobility or adaptive equipment affords freedom and access to persons with disabilities that otherwise would be denied.

9. Never assume that a person with a communication disorder, such as speech impairment or hearing loss, also has a cognitive disability.

## MAJOR DISABILITY CATEGORIES

**MOTOR DISABILITIES** include a broad range of neuromuscular and orthopedic conditions resulting in a variety of mobility limitations, which may affect one's ability to move about, walk and perform manual tasks. Some of the more common motor disabilities include spinal cord injury, cerebral palsy, arthritis, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, post-polio paralysis, spina bifida, stroke, amputation, osteoporosis, osteomyelitis, Guillain-Barre syndrome, etc.

### Classroom and Test Considerations

- Group assignments, note takers/scribes, lab assistants
- Extra exam time, alternative testing arrangements
- Classrooms, labs, field trips in accessible locations
- Adjustable tables, lab equipment located within reach
- Class materials in electronic formats
- Computers with special input devices (e.g., voice, alternative keyboards)

**LEARNING DISABILITIES** affect the way individuals with average or above intelligence take in, process, retain and express information. They are usually manifested by a significant deficit in one or more of the following areas: basic reading skills, reading comprehension, listening comprehension, mathematical calculation, problem solving, written expression, oral expression, sustained attention, organization, time management or social skills. Some of the more common terms describing specific disorders falling under the LD umbrella include dyslexia (difficulty with reading), dyscalculia (difficulty with mathematics), dysgraphia (difficulty with handwriting), expressive dysphasia (difficulty understanding auditory information) and sequential memory disorder.

### Classroom and Test Considerations

- Extra time on test
- Tape record lectures
- Front row seating
- Verbal description of board work
- Additional clarification of material
- Test proctored in a quiet environment
- Electronic speller
- A detailed course syllabus
- Use of a calculator

**ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER (ADD)**, the inability to selectively attend to relevant stimuli within the environment, is believed to be caused by chemical differences in the brain. Characteristics of ADD include short attention span, distractibility and hypersensitivity to environmental stimuli. Hyperactivity will often accompany ADD in childhood, in which case the condition is known as attention deficit with hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). In addition to the ADD symptoms, ADHD is characterized by non-purposeful motor activity, difficulty sitting still, impulsivity and being always "on the go."

### Classroom and Test Considerations

- Additional clarification of material
- Taped lectures
- Front row seating
- Extended time on tests
- Private room for low stimulus environment for testing

**HEARING DISABILITIES** may range in severity from a mild loss of hearing to total deafness. Communication is the major challenge facing persons with hearing impairments and students with hearing impairments vary widely in their communication skills.

Most students with hearing impairments use a combination of communication methods, the most frequent being a combination of lip-reading and residual hearing, which is often amplified by hearing aids. It is important to note, however, that lip-reading is only a partial solution, since experts' estimate that only about 30 to 40 percent of spoken English is distinguishable on the lips even by the best lip-reader.

Some student with hearing impairments will also communicate in writing when other methods like lip- reading and sign language cannot be used effectively. Professors should write notes when necessary to effectively communicate with a student.

Most students with hearing impairments will need a note taker for lectures because it is impossible to follow an interpreter or to lip read the professor and take notes at the same time. Some students will have a note taker accompany them to class while others will need the assistance of the professor to help recruit a good note taker from the class. The ODS office will provide carbon paper in these situations so that the copies of the notes are immediately available at the end of the class for each of them.

#### Classroom and Test Considerations

- Interpreters, FM systems, note takers
- Face student when speaking
- Use visual aids
- Put all assignments and important information in writing
- Electronic mail
- Extended time on test

*For those with a hearing disability a TDD machine is available in the Office of Disabled Student Services and the library. The TDD telephone number in the ODS office is 615-963-7440 and in the library it is 615-963-7579.*

**SPEECH DISORDERS** are usually a result of hearing loss, illness, injury or congenital factors, and may be found alone or in combination with other disabilities. Speech disorders range from problems with articulation and voice strength to being totally non-vocal and may include such conditions as stuttering, nominal aphasia (difficulty evoking an appropriate word or term), chronic hoarseness and esophageal speech resulting from a laryngectomy.

Modern technology has made available various communication aids and assistive devices for persons with severe speech impairments. They range from the simple to the very sophisticated and include communication boards consisting of the alphabet and a few common words and phrases to which the person points, keyboard devices equipped with a laser message screen or a tape print-out and computerized voice devices activated by a keyboard.

While such aids are very valuable, they can also be slow for long conversations, depending on the type of aid and the physical skill and ability of the person. Students may sometimes enter long messages ahead of time, reducing the amount of time required for the conversation. Patience is the key to good communications in these situations, and students with speech problems should be given the same reasonable courtesy to be heard that other students are given.

#### Classroom and Test Considerations

- Instead of an oral presentation - alternative methods: written assignments in lieu of oral recitation or written responses to specific questions, which may be shared with the class by someone reading them aloud.
- For those students who choose to participate orally, most will need patience, encouragement and an opportunity to develop self-confidence in an unfamiliar group.

**VISUAL DISABILITIES** may be congenital or result from a variety of causes, including injury, eye disease and brain trauma, or they may be secondary to other medical conditions such as diabetes and multiple sclerosis. One is considered visually handicapped when visual acuity is no better than 20/70

with best correction and legally blind when visual acuity is no better than 20/200 with best correction or when vision is limited to a narrow field of less than 20 degrees. Approximately 80 percent of persons with legal blindness have some measurable vision or light perception. While most persons with visual disabilities have partial sight, they may have blurred cloudy, spotty or double vision or have lost peripheral or central vision.

The major challenge facing college students with visual disabilities is the overwhelming amount of printed material with which they are confronted. The increasing use of films, video tapes, overhead projectors and closed circuit television adds to the volume of visual material to which they must gain access.

Unless students are newly blind, students without vision have probably developed techniques for dealing with certain kinds of visual materials. Most use a combination of methods including readers, recorded books and lectures and Braille materials. Students may use tactile or raised line drawings of diagrams, charts and illustrations; relief maps; and three-dimensional models of physical organs, shapes and microscopic organisms. There are also adaptive devices such as scanners that convert printed text to voice output, computer Braille and talking computers, calculators and dictionaries.

The process of reading and studying requires more time for students who are non-sighted than for those who are sighted. In classes involving large amounts of material and readings, students may need time extensions in order to deal with required reading.

Some students who are blind use guide dogs to aid them in their mobility. Guide dogs are highly trained and well disciplined. They usually lie quietly near the feet of their master in class without causing any disturbance. It is important to remember that the dog is responsible for guiding its owner and should not be distracted from that duty while it is working, usually anytime it is wearing a harness. One should not talk directly to the dog or pet it without permission from the owner.

#### Classroom and Test Considerations

- Tape record lectures
- Extra time on test
- Have written material in Braille – class syllabus, etc...
- Dictating test responses to a writer, recording the responses on tape, entering responses on a computer, or taking the test orally with the professor
- Books in alternative format
- ODS can assist faculty by providing taped test, by administering the test with a reader or writer or by providing an adaptive computer.
- Large print handouts
- Computer with enlarged screen images
- Seating where lighting is best
- Seating in front of the room

**CHRONIC HEALTH DISORDERS AND OTHER HIDDEN DISABILITIES** include seizure disorders, diabetes and other endocrine or metabolic disturbances, psychiatric disorders, traumatic head injury, sickle cell anemia, cardiac conditions, renal disease requiring dialysis, gastrointestinal disorders, allergies, cancer, hemophilia, lupus, AIDS, etc. Some of these conditions can have a much more impact on one's academic functioning at times than a severe disability we can see.

The same kinds of academic support services, accommodations, and auxiliary aids discussed earlier are also available to students with hidden disabilities. For example, students who have incurred head injury, tumor or stroke may manifest academic problems similar to students with learning disabilities and can benefit from the same kinds of resources and accommodations used by them.

Complications from some disabilities fluctuate from time to time, causing students to be absent. Some conditions are more symptomatic during certain kinds of weather conditions. Some disease processes go through periods of remission and then become more active, such as sickle cell anemia, requiring hospitalization, medical treatment and or recuperative rest periods. In these situations, the professor should be notified so that arrangements can be made for the student to complete assignments and tests. If the student must be absent for an extended period of time, it may be advisable to cooperate with a late drop approval or a grade of "incomplete." It is the student's responsibility to initiate action to make up assignments or arrange for an incomplete, drop or withdrawal.

Very infrequently a student may need some type of immediate intervention in the classroom for complications of hidden disabilities, the most likely being seizures, insulin reactions and coronary attack. In the unlikely event of such an occurrence, Security should be contacted immediately (5171 or Avon Williams Security - 7276) to summon emergency medical assistance. Until medical personnel are on the scene, there are some interventions that may be started. See the following two pages.

#### Classroom and Test Considerations

- Tape record lectures
- Flexible attendance
- Extra time on test and assignments

**SEIZURE MANAGEMENT** Seizures result from a temporary imbalance of electrical impulses in the brain. While most seizure disorders are controlled by medication and rarely occur in the classroom, it is helpful to know what to do if one of the most common types of seizures (**grand mal**) should occur.

1. Ease the person to the floor, if necessary, and clear the area of objects that could hurt the person
2. Loosen collar and put something flat and soft, like a folded jacket, under the person's head so it will not bang against the floor as the body jerks.
3. Turn the person gently to the side to keep the airway clear and allow any fluids in the mouth to drain harmlessly away.

**Don't try to force the mouth open. Don't try to hold the tongue**

**Don't put anything in the mouth.**

**Don't restrain the person's movements.**

4. It isn't usually necessary to call a doctor or an ambulance unless the seizure lasts more than five minutes or unless the first seizure is followed by a second
5. Once consciousness is regained, be reassuring to the person and allow resting. You may wish to **call Security (TSU main campus 5171, Avon Williams Campus - 7276) for assistance.**

**Absence seizures**, previously called **petit mal**, produce momentary loss of awareness, sometimes accompanied by movements of the face, blinking or arm movements. They usually last only a few seconds and may or may not occur frequently. The person's activity is suspended briefly but is resumed when the seizure is over and the person returns to full awareness. The seizure may not be noticed by the individual or others. **No first aid is necessary.**

**Complex partial seizures** previously called **psychomotor or temporal lobe epilepsy** can produce a variety of automatic behaviors in which consciousness is lost or clouded. The seizures may be characterized by a blank stare, chewing, mental confusion, mumbling, uncoordinated random movements, behavior outbursts or fear. They usually last only a few minutes, but the post-seizure confusion can last substantially longer. The person does not remember what happened during the seizure. **While first aid is usually not necessary, gentle treatment during the seizure is** and guide him carefully to a seat. **Do not grab, hold or speak loudly is advised.** If the person gets out of his/her seat and tries to move about, speak to him calmly, gently take his arm.

If the seizure is manifested by disruptive behavior contact Security for Assistance.

Source: *Epilepsy foundation of America*

**FIRST AID FOR DIABETIC EMERGENCIES** Insulin is a hormone produced in the pancreas, which helps the body convert food into energy needed for daily life. In a person with diabetes, the body either does not produce insulin or does not use it effectively. Diabetes can usually be controlled through a balanced regime of insulin, diet and activity. Two types of emergencies can occur in persons with diabetes, each requiring different treatment:

1. **Insulin Reaction** is by far the most common type of diabetic emergency. Insulin reaction is essentially severe low blood sugar, hypoglycemia. It may result from too much insulin, too little food, delayed meal or too much exercise in relation to insulin and food intake. It has a sudden onset, ranging from minutes to a few hours. Symptoms may include excessive sweating, faintness; pounding heart/trembling; skin pale and moist; headache/irritability/impaired vision; staggering/poor coordination; confusion/disorientation; personality change; and eventual stupor/unconsciousness. **First Aid for Insulin Reaction**

Unless the person is unconscious, give any food or drink containing sugar, such as fruit juice, soft drink or candy. do not use diet drinks! Often people with diabetes will wear medical alert identification and will carry candy or a commercial preparation of glucose in individually sealed packets in their purse or pocket. If the person does not respond in 10-15 minutes, emergency medical treatment should be sought.

**If the person is unconscious, do not give anything by mouth. They will require an injection of glucose by medical personnel. Call Security (5171, AWC - 7276) or 911.**

2. **Diabetic Acidosis** is not as likely to occur in the classroom as Insulin Reaction; however, it is very serious, can result in diabetic coma and requires immediate medical attention. It results from severe high blood sugar, hyperglycemia, and can occur from undiagnosed diabetes, omission of prescribed insulin, emotional stress, infection, fever or overindulgence in food and drink. Its onset is usually gradual, ranging from a few hours to a few days. Symptoms may include: increased thirst and urination; flushed skin; heavy, labored breathing; fruity or wine-like odor or breath; weakness, abdominal pain, generalized aches; loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting; and eventual stupor/unconsciousness. **First aid for Diabetic Acidosis**

**This condition usually requires immediate hospitalization. Call Security (5171, AWC - 7276) and 911 to request medical emergency assistance.** If the person is unconscious, do not give anything by mouth. If the person is able to swallow, you may give fluids without sugar.

Source: *American Diabetes Association*

**TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY  
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES  
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

The Office of Disability Services (ODS), a unit within Emergency Management and Auxiliary Services, has established the following policy.

**GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

Students with disabilities who have complaints regarding physical accessibility of the University campus or regarding a complaint about the accommodations they are receiving, should follow the guidelines and procedures below:

**For Physical/Faculty Accessibility**

Contact the office of Disabled Services about the complaint/grievance. The complaint must be made in writing. Special accessibility requests should be made two weeks prior to classes for things such as a bus with wheelchair lift, (field trips) or specialized adaptation to computer or seating arrangements.

**Institutional Accommodations**

If a qualified student has met with the instructor and a representative from the Office of Disability Services to determine what the reasonable, institutional, accommodations are, and the accommodation was denied, the student should:

1. Contact the Office of Disability Services Coordinator. A joint meeting will be set up to establish and encourage a voluntary and informal resolution of complaints/grievances. All efforts should be taken to resolve the complaint formally. If the complaint cannot be resolved in a joint meeting with the student and instructor, the ODS coordinator will advise the student of the Student Services Complaint Form via Office of Equity and Inclusion website. All efforts should be taken to resolve the complaint informally.
2. Complete the Grievance/Complaint Form. The form is submitted to the Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) for review and a decision will be made.
3. If the concern is still not resolved, a student has the right to formally file a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights, Department of Justice or the Department of Education.

**TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY  
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES  
CLASSROOM RECORDING**

Office of Disability Services has established the following policy.

**RECORDED LECTURE POLICY**

Students who have a qualifying disability that limits their independence have the right to record class lectures for their personal study only. Lectures taped for this reason may not be shared with other people without the consent of the lecturer. Tape recorded lectures may not be used in any way against the faculty member, other lecturers or students whose classroom comments are taped as a part of the class activity. Information contained in the tape recorded lecture is protected under federal copyright laws and may not be published without the consent of the lecturer. A pledge must be signed by the student before lectures can be recorded.

**PROCEDURE**

A student with a qualifying disability must be registered with the Office of Disability Services.

The student voluntarily has provided the appropriate documentation to the Office of Disability Services pertaining to the disability.

When appropriate accommodations and modifications have been discussed and agreed to by the student, and if the modifications include taping, class, or activity, then the student will sign a pledge in agreement with Tennessee State University Taping Policy.

The pledge will be kept in the confidential file in the Office of Disability Services along with the disability documentation.

**TAPE RECORDED LECTURE POLICY**

Students who have a disability that limits them in taking or reading notes have the right to tape record class lectures for their personal study only. Lectures taped for this reason may not be shared with other people without the expressed consent of the lecturer. Tape recorded lectures may not be used in any way against the faculty member, other lecturer, or students whose classroom comments are taped as a part of the class activity. Information contained in the tape recorded lecture is protected under federal copyright laws and may not be published or quoted without the expressed consent of the lecturer and without identifying and giving proper credit to the lecturer.

**PLEDGE**

I have read and understand the above policy on tape recorded lectures at Tennessee State University, and I pledge to abide by the above policy with regard to any lectures I tape while enrolled as a student at Tennessee State University.

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Signatures of Student

## EQUIPMENT CHECK – OUT POLICY

ODS has a variety of special equipment needed by some students for academic access reasons. This equipment includes tape recorders, Franklin spellers, and calculators. Students who have their own equipment are encouraged to use instead of ODS's equipment, but for those without such necessary aids, they are welcomed to check out items from ODS on an as-available basis.

Due to the increasing number of students requesting our limited supply of equipment, loss and damage, and the cost of replacing these items, we ask that you check out only what you truly need and will use, that you keep up with it and take good care of it, and that you return it as soon as possible when you have finished with it. Such cooperation extends the utility of the equipment and allows more students to benefit from this service.

### Procedures and Policies for Equipment:

1. You must personally sign a check –out sheet for the specific equipment you borrow each semester or each time that you borrow it.
2. You must also sign the same check-out sheet when you return the equipment as a record of your return.
3. All equipment must be returned by the last day of final exams each semester in order for us to inventory the equipment at the end of each semester.
4. If the equipment is not returned by the last day of final exams, the Bursar's Office will be notified by ODS, and your grades will be held until the matter is cleared by ODS.
5. If the equipment is lost or damaged, you are responsible for the current replacement or repair cost. This cost will reflect on your records as an outstanding debt in the Bursar's Office until the fee is paid.

Thank you for your cooperation in adhering to the equipment check-out procedures and policies. NOTE: ODS does not supply batteries.

**TSU-12-0145 (A)-14-50160 – Tennessee State University is an AA/EEO employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its program and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: 3500 John A. Merritt Boulevard, Nashville, TN 37209, (615) 963-7435.**



The information contained in this booklet is selective in nature and does not represent a comprehensive coverage of the University's legal requirements. Persons interested in further exploration of this are referred to the following references used in compiling the above information.

Public Law 93-112, The Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Federal Register Vol.45, No.92, May 9, 1980. Public Law 101-336, The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008. Tennessee Code Annotated. Section 49-7-113.