

## **American's with Disabilities Accommodations**

Wallace State Community College is committed to making its academic programs and services accessible to qualified students who have disabilities. It is a goal of Wallace State to provide students who have disabilities equal opportunities to develop and demonstrate their academic skills, while maintaining the academic integrity of the College programs. Consistent with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008, it is the policy of Wallace State College that no qualified person with a disability shall be subjected to discrimination because of that disability under any program or activity conducted or sponsored by the College.

**The Admissions Office handles all applications for admission.** Admission standards are described in the College catalog and must be met by all students, regardless of disability. The College offers orientation sessions for entering students. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services before or during new student orientation (Lion's Pride). Students who need accommodations during Lions' Pride should contact the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services upon receiving materials concerning the new student orientation. The Director can be reached at 256-352-8052 or [adaoffice@wallacestate.edu](mailto:adaoffice@wallacestate.edu).

**Colleges are not required to alter essential academic requirements.** Requirements, which can be demonstrated as essential to a course or program of study or to any directly related licensing requirement, are not regarded as discriminatory. Specifically, the law says that a college "shall make such modifications to its academic requirements as are necessary to ensure that such requirements do not discriminate or have the effect of discriminating, on the basis of handicap, against a qualified handicapped applicant or student... Modifications may include changes in the length of time permitted for the completion of degree requirements, substitution of specific courses required for the completion of degree requirements, and adaptation of the manner in which specific courses are conducted." 34 CFR Section 1-04.44 (a).

**When to self-identify as a student with a disability is a decision for the student.** However, prospective students are encouraged to contact the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services for information regarding services and facilities and to discuss questions pertinent to admission. If accommodations are needed for **placement testing**, all documentation must be on file in the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services.

**The Office of Accessibility and Disability Services** serve as the central contact point for students with disabilities. The goal of the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services is to provide a physically and educationally accessible college environment that ensures an individual is viewed on the basis of ability, not disability. The Director works individually with students to determine appropriate and reasonable academic accommodations, and to have students' academic performance evaluated without the limiting effects of a disability.

## A Disability as Defined by the ADA

An individual who:

- a) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activity (caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, talking, seeing, hearing, and learning).
- b) has a record of such an impairment; or
- c) is regarded as having such an impairment.

## Establishing Services with the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services

1. All students must provide proper documentation to the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services. It cannot be just an IEP. It should include diagnostic information used to create the IEP. See "Documentation Guidelines."
2. Students need to complete an ADA application. Go to <http://kea.accessiblelearning.com/WallaceState/>  
\*Click on "New Student" to begin the application.
3. Students must make an appointment to discuss accommodations that may be utilized. Students will sign the paperwork needed to complete the initial process.
4. Student must complete an "Accommodation Request Form" that gives the Director permission to send accommodation letters. This must be done every semester.
5. Students notify their instructors that they will need to use their accommodations. Students may contact the instructor in person or via email, but students are required to make the first step at the higher education level.

**Students who are seeking accommodations and services on the basis of a disability are required to submit documentation to verify their eligibility for services.** All students must provide proper documentation to the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services. It cannot be just an IEP. It should include diagnostic information used to create the IEP. Typically, a licensed psychologist, physician, or other appropriate professional provides the evaluation, diagnosis, and recommended accommodations in a detailed report. The Director is responsible for determining the nature of an individual's disability. The Director maintains the right to reject documentation that does not verify a student's disability or delineate reasonable accommodations.

Documentation accepted by the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services is valid as long as a student is continuously enrolled at the College. However, if there is a break in the student's enrollment, he/she may need to present updated documentation to receive services. Disability-related information received to support requests for accommodations are treated as

confidential and shared only on a need-to-know-basis. The information may not be released to an outside third party without the written consent of the individual.

### **Accommodation Process Information**

The Director meets individually with a student to discuss accommodations and assist the student in completing required forms. The Director determines reasonable academic accommodations for a student, taking into consideration recommendations from the physician, psychologist or other professional who diagnosed the student's disability.

Accommodations previously used in educational settings with the student will be taken into consideration. Although some students may have similar diagnoses, each student is treated as an individual because accommodations must be tailored to individual needs.

The Director recommends reasonable accommodations by preparing a letter addressed to the instructor of each class for which the student requests accommodations.

An instructor is not obliged to provide accommodations to a student with a disability until he/she receives the Director's accommodation letter concerning a student. In addition, it is the student's responsibility to discuss scheduling and details of the requested accommodations with his/her instructor(s). If a student requests an accommodation letter to be sent within a few days of an assignment or exam, the instructor may not be able to provide the optimal accommodation requested. It is highly suggested that students have accommodation letters sent by the first day of class each semester.

### **Responsibility of the Student Each Semester**

Once students have completed the process to establish accommodations, they will need to complete the following each semester:

1. Students must complete an "Accommodation Request Form" from the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services each semester. Students may come by the office to complete form or email the completed request form to [adaoffice@wallacestate.edu](mailto:adaoffice@wallacestate.edu)
2. Letters will be emailed to each instructor the student has listed on the "Accommodation Request Form." Letters include only accommodations that were approved by the student and the Director in the initial meeting.
3. Students notify their instructors that they will need to use their accommodations. You may contact the instructor in person or via email, but students are required to make the first initial step at the higher education level. Any accommodations needed for testing needs to be decided at that point. Students who wish to take exams in the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services need to read the "Guidelines for Proctored Test in

the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services.” A testing form must be completed so the student can be placed on the testing calendar.

4. Students report any concerns about accommodation to the Director as soon as possible.

**Students with disabilities must maintain the same responsibility for their education as students who do not have disabilities.** This includes maintaining the same academic levels, maintaining appropriate behavior, and giving timely notification of any special needs.

### **Conflict Resolution**

Questions and concerns regarding accommodations and services for students who have a disability should be directed initially to the Director.

At the beginning of each semester, students should have an accommodation letter sent to the instructor of each class that accommodations will be needed. Students and instructors will discuss the requested accommodations. This can be in-person or via email. If an agreement cannot be reached, the student should consult with the Division Chair. If an agreement is still not obtained, the student should contact the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services to begin the steps in the conflict resolution process.

1. The Director meets with the Department Chair. If an agreement is not reached with the student, he or she may submit an appeal, in writing, to the Vice President for Students within three (3) working days of the decision of the Department Chair.
2. The Vice President for Students will review the student’s information, may conduct further investigation as needed, and will issue a written decision to the student within five (5) working days of receipt of the appeal. If the student disagrees with the decision, the student may submit an appeal, in writing, to the President.

The College will make every reasonable effort to address a student’s concerns promptly to minimize the effect on course participation. During the conflict resolution process, the student is entitled to receive all accommodations recommended by the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services.

### **Guidelines for a Proctored Exam**

Proctored exams are a service for students and faculty. A proctored exam is only recommended when 1) the student needs to have a reader, scribe, or special equipment; and/or 2) the instructor cannot proctor the exam.

*It is always preferable for the instructor to provide exam accommodations so the student with a disability has the same opportunity to clarify information as others in the class. Proctored exams may or may not coincide with class exams, depending on the availability of proctors.*

### **Student's Responsibility for Testing in the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services**

1. Student must complete an "Request for Individualized Testing" form and submit to the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services. A form must be completed for each test the student intends to take in the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services. The Director will contact the student if there is a conflict on the calendar.
2. On the testing day, the student must arrive on time and be prepared to begin the test on time. If the student is excessively late, he/she may forfeit the testing room based upon availability or realize the window for the password to be active may close. Additionally, if a student is absent or a no-show, he/she must contact the instructor of the class regarding taking a make-up test.
3. After the test is completed, the student signs to verify that he/she received testing accommodations to his/her satisfaction. Paper test are sent back to the instructor in a timely fashion.

### **Accommodations and Services**

The Director may recommend the following academic accommodations, based upon appropriate documentation and individual class requirements.

Services of a personal nature are not considered academic accommodations. Examples of personal services include transportation and attendant care.

Priority Registration- All students registered with the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services are eligible for priority registration. Students are registered before open registration begins for the College.

Testing Accommodations- Testing accommodations may include extended time, reduced-distraction testing situation, oral testing, and/or alternate test formats. Tests are administered in each department, if possible. Students should discuss testing accommodations with their instructors at the beginning of each semester.

Recording, Note Taking Assistance, Readers, and Scribes- Students may record class lectures and/or request peer note takers. Students with supporting documentation may be provided a scribe for the classroom.

Sign Language Interpreting- Deaf and hearing-impaired students may be provided with state licensed/permitted interpreters or captioning.

Academic Classroom Aids- Students may use calculators, computers, dictionaries, word processors with spell check and/or grammar check for in-class assignments and homework assignments.

Alternative Format Tools and Software- Students may be provided alternative formats or software to provide access to print information. Services may include but are not limited to accessible PDFs, large print, Braille, etc.

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*It is the official policy of Wallace State Community College that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, disability, gender, religion, creed, national origin, or age be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program, activity, or employment.*



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## **DISABILITY DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES**

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) state that qualified students with disabilities who meet the technical and academic standards at Alabama College System institutions are entitled to reasonable accommodations. Under these laws a disability is defined as any physical or mental impairment which substantially limits a major life activity, a history of such an impairment, or the perception of such an impairment. Alabama Community College System institutions do NOT provide disability documentation for students. It is the student's responsibility to provide appropriate documentation to the college office responsible for handling the request and to request accommodations.

Appropriate documentation is defined as that which meets the following criteria, including recommendations for limitations:

### **Health Condition, Mobility, Hearing, Speech, or Visual Impairment**

A letter or report from treating physician, orthopedic specialist, audiologist, speech pathologist, or ophthalmologist (as appropriate), including:

1. Clearly stated diagnosis including DSM-5 or ICD-9 diagnostic code
2. Defined levels of functioning and any limitations
  - This should include a description of how the disability currently impacts the student in social, academic, or occupational settings and a description of how the disability will limit the student in the classroom.
3. Current treatment and medication
  - This may include how the medication impacts the student's ability to perform in an academic environment.
4. Current letter/report (within 1 year) dated and signed
5. Suggest accommodations and the rationale to equalize this student's educational opportunities at the post-secondary level

## **Psychological Disorder**

A letter or report from a mental health professional (psychologist, neuropsychologist, licensed professional counselor) including:

1. Clearly stated diagnosis including DSM-5 diagnosis
  - Medication cannot be used to imply a diagnosis.
2. Defined levels of functioning and any limitations
  - This should include a description of how the disability currently impacts the student in social, academic, or occupational settings and a description of how the disability will limit the student in the classroom.
3. Supporting documentation (test data, history, observations, etc.)
  - This must include how the health professional arrived at the student's diagnosis.
4. Current treatment and medication
  - This may include how the medication impacts the student's ability to perform in an academic environment.
5. Current letter/report (within 1 year), dated and signed
6. Suggest recommendations for academic accommodations and the rationale for such accommodations

## **Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)**

A comprehensive evaluation report by a rehabilitation counselor, speech-language pathologist, orthopedic specialist, and/or neuropsychologist (or other specialist as appropriate), including:

1. Assessment of cognitive abilities, including processing speed and memory
2. Analysis of educational achievement skills and limitations (reading comprehension, written language, spelling, and mathematical abilities)
3. Defined levels of functioning and limitations in all affected areas
  - This should include a description of how the disability currently impacts the student in social, academic, or occupational settings and a description of how the disability will limit the student in the classroom.
4. Current treatment and medication
5. Current letter/report (post-rehabilitation and within 1 year), dated and signed
6. Suggest recommendations for academic accommodations and the rationale for such accommodations.



## Learning Disabilities

A comprehensive evaluation report from a clinical psychologist, psychiatrist, neuropsychologist, school psychologist, learning disability specialist, or diagnostician, including:

1. Clearly stated diagnosis of a learning disability based upon DSM-5 criteria
  - High School IEP, 504 Plan, and/or letter from physician or other professional **will not be sufficient to document a learning disability.**
2. Clear statement of presenting problem; diagnostic interview
3. Educational history documenting the impact of the learning disability
4. Alternative explanations and diagnoses are ruled out
4. Relevant test data with standard scores and interpretations are provided to support conclusion, including at least:
  - a. WAIS-IV(b), WIAT-III
  - b. Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery-III including Written Language
  - c. Woodcock-Johnson Cognitive Processing Battery to substantiate any processing problems
5. Defined levels of functioning and any limitations, supported by evaluation data
6. Current report (**within 3 years of enrollment date**), dated and signed
7. The report must include specific recommendations for academic accommodations and the rationale for those recommendations.

## Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

A comprehensive evaluation report from a physician, psychiatrist, clinical psychologist, neurologist, or neuropsychologist, including:

1. Clearly stated diagnosis of ADD or ADHD based upon DSM-5 criteria
  - High School IEP, 504 Plan, and/or letter from physician or other professional **will not be sufficient to document ADD or ADHD.**
  - Medication cannot be used to imply a diagnosis.
2. Clear statement of presenting problem, diagnostic interview
3. Evidence of early and current impairment in at least two different environments (comprehensive history)
4. Alternative explanations and diagnoses are ruled out
5. Relevant test data with standard scores are provided to support conclusions, including at least:
  - a. WAIS-IV (b), WIAT-III
  - b. Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational battery- III, including Written Language
  - c. Behavioral Assessment Instruments for ADD/ADHD normed on adults
6. Defined levels of functioning and any limitations, supported by evaluation data
7. Current report (**within 3 years of enrollment date**), dated and signed
8. The report must include specific recommendations for academic accommodations and the rationale for those recommendations.