

Oklahoma Wesleyan University - Disabilities Services Policy Statement

In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990/ADA Amendments Act of 2008, Oklahoma Wesleyan University does not exclude otherwise qualified persons with disabilities solely by reason of the disability from participating in university programs and activities, nor are persons with disabilities denied the benefits of these programs or subjected to discrimination.

Once a student is admitted, it is the responsibility of the student to bring to the university's attention the need for accommodation due to a qualifying disability. Requests for accommodation should be made to the Student Success Center (SSC). The SSC will assist students in their request for accommodations and help them obtain other necessary support services. Once proper information has been received, the SSC will notify appropriate faculty and/or staff of the student's specific requests. The SSC will also make arrangements with outside agencies for any services needed (i.e., interpreters, audio books, etc.). An updated disclosure release form is required each academic term in order for new faculty and/or staff to be contacted regarding the student's requested accommodations. In addition, an updated application is required in order to meet any accommodation changes.

Services for Students with Disabilities (Much of the following information regarding Disabilities Services is summarized from the federal Office of Civil Rights website available at: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>).

One of the functions of the Director of Student Success is to assist students who have disabilities in gaining equal access to all OKWU services, classes, and events. Student Success Center also will assist you in determining how OKWU can best help you meet your accommodation needs in these areas. The Director of Student Success is the primary office on campus with staff that has specialized knowledge and experience in disability issues. We are also the central location for maintaining information about your disability through written records and staff contact.

Our office is staffed with caring professionals who desire to assist you in obtaining your goals at Oklahoma Wesleyan. We work hard to support each student by providing services necessary for accessibility in your academic career while here at OKWU. Please feel free to contact our office: Student Success Center in the La Quinta Mansion Building.

Responsibilities of the Student

OKWU offers support services to any qualified student with a disability who requests such services. It is each student's responsibility to make use of these services. Each student is reminded that he or she is ultimately responsible for his/her academic success and/or failure. Each student must take the initiative to use time, facilities, and support services in a productive manner. Each student is responsible for his/her own work and grade in each course.

Also, SSC offers direction in securing guidance in academic and personal matters. Again, it is each student's responsibility to make use of these services. SSC will not be held responsible for acts of misconduct committed by any student.

It is the responsibility of each student to know and abide by all Oklahoma Wesleyan and SSC policies, rules, and regulations. Each student must take the initiative to familiarize him/herself with these policies, rules, and regulation. Failure to do so will not exclude the student from reprimand, discipline, or any other consequence of violating any OKWU or SSC policy, rule, or regulation.

SSC staff and students must adhere to Oklahoma Wesleyan policies. OKWU policies take precedence over all academic development policies.

Basic Expectations of the Student

Role: The student's role is simply to be the learner. They are in the classroom for the purpose of learning.

Responsibilities:

1. At the beginning of each semester, contact the SSC office if accommodations are needed. For the initial meeting, bring documentation of disability. Students who received accommodations the previous semester and have documentation on file do not need to submit new documentation, unless the scope of accommodation has changed.
2. Students should request accommodations at the beginning of each semester. Accommodations are not retroactive.
3. Meet with each professor to notify them of the accommodations needed and secure their signature on the Academic Accommodation Form.
4. Be on time for all classes, labs, and meetings.
5. Sit in a place in class that provides for optimal attention.
6. Students who have questions relating to class materials should ask the instructor.
7. Students who have questions about the accommodations or concerns about how the accommodations are being addressed should notify Student Academic Services.

Responsibilities of the Teacher

Having a student with a disability may be a new and challenging experience for a teacher. As a teacher, he/she is the 'head of the class', simply meaning, the one who sets the pace, tone, and atmosphere for learning. It is no small feat, yet one that is easily overlooked. Aside from the usual classroom preparations, the instructor must enforce the disciplinary code that is expected in the classroom. Each student in the classroom falls under the jurisdiction of the instructor and has a responsibility to follow the disciplinary code. This applies to each and every student, regardless of having a disability or not. A teacher has a job to do in the classroom, as does the student.

Further, it is the responsibility of the teacher to:

1. Be familiar with applicable laws protecting individuals with disabilities from discrimination.
2. Provide reasonable accommodations as set forth in the Academic Accommodations and Modifications form.
3. Provide an environment where individuals with disabilities are encouraged to advocate for themselves.

If a student has a concern about the accommodations being received, he/she should contact the instructor first. If the student does not feel that the concern has been resolved, or if accommodations need to be altered, the SSC Director should be notified.

Grievance Procedure for Student Accommodations

Student Success Center (SSC) has the responsibility of determining students' needs for accommodation. This determination is made through a two-part process of an intake interview and reviewing documentation of the disability. If the SSC director determines a student is eligible for accommodations, the SSC office is responsible for coordinating the accommodations.

If the student believes the accommodation(s) provided are not reasonable, the below-listed procedure should be followed. While the following time limits should not be exceeded, the goal of the SSC staff is to accomplish each step as quickly as possible.

1. The student needs to schedule a meeting with the SSC director who evaluated the original accommodation request and discuss the matter. If an accommodation is related to a specific course, the student's faculty member may be asked to attend the meeting.
2. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the meeting, the student can request an appeal. The student should make an appointment to meet with the Vice President for Student Development within ten (10) working days from date of the meeting with the SSC director. The Vice President will review the matter, allowing all interested parties an opportunity to submit relevant information, statements and documentation. This review may involve meeting with the student, staff from the SSC, a faculty member or other staff members. In filing an appeal with the Vice President, the student thereby gives the Vice President permission to review the student's documentation and file.
3. The Vice President will make a decision regarding the grievance within ten (10) working days of the meeting with the student and attempt to notify the student immediately. This decision will be communicated to the student in writing with a copy provided to Student Success Center Office and other appropriate college/university staff.

Confidentiality

Section 504 states that any information regarding a person's disability gained from medical examinations to the appropriate post-admission investigation shall be considered confidential and shall be shared with others within the college or university on a need-to-know basis. In other words, faculty members do not need to have access to information regarding a student's disability, only the accommodation(s) that are appropriate and necessary to meet the student's needs. Confidential information is kept in a separate file with the SSC Director and is not considered a part of a student's educational record.

Disability Laws in Postsecondary Education

Section 504 & Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990/ADA Amendments Act of 2008.

There are two laws that protect persons with disabilities in postsecondary education: The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Pub. L. No. 93-112, as amended) and the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (Pub. L. No. 1001-336), as amended by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008.

The Rehabilitation Act. Title V of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is generally regarded as the first civil rights legislation on the national level for people with disabilities. Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act is a program access statute. It prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in any program or activity offered by an entity or institution receiving federal funds. Section 504 states (as amended):

“No otherwise qualified person with a disability in the United States...shall, solely on the basis of disability, be denied access to, or the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity provided by any institution receiving federal financial assistance.”

Under Section 504, institutions were required to appoint and maintain at least one person to coordinate its efforts to comply with the requirements of Section 504 (Section 504 Coordinator). This individual has the ongoing responsibility of assuring that the institution/agency/organization practices nondiscrimination on the basis of disability and should be included in any grievance procedures developed to address possible instances of discrimination brought against the institution. At Oklahoma Wesleyan University, the established office is Student Success Center (SSC)

The Americans with Disability Act (ADA). The ADA is a federal civil rights statute that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities. There are four sections of the law: employment, government, public accommodations, and telecommunications. The ADA provides additional protection for persons with disabilities in conjunction with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The ADA is designed to remove barriers, which prevent qualified individuals with disabilities from enjoying the same opportunities that are available to persons without disabilities. Postsecondary institutions are covered in many ways under the ADA. Employment is addressed by Title I, accessibility provided by public and Title II and III address private entities, and miscellaneous items are addressed under Title V and Title IV.

The ADA in Relation to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act: Institutions that receive federal funds (such as Oklahoma Wesleyan University) are covered under Section 504. The ADA does not supplant Section 504, but those situations where the ADA provides greater protection the ADA standards apply. Therefore, postsecondary institutions must adhere to both the Rehabilitation Act and The Americans with Disabilities Act.

Admittance to Oklahoma Wesleyan University

Qualified persons with disabilities must meet the Oklahoma Wesleyan University regular admissions standards. However, admission eligibility will be considered on a case-by-case basis to afford applicants an equal educational opportunity. Qualified applicants with disabilities will not be denied admission solely on the basis of their disability. It is not necessary, nor recommended, that students disclose their disability in the application process.

Once admitted to Oklahoma Wesleyan University, students with disabilities requiring accommodation(s) must contact Student Success Center (SSC) office to register for these services.

SSC Disability Services Program

The SSC office at Oklahoma Wesleyan University is committed to providing services that facilitate the academic and personal goals of the students it serves. Students with documented disabilities are entitled to reasonable and appropriate academic accommodations in accordance with Federal laws including Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act. Oklahoma Wesleyan is committed to equal opportunity for persons with disabilities without regard to disability in the recruitment of, admission to, participation in,

treatment in or employment in the programs and activities operated and sponsored by Oklahoma Wesleyan University.

Services from the SSC are open to any student with a learning, physical, or psychological disability. The office aids students in the development of an individualized plan to propel their academic achievement to its fullest potential.

Eligibility for Services

A person is eligible for academic accommodations/modifications if he/she:

1. is considered a person with a disability,
2. has identified him/herself to the institution through SSC,
3. has presented appropriate documentation regarding the disability to the institution as required by SSC, and
4. needs accommodation(s)

Disability Definition. Section 504 defines a person with a disability as a person:

1. with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities,
2. who has a record of the disability, OR
3. who is regarded as having the disability.

Accommodations & Services

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), clearly specifies the importance and liability that educational institutions have in complying with students with disabilities. Academic accommodations indicates in writing what support services a specific student requires. This can involve such things as: classroom assistance and testing accommodations. Although it is the responsibility of the student to indicate what support services are preferred or have been used in high school, it is the responsibility of the SSC Director to assess appropriate accommodations for post-secondary studies.

The SSC Director will assist the student with determining the scope of services needed by reviewing the diagnostic evaluations and pertinent medical information. There must be a diagnostic basis in order for a student to receive a particular accommodation. See the specific sections on the following pages to determine specific documentation.

- For students with learning disabilities: Diagnostic evaluations (performed by a certified professional) should include copies of the specific assessments and scores, diagnostic summary, and recommendations. In some situations, diagnostic evaluations will be accepted with the assessments and scores only.
- For students with physical disabilities: Diagnostic evaluations (performed by a certified professional) must include specific diagnosis and recommendations.
- For students with psychological disabilities: Diagnostic evaluations (performed by a certified professional) should include copies of the specific assessments and scores, DSM classification, and recommendations. In some situations, diagnostic evaluations will be accepted with the DSM classification and summary only.

Student Success Center will keep all evaluations on file during the tenure of the student.

Academic Accommodation & Modification Forms

The Accommodation and Modification form indicates in writing what specific support services a student requires. This is determined based on the required documentation(s) of disability and student input. This form is signed by the support staff, student, and instructor to ensure that communication about what will take place is clear to each individual. Accommodations are based on student needs, although those needs can change over a period of time from the initial request. It is important to notify the SSC office if the student feels that his/her needs are not being met.

Reasonable Accommodations

The SSC Director will work with the student in determining appropriate accommodations as mandated under the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Since each disability and the particular circumstances surrounding each request for accommodations is unique, it is impossible to predict which accommodations will be provided to any given student. The following is a list of potential accommodations that may be appropriate based on the student's disability and how it impacts them in a postsecondary educational environment.

- Extended Time for taking exams
- Private Room for taking exams
- Scribe for taking exams
- Reader for taking exams
- Computer for taking exams
- Enlarged Print exams
- Extended time on Assignments
- Note taker for classes
- Audio Book / Recording Device
- Adaptive Equipment

Note: This is not an exhaustive list of potential accommodations.

Audiobook Policy

Audio books need to be requested before the beginning of the school semester, if at all possible. A minimum of two weeks is required to secure audio books. Students receiving audiobook access are held to the same copyrighting laws as students using word format textbooks. If audiobooks are a part of academic accommodations, the student is responsible to:

1. Bring a copy of each course's reading schedule to the SSC Director at the beginning of each semester.
2. Notification of audiobook accessibility will be made through campus email. It is the student's responsibility to consistently check their campus email address.

The Documentation of a Disability

Documentation of a disability is the basis for providing accommodations. Understanding what the disability is and determining how to accommodate the student in the postsecondary setting, is the main focus of providing support services.

Documentation Guidelines

Postsecondary institutions differ from high schools regarding the first step of providing academic accommodations. When a person with a disability needs an academic accommodation in high school, a team is assigned to discuss that student's classroom instructional accommodations. This is not the case with colleges and universities. The legislation states that in order to receive services from a postsecondary institution, a person with a disability must first disclose his/her disability to the institution. You must bring the SSC office appropriate documentation regarding your disability.

The name, title, the professional credentials of the evaluator (including license or certification as well as the area of specialization), place of employment, and state in which the individual practices, should clearly be stated on the documentation for all disabilities. Additionally, appropriate documentation must meet the following criteria:

- the documentation must be current (i.e. no more than three years old);
- the documentation must include the diagnostic evaluation (not the IEP);
- the documentation should include recommendations for what accommodations/modifications are needed and why.

Documentation Guidelines for Attention Deficit/Hyperactive Disorder

Attention Deficit/Hyperactive Disorder (AD/HD) is considered a medical or clinical diagnosis. Individuals qualified to render a diagnosis for this disorder are practitioners who have been trained in the assessment of AD/HD and are experienced in assessing the needs of adult learners. Recommended practitioners may include: developmental pediatricians, neurologists, psychiatrists, licensed clinical or educational psychologist, or a combination of such professionals. The diagnostician should be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.

The following guidelines are provided to assist the service provider in collaborating with each student to determine appropriate accommodations. Documentation serves as a foundation that legitimizes a student's request for appropriate accommodations. Recommended documentation includes:

1. A clear statement of ADD or AD/HD with the DSM-IV diagnosis and a description of supporting past and present symptoms;
2. Documentation for eligibility should be current, preferably within the last three years; (the age of acceptable documentation is dependent upon the disabling condition, the current status of the student and the student's specific request for accommodations);
3. A summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis;
4. A narrative summary, including all scores, which supports the diagnosis;
5. Medical information relating to student's needs to include the impact of medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of the postsecondary environment;
6. A statement of the functional impact or limitations of the disability on learning or other major life activity and the degree to which it impacts the individual in the learning context for which accommodations are being requested.

Further assessment by an appropriate professional may be required if coexisting learning disabilities or other disabling conditions are indicated. The student and the SSC Director collaborate regarding accommodations.

Documentation Guidelines for Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Physicians, including otorhinolaryngologists and otologists are qualified to provide diagnosis and treatment of hearing disorders. Audiologists may also provide current audiograms. The diagnostician should be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.

1. A clear statement of Deafness or hearing loss, with a current audiogram that reflects the current impact of Deafness or hearing loss has on the student's functioning, (the age of acceptable documentation is dependent upon the condition, the current status of the student, and the student's request for accommodations);
2. A summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis and a narrative summary of evaluation results, if appropriate;
3. Medical information relating to the student's needs and the status of the individual's hearing (static or changing) and its impact on the demands of the academic program;
4. A statement regarding the use of hearing aids (if appropriate);
5. A statement of the functional impact or limitations of the disability on learning or other major life activity and the degree to which it impacts the individual in the learning context for which accommodations are being requested.

Further assessment by an appropriate professional may be required if coexisting learning disabilities or other disabling conditions are indicated. The student and the SSC Director collaborate regarding accommodations.

Documentation Guidelines for Specific Learning Disability

Professionals conducting assessment and rendering diagnoses of specific learning disabilities (SLD) must be qualified. A qualified professional needs to hold a degree in a field related to diagnosis of SLD and have at least one year of diagnostic experience with adults and late adolescents. Recommended practitioners may include: certified and/or licensed psychologists, learning disabilities specialists, educational therapists, diagnosticians in public schools or colleges and rehabilitation services and private practitioners with the above characteristics are typically considered qualified. The diagnostician should be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.

The following guidelines are provided to assist the service provider in collaborating with each student to determine appropriate accommodations. Documentation serves as a foundation that legitimizes a student's request for appropriate accommodations. Recommended documentation includes:

1. Testing that is comprehensive, including a measure of both Aptitude and Achievement in the areas of reading, mathematics and written language;
2. Documentation for eligibility should be current, preferably within the last three years; (the age of acceptable documentation is dependent upon the disabling condition, the current status of the student and the student's specific request for accommodations);

3. A clear statement that a learning disability is present along with the rationale for this diagnosis. (Note: individual “learning deficits,” “learning styles,” and “learning differences,” do not, in or of themselves, constitute a learning disability);
4. A narrative summary, including all scores, which supports the diagnosis;
5. A statement of strengths and needs that will impact the student’s ability to meet the demands of the postsecondary environment;
6. A statement of the functional impact or limitations of the disability on learning or other major life activity and the degree to which it impacts the individual in the learning context for which accommodations are being requested.

Further assessment by an appropriate professional may be required if coexisting AD/HD or other disabling conditions are indicated. If an unlicensed individual provides a diagnosis, documentation from a licensed professional may be required. The student and the SSC Director collaborate regarding accommodations.

Documentation Guidelines for Blind or Low Vision

Ophthalmologists are the primary professionals involved in diagnosis and medical treatment of individuals who are blind or experience low vision. Optometrists provide information regarding the measurement of visual acuity as well as tracking and fusion difficulties. The diagnostician must be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student. The following guidelines are provided to assist the service provider in collaborating with each student to determine appropriate accommodations. Documentation serves as the foundation that legitimizes a student’s request for appropriate accommodations. Recommended documentation includes:

1. A clear statement of vision related disability with supporting numerical description that reflects the current impact the blindness or vision loss has on the student’s functioning, (the age of acceptable documentation is dependent upon the disabling condition, the current status of the student and the student’s request for accommodations);
2. A summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis and a summary of evaluation results including standardized scores;
3. Present symptoms which meet the criteria for diagnosis;
4. Medical information relating to the student’s needs and the status of the individual’s vision (static or changing) and its impact on the demands of the academic program;
5. Narrative or descriptive text providing both quantitative and qualitative information about the student’s abilities which might be helpful in understanding the student’s profile including the use of corrective lenses and ongoing visual therapy (if appropriate);
6. A statement of the functional impact or limitations of the disability on learning or other major life activity and the degree to which it impacts the individual in the learning context for which accommodations are being requested. Further assessment by an appropriate professional may be required if coexisting disabling conditions are indicated. The student and the SSC Director collaborate regarding accommodations.

Documentation Guidelines for Physical Disabilities and Systemic Illnesses

(Includes but is not limited to: Mobility Impairments, Multiple Sclerosis, Cerebral Palsy, Chemical Sensitivities, Spinal Cord injuries, Cancer, AIDS, Muscular Dystrophy, Spina Bifida) Any physical disabilities and systemic illnesses are considered to be in the medical domain and require the expertise of a physician, including a neurologist, psychiatrist or other medical

specialist with experience and expertise in the area for which accommodations are being requested. The diagnostician should be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.

The following guidelines are provided to assist the service provider in collaborating with each student to determine appropriate accommodations. Documentation serves as a foundation that legitimizes a student's request for appropriate accommodations. Recommended documentation includes:

1. A clear statement of the medical diagnosis of the physical disability or systemic illness;
2. Documentation for eligibility must reflect the current impact the physical disability or systemic illness has on the student's functioning, (the age of acceptable documentation is dependent upon the disabling condition, the current status of the student and the student's request for accommodations). Disabilities that are sporadic or degenerative may require more frequent evaluation;
3. A summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis, including evaluation results and standardized scores if applicable;
4. A description of present symptoms which meet the criteria for diagnosis;
5. Medical information relating to the student's needs to include the impact of medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of the postsecondary environment;
6. A statement of the functional impact or limitations of the disability on learning or other major life activity and the degree to which it impacts the individual in the learning context for which accommodations are being requested.

Further assessment by an appropriate professional may be required if coexisting disabling conditions are indicated. The student and the SSC Director collaborate regarding accommodations.

Documentation Guidelines for Psychiatric or Psychological Disabilities

(Includes but is not limited to: Depressive Disorders, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Bipolar Disorders, and Dissociative Disorders)

A diagnosis by a licensed mental health professional including licensed clinical social workers (LCSW), licensed professional counselor (LPC), psychologists, psychiatrists, neurologists is required and must include the license number. The diagnostician should be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.

The following guidelines are provided to assist the service provider in collaborating with each student to determine appropriate accommodations. Documentation serves as the foundation that legitimizes a student's request for appropriate accommodations. Recommended documentation includes:

1. A clear statement of the disability, including the DSM-IV diagnosis and a summary of present symptoms;
2. Documentation for eligibility must reflect the current impact the psychiatric/psychological disability has on the student's functioning, (the age of acceptable documentation is dependent upon the disabling condition, the current status of the student and the student's request for accommodations);

3. A summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis and a summary of evaluation results, including standardized or percentile scores;
4. Medical information relating to the student's needs to include the impact of medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of the postsecondary environment;
5. A statement of the functional impact or limitations of the disability on learning or other major life activity and the degree to which it impacts the individual in the learning context for which accommodations are being requested.

Further assessment by an appropriate professional may be required if coexisting disabling conditions are indicated. The student and the SSC Director collaborate regarding accommodations.

Documentation Guidelines for Head Injury/Traumatic Brain Injury

Head Injury or Traumatic Brain Injury is considered medical or clinical diagnoses. Individuals qualified to render a diagnosis for these disorders are practitioners who have been trained in the assessment of Head Injury or Traumatic Brain Injury. Recommended practitioners may include: physicians; neurologists; licensed clinical, rehabilitation and school psychologists; neuropsychologists and psychiatrists. The diagnostician should be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.

The following guidelines are provided to assist the service provider in collaborating with each student to determine appropriate accommodations. Documentation serves as a foundation that legitimizes a student's request for appropriate accommodations. Recommended documentation includes:

1. A clear statement of the head injury or traumatic brain injury;
2. Documentation for eligibility must reflect the current impact the head injury has on the student's functioning, (the age of acceptable documentation is dependent upon the disabling condition, the current status of the student and the student's request for accommodations);
3. A summary of cognitive and achievement measures used and evaluation results including standardized scores or percentiles used to make the diagnosis;
4. A summary of present residual symptoms which meet the criteria for diagnosis;
5. Medical information relating to student's needs to include the impact of medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of the postsecondary environment;
6. A statement of the functional impact or limitations of the disability on learning or other major life activity and the degree to which it impacts the individual in the learning context for which accommodations are being requested.

Further assessment by an appropriate professional may be required if coexisting disabling conditions are indicated. The student and the SSC Director collaborate regarding accommodations.