



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER EL PASO

Operating Policy and Procedure

HSCEP OP: 77.14, **Accessibility and Establishing Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso (TTUHSC El Paso) Operating Policy and Procedure (HSCEP OP) is to outline the procedures for establishing reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities.

REVIEW: This HSCEP OP will be reviewed by June 1 of odd-numbered years by the Office of General Counsel, and the assistant vice president of student services or his/her designees, with recommendations for revision forwarded to the provost or his/her designee by July 1.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

I. Background

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 (42 U.S.C. § 12101 *et seq.*, as amended) mandates equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in all public facilities, programs, activities, services, and benefits derived from them. Title V, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794 *et seq.*), as amended, mandates equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities in all programs, activities, and services that are recipients of federal financial assistance. Both the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act are civil rights statutes that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability and, if applicable, obligate colleges and universities to make certain adjustments and accommodations and offer persons with disabilities the opportunity to participate fully in all institutional programs and activities. TTUHSC El Paso will adhere to and follow federal and state law as it pertains to establishing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities.

II. Faculty Notice

Faculty members must insert the following statement into each course syllabus:

“TTUHSC El Paso is committed to providing equal access to learning opportunities to students with documented disabilities. To ensure access to this course, and your program, please contact the Academic Success and Accessibility Office (ASAO), to engage in a confidential conversation about the process for requesting accommodations in the classroom and clinical setting. Accommodations are not provided retroactively, so students are encouraged to register with the ASAO as soon as possible. Please note: faculty are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from ASOA has been provided to the school and disseminated to the appropriate faculty member(s). For additional information, please visit the ASAO website: <https://elpaso.ttuhscc.edu/student-services/office-of-academic-and-disability-support-services/default.aspx>.”

III. Eligibility and Procedures for Establishing Reasonable Accommodations

A. A student must contact and register with the Academic Success and Accessibility Office (ASAO) and file appropriate documentation in order to be eligible for any disability benefits and services described in this operating policy. All documentation must be turned in to ASAO 30 days prior to an exam.

- B. The university-approved mechanism for establishing reasonable accommodation is notification in the form of a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) from ASAO. The LOA indicates to the school detail that the student has provided documentation in support of a disability and that the accommodation(s) noted are considered appropriate and reasonable. The school-level point of contact shares information from the ASAO directly to the faculty members LOA affects in a timely manner. No further proof of disability is required of the student in order for faculty or school to implement the noted accommodations. Students presenting other kinds of verification to faculty should be referred to the ASAO in the Office of Student Services and Student Affairs. Faculty must not provide accommodations prior to completion of the approved university process.
- Each college dean or dean-designee should provide accurate and up-to-date information related to school-level point of contact to the ASAO annually or upon reassignment.
- C. Faculty members should not provide accommodations for a student's disability needs until receipt of the ASAO issued LOA. Ideally, letters of accommodation should be presented to faculty at the beginning of the semester; however, they may be submitted at any time during a semester. If a LOA is presented after a semester begins, the accommodation applies only from the date on the letter forward and is not retroactive. Letters of accommodation must be presented no later than 10 days prior to an exam. If the accommodation(s) are not implemented within one week, the student shall immediately contact ASAO.
- D. Documentation required to initiate review by the ASAO must be provided by a trained and qualified professional by either completing the TTUHSC El Paso Disability Verification Form or a formal letter. Letters must be on letterhead with a date and signature include the following details:
- a diagnostic statement identifying the disability (including the date of diagnosis)
 - severity of the disability (mild/moderate/severe)
 - an assessment of major life activities that are impacted by the disability (e.g., learning, concentration, class attendance, social interactions, reading, walking, etc.)
 - specific recommendations for accommodations
 - Examples of trained and qualified professionals by category include:
 - Physical Disabilities
 - ASAO will accept current diagnoses of physical disabilities that are based on appropriate diagnostic evaluations administered by trained and qualified (i.e., certified and/or licensed) professionals (e.g., medical doctors, ophthalmologists, psychologists, neuropsychologists, audiologists).
 - Learning Disabilities
 - ASAO will accept diagnoses of specific learning disabilities that are based on comprehensive, age-appropriate, psychoeducational evaluations that demonstrate current functional limitations of the disability. The assessment must be administered by a trained and qualified (i.e., certified and/or licensed) professional (e.g., psychologist, neuropsychologist, educational diagnostician) who has had direct experience with adolescents and adults with learning disabilities.
 - Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
 - ASAO will accept current diagnoses of ADHD that are based on age-appropriate, diagnostic evaluations, administered by trained and qualified (i.e., certified or licensed) professionals (e.g., psychiatrists, psychologists,

or neuropsychologists). Submitted documentation must demonstrate current functional limitations of the disability.

- Psychiatric Disabilities
 - ASAO will accept current diagnoses of psychiatric disabilities that are based on comprehensive and appropriate diagnostic evaluations completed by trained and qualified (i.e., licensed or certified) professionals (e.g., psychologists, psychiatrists, neuropsychologists, school psychologists, certified professional counselors). Submitted documentation must demonstrate current functional limitations of the disability.

- E. A list of service providers that conduct assessments, render diagnosis of learning disabilities and/or attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, and make recommendations for accommodations for students is available in the ASAO. The TTUHSC El Paso Office of Student Services and Student Affairs does not endorse any particular service provider.

Before selecting a qualified professional, the student should ask what his/her credentials are, what experience he/she has had working with adults with learning disabilities and/or attention deficit disorders. If the provided has not previously worked with ASAO the student may forward the "Documentation Requirements for Specific Disabilities" (available on the ASAO website) to ensure proper testing is conducted to be eligible for disability benefits.

After the assessment has been completed, the student should request a written copy of the assessment report and make an appointment to discuss the results and recommendations with the professional. The student should take this opportunity to request additional resources, if needed, and always keep a personal file of all their records.

In order to obtain accommodations at TTUHSC El Paso, a copy of the report, along with an application, should be forwarded to ASAO in the Office of Student Services and Student Affairs. Please allow 10 university working days for process of the application.

- F. ASAO maintains the confidentiality of all medical and ADA information concerning students. These records are securely kept separate from student educational records and are accessible only to authorized personnel.

IV. Student Rights and Responsibilities

Each student receiving services through ASAO has rights and responsibilities related to their accommodations.

RIGHTS:

It is the student's right to disclose the LOA to any and all faculty. The student may not need all accommodations for every class, but any professor that he/she needs an accommodation from **must** have a copy of the LOA.

It is the student's right not to use their LOA for any class during a semester. This does not affect their right to have accommodations again for any subsequent semester.

It is the student's right to request adjustments to their LOA regarding the accommodations for which they are eligible. Additions to an LOA must be supported by appropriate documentation.

It is the student's right to have their disability kept confidential. ASAO does not share information regarding a student's disability with any faculty, staff, parent, or other entity, unless the student has given written permission to do so. In addition, the student is not required to disclose details of their

disability to any faculty or staff outside of what is noted in the LOA.

It is the student's right to have their approved accommodations provided free of charge, as mandated in the ADA.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

It is the student's responsibility to meet qualifications and maintain essential institutional technical standards for courses, services, and activities.

It is the student's responsibility to self-disclose as an individual with a disability and provide supporting documentation when an academic adjustment, auxiliary aid, and/or other service is needed. A completed application and documentation for accommodations must be completed 30 days prior to an exam.

It is the student's responsibility to follow up with each professor during the first week of class, or within one week of receiving the accommodation letter, if it is during the semester, to review the LOA. **The LOA becomes effective on the date it is received by the professor and is not retroactive.**

It is the student's responsibility to report problems with professors who are not allowing accommodations to ASAO. This must be done during the semester the problem is occurring and not after grades have been given for the course. If an accommodation is not implemented within one week, the student should immediately contact ASAO.

It is the student's responsibility to notify ASAO of any changes in their disability status or accommodation needs.

V. Temporary Accommodations

Students who have a short-term disabling condition, often due to injury or surgery, may apply for temporary accommodations for the duration of their functional limitations associated with their disability.

The eligibility process is the same as for permanent disability cases. Students must complete a Temporary Accommodation Application and submit the appropriate documentation with an anticipated end date. The director of ASAO will determine appropriate accommodations.

ASAO will send a Letter of Temporary Accommodations to the school-level point of contact who will forward to the relevant faculty.

VI. Provisional Accommodations

At times, a student may require provisional accommodations. This is a conditional arrangement made on a case-by-case basis and is not an official, approved accommodation. This arrangement is not a substitute for a student with no documentation to receive accommodations, nor is it a replacement for a student whose documentation has been denied.

The following considerations for provisional accommodations are: 1) documentation is provided, even if it may be insufficient information to meet TTUHSC El Paso guidelines that present a diagnosis and substantiates a need for accommodations. Documentation presented at least two weeks before an exam will be eligible for provisional accommodations; 2) the director of ASAO is in the process of reviewing documentation to determine the provision of accommodations; 3) appropriate documentation is in the process of being obtained, including any upcoming evaluation appointments.

Complete documentation must be received within four weeks of receiving provisional

accommodations, or they will be waived. If a student has difficulty in meeting this deadline due to troubles making a testing appointment, they must contact ASAO immediately. ASAO will send a Letter of Provisional Accommodations to the school-level point of contact who forwards to the relevant faculty.

VII. Appeal Process for Denial of Services or Accommodations

Students who wish to appeal a decision made by ASAO must do so in writing by submitting an appeal form located on the ASAO website within 20 days after the receipt of the LOA or notification of denial of services. Appeals are considered by the assistant vice president for student services (AVPSS), or the provost's designee.

VIII. Right to Change Policy

TTUHSC El Paso reserves the right to interpret, change, modify, amend, or rescind this policy in whole or in part at any time without the consent of employees, faculty, or students.

- Attachment A: [Application for Disability Services](#)
- Attachment B: [Verification of Disability Form](#)
- Attachment C: [Application for Disability Services – Provisional](#)
- Attachment D: [Application for Disability Services – Temporary](#)
- Attachment E: [Accommodations Waiver Form](#)
- Attachment F: [Appeals Form](#)