

FAQs – ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Dear Faculty,

You have probably received the Accommodations Form from some students with disabilities. Here are common questions that I have addressed below. If you have other questions, feel free to contact me at X5307 if you are calling from on campus, or 860-738-6307 if calling from off campus. You may also email me at rdennerlein@nwcc.commnet.edu.

1) **How much time should I allow for a student who needs extended time for tests/quizzes.**

The general rule is time and a half. For example, if the students are given 20 minutes for a quiz, then the accommodation should be up to 10 extra minutes. If two hours is permitted for a final exam, then the student should be allotted up to 3 hours to take the exam.

2) **How do I make arrangements for students who need extra time?**

Students are responsible to show the instructor the Accommodations Form the first week of class, and to discuss the logistics of administering exams throughout the semester. Extended time can be handled in different ways for different students. Some professors prefer the student to begin the test beforehand. Others prefer that the student stay afterwards. If you are unable to make these arrangements due to schedule conflicts, then contact me and we will work out a solution using campus resources.

3) **What can I suggest for students who have difficulty with reading comprehension?**

Students that have “Books On Tape” checked off on the Accommodations Form are qualified for audio versions of textbooks. Students should have made arrangements with me to obtain an audio version of the textbook at least three weeks before the beginning of the semester.

The Kurzweil Reader is a software program whereas scanned reading material is read aloud to a student as they visually read the information. Any student can use this program at the Academic Skills Center, not only students with documented disabilities.

4) **What if a student says that he/she should not be penalized for poor spelling?**

Please double check the accommodations form. The actual wording is “In-Class assignments done either on word processor (i.e. alpha-smart) or excluding spelling or handwriting in the evaluation process.”

The student may also use a Franklin Spell Checker available from Staples. For handwritten in-class assignments/tests, points should not be deducted for spelling errors if the assistive devices are not available.

If spelling/grammar is a critical element of the assignment/test, then the instructor can request a laptop from the Computer Center Help Desk (Founders Hall Annex) each time an in-class test/assignment is given. The Computer Center Help Desk phone number is 860-738-6367 or nw-helpdesk@nwcc.commnet.edu if you have questions about signing out a laptop.

5) What if a student insists he/she needs to use a calculator for Pre-Algebra?

Only students who have a math disability or dyslexia are able to use a calculator for Pre-Algebra. This will be indicated on the accommodations form and "Use of Calculator for Homework and Exams" will be checked off.

6) What if there are concerns about a note-taker or students receiving note-taking services who are missing class?

If note-takers are frequently absent, the students receiving the notes should let me know that they are not receiving notes. I will follow up with the note-taker. A new note-taker may be hired if needed. If the students receiving notes are not attending class, let me know. I will follow up with these students so they are not taking advantage of receiving notes for classes that they are missing.

7) I have a deaf student in class and want to show a video or TV clip. How do I know if it's captioned? The common symbols used to identify captioned programs are "CC" or a "CC" within a television shape or the image of a small television screen with a small tail at the bottom. As of January 2006, all TV programming from 6 AM to 2 AM must be captioned according to ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act). All newly produced DVDs should also be captioned. If a captioned version is not available, the interpreter can interpret the video.

8) How can I know if the student didn't check off the accommodations themselves?

As the Counselor for Students with Disabilities, I review all of the psychological and/or medical reports to verify that there is justification for each accommodation. The students receive a copy of the accommodations report, and I keep the original. If there is an accommodation checked off in fresh ink, then let me know.

What if I suspect a student has a learning disability, what should I do?

- ⇒ If the student has not provided you with an accommodations sheet, you may want to ask the student if he/she struggled academically in high school.
- ⇒ If yes, then you may ask if they received extra help in high school. Often, the student will disclose of a learning disability at that point.
- ⇒ Then, you can ask if the student met with the Counselor for Students with Disabilities, Roseann Dennerlein. If yes, then you can ask for the accommodations form (which always includes – Tutoring in the ASC as a service). If not, then encourage the student to make an appointment with Roseann.

Another option is sending me a Student Status Referral form, which has an option of "Suspect Learning Disability" as a reason for struggling in the course. I will follow up with the student.

LET ME KNOW IF YOU HAVE ANY OTHER QUESTIONS. IF I DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER, I WILL RESEARCH IT FOR YOU.

Sincerely,

Roseann Dennerlein,
Counselor for Students with Disabilities