

SOUTH GEORGIA STATE COLLEGE



Office Of Disability Services

Procedures Manual



I. Manual Introduction

The policies and procedures in this manual have been compiled to assist students in receiving academic accommodations and support services appropriate for their disability. This policy and procedure manual is designed to cover the major services provided to students with disabilities, but is not an all-inclusive document and is subject to change. Students unsure of the appropriate procedure to follow and/or with a situation not covered by this manual should contact the Office of Disability Services for clarification and guidance.

II. Mission Statement

The Office of Disability Services, a unit of Student Success, is committed to ensuring equal access to learning opportunities for all qualified students with disabilities. The Office of Disability Services is responsible for coordinating services that will empower students with disabilities to develop and optimize their maximum potential at South Georgia State College.

The Office of Disability Services provides assistance in accordance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the policies of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.

III. Program Accessibility

Assurance of equal educational opportunity rests upon legal foundations established by federal law, specifically the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 including Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. By federal law, a person with a disability is any person who: 1) has a physical or mental impairment; 2) has a record of such impairment; or 3) is regarded as having such an impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities such as self-care, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, or learning.

The Office of Disability Services (ODS) at South Georgia State College is administered through:

Douglas Campus Student Success, Powell Hall - Room 118, 912.260.4435

Waycross Campus Student Success, Dye Building - Room 130, 912.449.7593

**Valdosta Site SGSC Entry Program, Entrance #9 of the University Center,
229.293.6135**

Americus Site SGSC Entry Program, Collum Hall, Room 208, 229.931.5141

IV. Procedures for Receiving Services

Student Responsibilities:

- A. Contact ODS to obtain appropriate paperwork to register with ODS. (Students must self-identify as an individual with a disability when seeking a reasonable accommodation.)

- B. Complete ODS Intake Forms. (See Appendix A for example.)
- C. Provide ODS appropriate documentation that includes a statement of diagnosis and suggested accommodations to validate request for academic accommodations. Documentation **must be current** and provided by a qualified health professional such as physician, audiologist, psychologist, psychiatrist, or neuropsychologist. In most situations, documentation should be within 3 years of the student's application for services.
- D. Meet with your ODS coordinator to request reasonable accommodations.
- E. Follow all time deadlines and procedures necessary to receive your specific accommodations.
- F. Contact your ODS coordinator **prior to the beginning** of each semester in order to discuss any necessary changes in your accommodations and receive your accommodation letters for each instructor.
- G. Present the accommodation letter to the instructor each semester in a timely manner. Students are strongly encouraged to obtain the accommodation letters and present them to their instructors within the first week of each semester.
- H. Contact your ODS coordinator immediately should you encounter any difficulty or concern regarding your accommodations.
- I. Abide by South Georgia State College's standards and guidelines for behavior in the **SGSC Student Handbook**.
- J. Meet the College's qualifications and essential technical, academic, and institutional standards.

Note: Noncompliance on the part of the student with the procedures stated herein may result in delays in or denial of the provision of accommodations.

ODS Responsibilities:

- A. Review the student's documentation and meet with the student as necessary to determine eligibility for receiving reasonable accommodations.
- B. Present student's documentation to the Regent's Center for Learning Disabilities in a timely manner if their review and recommendations are appropriate.
- C. Meet with assigned student to discuss the approved accommodations and the procedures necessary to obtain them.
- D. Prepare paperwork (such as 'Accommodation Letters') as necessary to facilitate receipt of appropriate accommodations for which the student is approved.
- E. Assist the student with the accommodations process.
- F. Assist the student in resolving problems that may occur during the accommodations process.
- G. Interact with SGSC faculty, staff, and non-SGSC professionals on student's behalf as appropriate.
- H. Maintain records of interactions with student related to the administration of accommodations.

All requests for University System accommodations (foreign language substitutions, additional semesters in Learning Support, and special accommodations for the Regents Exam, CPE/Compass) must be submitted to the Regents Center for Learning Disorders at Georgia Southern University. Students requesting University System testing accommodations for entrance or placement tests

should make their request well in advance of testing date to ensure appropriate time for needed arrangements.

V. DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

The Office of Disability Services is responsible for maintaining confidential student files. These files include appropriate documentation of the disability, intake forms, a record of contacts with the student, and a record of services provided. To determine appropriate and reasonable accommodations, documentation must be furnished. The following documentation is required for:

Learning Disabilities - A psychological or psycho-educational evaluation, not older than three years, must be provided by a licensed professional. The evaluation must meet the Board of Regents criteria for LD eligibility. Additional records from primary or secondary schools may be requested.

Attention Deficit Disorder - A psychological or psycho-educational evaluation, not older than three years, must be provided by a licensed professional. The evaluation must meet the Board of Regents criteria for LD eligibility. Additional records from primary or secondary schools may be requested.

Traumatic Brain Injury - A psychological or psycho-educational evaluation, not older than three years, must be provided by a licensed professional. The evaluation must meet the Board of Regents criteria for LD eligibility. Additional records from primary or secondary schools may be requested.

All Other Disabling Conditions – A letter from a qualified practitioner that provides a diagnosis, the current status of the condition, the impact of the condition on academic and any suggested academic accommodations.

If documentation is not current, or if the student has never been tested:

The student is assisted in the process of obtaining appropriate documentation. The student is provided with standards established by the BOR for outside evaluations and provided with information on obtaining testing from the RCLD at Georgia Southern University.

The student must then choose either “Outside Documentation” or “RCLD testing”:

1. **OUTSIDE DOCUMENTATION:** When outside documentation is chosen, the student compiles the materials and presents them to the Office of Disability Services at SGSC. ODS will send the outside documentation to RCLD for evaluation.
2. **RCLD TESTING:** When testing from the Regents Center for Learning Disorders is chosen, the student completes a pre-testing packet for the RCLD. This packet is submitted to the ODS at SGSC, which then forwards it to the RCLD for evaluation.

The RCLD makes all decisions regarding academic accommodations and refers them by letter to the ODS at SGSC, which then facilitates services.

VI. EVALUATION BY THE REGENTS CENTER FOR LEARNING DISORDERS

The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia has established three centers for the provision of assessment, resources, and research related to students within the University System who have learning disorders. The Regents Centers for Learning Disorders (RCLD) are located at Georgia Southern University, The University of Georgia, and Georgia State University. Each RCLD is responsible for serving designated colleges and universities within a geographic region.

Students who do not have current evaluations that meet state guidelines may be referred to the Center for evaluation but must meet certain requirements. Students who are referred for testing or an evaluation review must be enrolled in the referring institution. Exceptions to the rule are considered when students who are applying for admission to an institution and require verification of a disability for the institution CPC foreign language requirement. Referral for testing or evaluation review in these cases should come from the institution at which admission is pending. No exceptions will be made to the University System admissions requirements. (*Academic Affairs Handbook, Section 2.22 [2/2009]*).

Students who wish to be tested by the RCLD should contact the ODS on their campus. An ODS staff member will schedule an appointment with the student to go over the pre-testing packet. When a student returns this packet, an ODS staff member will check for completeness and forward the packet to the RCLD at Georgia Southern University. The RCLD schedules the evaluation and notifies the student of the time, date, and place for the evaluation. The Georgia Southern RCLD is located in Cone Hall. The student is responsible for the evaluation fee of \$500.00. This fee is to be mailed to the RCLD along with the pre-testing packet.

VII. ACCOMMODATION LETTERS

The Accommodation Letter is used as a means of communication among the student, the Office of Disability Services (ODS), and the faculty. Academic and physical accommodations to which a student is entitled are listed in the letter. The process for use of the Accommodation Letter is as follows:

1. The student completes the Voluntary Declaration of Disability and meets with a staff member from the ODS to present documentation of the disabling condition. (See Appendix B for example.) When that documentation has met all standards established by the BOR, the student is eligible for an Accommodation Letter(s). (See Appendix C for example.)
2. Based on the documentation and recommendations of the BOR, the ODS coordinator, along with the student, determines appropriate and individualized accommodations. These accommodations are outlined in the Accommodation Letter(s).
3. At the beginning of each term, the student requests an Accommodation Letter(s) from the ODS Coordinator. The student then comes to the ODS office for the letter (s) and the Faculty Academic Accommodations Form(s). (See Appendix D for example.)
4. The student is responsible for making sure the instructor has received the Accommodation Letter at the beginning of each term, and that the Faculty Academic Accommodations Form has been signed by the instructor and returned to the ODS. Faculty members are under no obligation to provide accommodations until an Accommodation Letter is received. Accommodations should begin within a reasonable period following delivery of the Accommodation Letter.

VIII. PROCEDURES FOR DISABILITY-RELATED ABSENCES

1. Students are expected to follow the attendance policy established by the instructor in each class.
2. If a qualified student with a disability cannot attend class because of disability-related reasons, the student should contact the Office of Disability Services prior to the beginning of the semester, or as soon as possible after the need for an exception arises.
3. Determination of eligibility for a disability-related exception to the attendance policy is made by the Disability Service Coordinator (DSC) in consultation with the instructor of the course for which the exception is sought. The DSC may consult with the Regents Center of Learning Disorders at Georgia Southern University for this request.
4. As with all disability accommodations, exceptions to the attendance policy will be determined on an individual, case-by-case basis.

5. Students who are approved for an exception to the attendance policy are expected to contact instructors in advance of an anticipated absence.
6. In the case of emergencies or unexpected disability-related absences, contact should be made as soon as possible with the instructor to verify the reason for the absence and discuss make-up work. The student and instructor should come to a clear agreement about the nature of the make-up work and deadlines for completing it.
7. It is the individual student's responsibility to obtain copies of lecture notes and/or materials from missed classes due to a disability-related issue.
8. Students should make a special effort to attend class for exams and to observe deadlines for submission for assignments.
9. Exception to the attendance policy does **not** mean exception to any of the other academic requirements of the course.
10. Students should provide verification of absences from health practitioners for instructors when requested.
11. Students should be aware that exceptions to the attendance policy may not be possible in all courses because class attendance is an essential, integral part of some courses.

IX. Testing Accommodations

1. Students that are determined eligible for testing accommodations must pick up their accommodation letters from the ODS at the beginning of each semester. (Preferably before the first class meeting.)
2. Students must present the Accommodation Letters to their instructors in a timely manner and discuss the testing accommodations.
3. Students and instructors are encouraged to arrange testing accommodations within the department to insure better student access to instructors.
4. If testing accommodations **cannot** be made within the department, students need to complete a *Test Accommodation Form* with their instructor and schedule the test with the ODS/Designated Proctor. (Test Accommodation Forms are located in the ODS. See Appendix E for example.)
5. In order to schedule testing in the ODS, the student is encouraged to submit the **completed** *Test Accommodation Form* no later than one week before the test.
6. If you have scheduled a test with the ODS and valid circumstances require a change in your test schedule, you must contact the ODS as soon as possible.
7. Students are required to be on-time for scheduled tests with the ODS. Instructors will be notified of late arrivals and no shows. If rescheduling of the test is necessary, then the instructor must give the student permission to reschedule at another time.
8. If a student is testing with the ODS, he/she will be allowed to use only the materials that have been approved by the instructor on the *Testing Accommodation Form*.
9. Students that test with the ODS will be monitored electronically.
10. If any difficulties arise concerning your testing accommodations, contact the ODS immediately for assistance.
11. Students accommodated with testing services at the ODS are expected to adhere to the Student Conduct Rules and Regulations as stated in the SGSC Student Handbook.

X. STUDENT FILES—STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Student files are confidential and are kept in a secure location in the ODS. All records kept by the ODS shall remain confidential information and will be disclosed to a third party only with the student's written permission. (See Appendix F and G for examples.) Record of disclosure will be kept on file.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 protects the privacy of educational records, establishes the rights of students to inspect and review their educational records, and provides

guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data. The ODS complies with this act as outlined in the SGSC catalog.

XI. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Students who feel that a decision by an Office of Disability Services (ODS) staff member or faculty member does not fully comply with federal disability legislation should follow the appropriate procedure as outlined below:

A. Complaints of ADA Violations by Coordinator of Student Support Services

Students should first meet with the Coordinator of Student Support Services who made the decision and attempt to resolve the problem informally. It is anticipated that most questions will be resolved in this way. However, situations unresolved at the Coordinator of Student Support Services' level may be appealed to the Director of Campus Life (DCL). The Coordinator of Student Support Services will assist the student in making an appointment with the (DCL) and will forward materials relevant to the complaint to the DCL. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the DCL, the DCL will assist the student in appealing to the Vice President of Student Success (VPSS). The VPSS will meet with the student in an attempt to resolve the complaint. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the VPSS, the VPSS will assist the student in appealing to the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA) and will forward all relevant materials to the VPAA with copies to the ADA Compliance Officer.

The VPAA will meet with the student and attempt to resolve the appeal. If the VPAA and the student are not successful, the student will be referred to the ADA Compliance Office, the President and ultimately to the Board of Regents.

B. Complaints of ADA Violations by Faculty

Students who feel that their rights under federal disability legislation have been violated by a faculty member should first meet with the Coordinator of Student Support Services to register their complaint. If the Coordinator feels the incident demands further investigation, an informal inquiry is begun by discussing the allegations with the faculty member. It is anticipated that most perceived violations will be resolved at this point, through discussion with the faculty member of the relevant legislation and appropriate methods of accommodating students' documented disabilities.

The Coordinator will inform the student and the faculty member of any agreed-upon actions on the part of all parties, with a copy to the ADA Compliance Officer. Cases unresolved at the Coordinator's level may be appealed to the Director of Campus Life (DCL). The Coordinator of the ODS will assist the student in making an appointment with the DCL and will forward materials relevant to the complaint to the DCL.

The DCL will meet with the student in an attempt to resolve the complaint. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the DCL, the DCL will assist the student in appealing to the Vice President of Student Success (VPSS) and will forward all relevant materials to the VPSS.

The VPSS will meet with the student and attempt to resolve the appeal. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the VPSS, the VPSS will assist the student in appealing to the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA) and will forward all relevant materials to the VPAA with copies to the ADA Compliance Officer. If the VPAA and the student are not successful, the student will be referred to the ADA Compliance Office, the President and ultimately to the Board of Regents.

C. FACULTY APPEAL OF REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Because faculty members are course content experts, the ODS will negotiate specific academic accommodations with instructors. Instructors will receive accommodation suggestions via the Accommodation Letter process, but if they have other ideas concerning accommodations, they should contact the Coordinator of Student Support Services. Since the law requires such issues to be settled in a timely manner, instructors should move quickly to make their thoughts known. If the instructor and the Coordinator of Student Support Services are unable to reach an agreement concerning an accommodation, the Coordinator of Student Support Services will notify the VPAA of the problem. The VPAA will be responsible for resolving the disagreement.

Current Medications: _____

Medical Restrictions: _____

Are you registered with the Division of Rehabilitation Services? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, name of counselor _____

Accommodations:

Please list any academic accommodations or support services that you have received in the past.

Please list any academic accommodations or support services which you would like to request at South Georgia State College.

Please note any additional information that may assist Disability Services in providing you with accommodations.

Appendix B.

VOLUNTARY DECLARATION OF DISABILITY

This form is to be completed only if you have a disability and are requesting academic accommodations.

The information on this form is **confidential** and will be released only to those individuals responsible for providing assistance to students with disabling conditions.

Please check the area(s) that best describe(s) your disability:

Learning Disability

Physical Disability

Attention Deficit Disorder

Hearing/Visual/Speech Disability

Psychological Disability

Other (please describe)

_____ **I have a physical disability and request accommodations in housing.**

Please provide us with the following information:

Date: _____

Student's Name: _____ ID#: _____

Address: _____

_____ (City) _____ (State) _____ (Zip Code)

Phone#: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

I am a first time beginning freshman

Returning Student

Transfer

I plan to begin attending South Georgia State College: Semester: _____ Year: _____

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

If you have any questions concerning this procedure, please contact the Disability Services Coordinator, at (912) 260-4435. Please return this completed form to the Office of Disability Services.

Appendix C.

Academic Accommodation Request

TO:

FROM: Coordinator of Student Support Services

RE:

DATE:

_____ has registered for your class this semester and is receiving support from our office. The modifications that are needed vary from class to class, depending on the nature of the course material, the type of class presentation, and the types of tests given. The following kinds of modifications are requested for your class:

- Extended time for tests and in-class assignments
- Reduced-distraction test environment
- Use of text reading software
- Use of an audio recorder for lectures
- Access to books in alternate format
- Use of calculator (when not an essential skill)

Accommodations address the documented needs of this student, but must not violate what are considered to be the essential/technical standards of the course or program. Should you have any questions about this, please contact me. I will always be happy to confer with you either in person or by phone.

We want this to be a positive experience for both you and _____. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

cc: File

Appendix D.

Office of Disability Services
100 West College Park Drive
Douglas, Georgia 31533-5098
Ph. 912.260.4435
Fax 912.260.4459

**SERVICES FOR STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES
FACULTY ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FORM**

Student Name: _____

*In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this student has presented documentation of a specific disability. This information noted on the attached letter is **CONFIDENTIAL** and should be discussed privately between you and the student. To insure ADA mandated confidentiality, do not discuss/refer to a student's disability in front of others. If you have any questions regarding the accommodations, please contact Annette Nation, Disability Services Coordinator at 912.260.4435. Thank you for your assistance.*

It is the student's responsibility to talk with faculty to confirm when and how accommodations will be provided. (i.e. What accommodations are needed, where to go for tests, assistance with finding a note-taker, and pop-quizzes or laboratory accommodations.)

SEMESTER SCHEDULE

COURSE	INSTRUCTOR'S SIGNATURE	DATE

The instructor's signature is needed to verify that the student has identified and discussed the accommodations that he / she will need throughout the semester.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

*I hereby give permission for the Office of Disability services to discuss my accommodations with appropriate college officials. The information given to faculty and staff will be used only to substantiate need for accommodations and the nature of the accommodations required.

Staff: _____ Date: _____

Appendix E.

Office of Disability Services

South Georgia State College
Douglas, Georgia 31533
Phone: 912.260.4435 Fax: 912.260.4459

CONSENT TO RELEASE INFORMATION

NAME: _____ **SGSC ID#:** _____

I, the undersigned, hereby authorize: Disability Services Coordinator,
to release/exchange information concerning the above-named person to:

(Name of Person or Institution)

(Address)

Specific type of information to be disclosed/exchanged:

<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/> Testing Reports
<input type="checkbox"/> Attendance	<input type="checkbox"/> Recommendations
<input type="checkbox"/> Treatment Progress	<input type="checkbox"/> Counseling Records
<input type="checkbox"/> Drug/Alcohol Issues	<input type="checkbox"/> All of the Above
<input type="checkbox"/> Treatment Summary	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

I understand that the information is to be used for:

<input type="checkbox"/> Academic Considerations	<input type="checkbox"/> Family Involvement
<input type="checkbox"/> Contact with Referral Source	<input type="checkbox"/> Continuity of Treatment
<input type="checkbox"/> Professional Aftercare Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

As the person signing this consent, I understand that I am giving my permission to the above-named provider or other named third party for disclosure of confidential records. I also understand that I have the right to revoke this consent, but that my revocation is not effective until delivered in writing to the person who is in possession of my records. A copy of this consent and a notation concerning the persons or agencies to which disclosure was made shall be included with my original records in the Office of Disabilities. The person who receives the records to which this consent pertains may not redisclose them to anyone else without my separate written consent unless such recipient is a provider who makes a disclosure permitted by law.

This release expires in 12 months unless another date is specified: _____

Name (Signature): _____

Name (Print): _____

Date: _____

Address: _____

Witness: _____

Permission to transmit documentation by fax: ____ Yes ____ No ____ Initials

Appendix F.

**South Georgia State College
Office of Disability Services**

**Release of Information
Parent or Guardian**

I hereby authorize the Office of Disability Services at South Georgia State College to release or discuss any pertinent medical, psychological, educational, or vocational information to the parent or guardian listed below. The purpose of this disclosure is to assist me as I pursue my educational goals. Disclosures of information will be restricted to what is necessary, relevant, and verifiable. A photocopy of this authorization shall be as valid as the original document.

Parent/Guardian

Name(s): _____

Parent/Guardian

Address(es): _____

Parent/Guardian

Phone # (s): _____

Student's

Signature: _____

Student's

Name: _____

(Please Print)

SGSC

ID#: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____