



Policy Chapter: Chapter 16 Equal Opportunity

Policy Number and Title: 16.001 Disability Accommodations for Students and Academic Units

I. Policy Statement

The University of North Texas (UNT) does not discriminate on the basis of disability in employment, admission, treatment, or access to its programs or activities. UNT is committed to providing equal educational access for qualified students with disabilities in accordance with state and federal laws including the [Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as Amended](#) (ADA) and [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#). Additionally, the University is committed to making all UNT sponsored programs and activities accessible, as required by the [Texas Accessibility Standards](#) and the [Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines](#). To this end, all academic units are willing to make reasonable and appropriate adjustments to the classroom environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies in order to facilitate equality of educational access for persons with disabilities.

II. Application of Policy

All University.

III. Policy Definitions

A. Accommodations

“Accommodations,” in this policy, means modifications to a course, program, or educational requirements of a program or course as are necessary and reasonable so that such requirements do not discriminate or have the effect of discriminating against a student on the basis of a disability. Academic requirements that are essential to the course, to a student’s program of instruction, or which relate directly to licensing requirements will not be regarded as discriminatory. Modifications may include but are not limited to: extended time for exams, preferential seating, flexibility with attendance requirements, reduced distractions in testing environments, degree modifications, and relocation of classrooms to accessible locations.

B. Auxiliary Aids and Services

“Auxiliary Aids and Services,” in this policy, means accommodations that assist students with disabilities in the educational setting. Auxiliary aids and services may include but are not limited to digital textbooks, notetakers, sign language interpreters, enlarged text, and real-time closed captioning. Devices or services of a personal nature such as personal care attendants, individually prescribed devices, or readers for personal use are not provided by the university.

C. Disability Services Specialist

“Disability Services Specialist,” in this policy, means the official in the Office of Disability Access responsible for determining and coordinating reasonable accommodation; modification; or auxiliary aids and services for qualified prospective, newly admitted, or currently enrolled students.

D. Person with a Disability

“Person with a disability,” in this policy, means a person who has a physical or mental impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activities; who has a record of such impairment; or who is regarded as having such an impairment. An individual meets the requirement of “being regarded as having such an impairment” if the individual establishes that they have been subjected to an action prohibited under the ADA because of an actual or perceived physical or mental impairment, whether or not the impairment limits or is perceived to limit a major life activity.

E. Qualified Student with a Disability

“Qualified student with a disability,” in this policy, means a student with a disability who meets the academic and technical standards required for admission and participation in educational program(s) and activities.

F. Student

“Student,” in this policy, means an individual who has applied for admission or readmission to the University, who is registered or enrolled in one or more courses for credit at the university, or who currently is not enrolled but has a continuing academic relationship with the university.

IV. Policy Responsibilities

A. Referral of Students to the Office of Disability Access (ODA)

1. If a faculty or staff member is made aware that a student believes themselves to be a qualified student with a disability in need of accommodations or auxiliary aids and services, the student should be referred to the ODA for consultation with a Disability Services Specialist.
2. If a qualified student chooses not to contact ODA for an accommodation request, faculty may choose not to honor that student’s requests for accommodation.

B. Student Eligibility for Accommodation

1. A student is eligible for accommodation or auxiliary aids and services if they are documented as a qualified student with a disability and the Disability Services Specialist has met with the student and determined that the functional limitations of the disability require such accommodation or auxiliary aids and services.
 - a. Prospective students may request reasonable accommodation (e.g., for testing,

campus tours, or orientation) at any time during the application process by submitting an oral or written request to the ODA on forms developed for this purpose.

- b. All students, including newly accepted and currently enrolled students, are responsible for initiating a disability-related request for accommodation or auxiliary aids and services with the ODA as early as possible in the semester and prior to the time when the accommodation or auxiliary aids and service will be needed.
 - c. A qualified student who encounters difficulty accessing a class or program in a UNT facility should meet with ODA to obtain an accommodation for ensuring that the program is accessible.
2. The Disability Services Specialist has the discretion to determine the type of documentation necessary to establish the present level of the student's disability and its impact on the student's needs in the UNT setting. Any costs related to this initial documentation will be the responsibility of the student.
 3. The Disability Services Specialist may determine the need for a second professional opinion concerning the nature or severity of a student's disability. Costs related to obtaining a second opinion will be assumed by UNT to the extent not otherwise covered by student insurance.

C. Determination, Limitations, and Notification Regarding Eligibility

1. Determination

The University is required to provide reasonable academic adjustments and auxiliary aids and services that are necessary to afford students with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in UNT's educational program. The Disability Services Specialist determines accommodations on a case-by-case basis based on the documentation, the student's history, and specific functional limitations. The Disability Services Specialist will determine whether accommodation or auxiliary aids and services are reasonable following an individual assessment of a student's written documentation and a personal meeting with the student. If necessary, the Disability Services Specialist will collaborate with individual faculty members to identify reasonable accommodations that provide students with an equal opportunity without modifying essential course requirements.

2. Limitations

- a. The University is not required to make adjustments or provide auxiliary aids and services that would result in a fundamental alteration of an educational program or impose an undue burden on the University.
- b. The University is not required to alter or modify a course or academic program to the extent that it changes the fundamental nature of that course or program.
- c. Decisions regarding accommodation or auxiliary aids and services may require

consultation with UNT faculty or administrators to consider the fundamental nature of a course or academic program.

d. Letters of accommodation are not retroactive.

3. Notification

The Disability Services Specialist will provide a student with written notice regarding the determination and any approved accommodations, auxiliary aids and services. ODA communicates a student's approved accommodations through letters that are requested via the case management system. The letters are sent by ODA staff electronically and also available for faculty to view in the case management system.

D. Student Responsibilities

1. A student has no obligation to inform the University that they have a disability; however, if a student desires an accommodation or other disability-related service from the University, the student must identify themselves as having a disability.
2. A student who wishes to request disability-related accommodations or modification of certain generally applicable academic requirements must provide the ODA with timely, relevant, and complete written documentation of the disability for which accommodation is requested.
3. As early as possible in a semester, a student who has been approved for accommodation or use of auxiliary aids and services must seek a confidential meeting with faculty members to:
 - a. confirm receipt of the letter of accommodation from the Disability Services Specialist approving the accommodation or use of auxiliary aids and services; and
 - b. make arrangements for implementation of the approved accommodation or use of auxiliary aids and services.
4. Students should request letters of accommodation well in advance of class exams as faculty members have up to 5 business days to provide approved accommodations.
5. Students must request accommodations each semester that they desire to receive them.
6. Any student who feels that the granted accommodations are ineffective must inform the Disability Services Specialist immediately upon discovery of the ineffectiveness, so that alternate accommodations may be considered.

E. Faculty Responsibilities

1. Faculty members may not deny an approved accommodation without consulting the Disability Services Specialist to consider alternate means to accommodate a student's disability. At the request of a faculty member, ODA must review the accommodations provided for a specific course to consider their impact on the fundamental nature of a

course or academic program.

2. Faculty members may not disclose the student's disability to any other student or faculty member without the consent of the student.
3. After receiving an accommodations letter, faculty members have up to 5 business days to provide the approved accommodations. This is to allow time for any administrative planning that may need to occur.
4. Course syllabi must include the following statement:

“The University of North Texas makes reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities. Students needing a reasonable academic accommodations must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the student will request their letter of accommodation. ODA will provide faculty with a reasonable accommodation letter via email to begin a private discussion regarding a student’s specific needs in a course. Students may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to meet with faculty regarding their accommodations during office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website.”

5. The ADA Coordinator must receive and respond to complaints of discrimination on the basis of disability, including allegations of failure to accommodate; oversee the university’s response to requests for accommodation from students; and oversee the response to campus accessibility issues in collaboration with other offices.

F. Discrimination and Harassment Measures

Individuals who believe that they have been discriminated against on the basis of having a disability, a record of disability, or being regarded as disabled may file a complaint with the Office Equal Opportunity & Title IX (EO/TIX) in accordance with state and federal laws. [UNT Policy 16.004 Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#).

G. Grievances

ODA and EO/TIX are committed to working with university employees and students with disabilities to resolve disagreements regarding the need for or implementation of accommodations. A student requesting an accommodation or use of auxiliary aids and services may seek dispute resolution in accordance with the [Disability Accommodations Grievance Procedure](#) if the student either disagrees with a decision of the ODA or is dissatisfied with the final accommodation or its implementation.

H. Ineligibility

1. Students that do not meet the criteria of a qualified student with a disability are not entitled to reasonable accommodation and are not eligible to receive counseling or other assistance from ODA. ODA must not issue any communications; directions; or suggestions to faculty, staff, or administrators regarding students who have been found ineligible.
2. Students who are ineligible for reasonable accommodation but still have a problem impacting their academic performance (including temporary illness) may seek help from the Academic Dean of their School or College or from the Office of the Dean of Students. These officials will respond to all such requests in accordance with established academic policies.

V. Resources/Forms/Tools

[Initiate a Request for Services from the Office of Disability Access](#)
[File a Complaint of Discrimination or Harassment](#)
[Disability Accommodations Grievance Procedure](#)

VI. References and Cross-References

[Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, As Amended](#)
[Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines](#)
[The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 §503](#)
[The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 §504](#)
[Texas Accessibility Standards](#)
[UNT Policy 16.004, Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#)

VII. Revision History

Policy Contact:	Asst. Vice President, Equal Opportunity & Title IX
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