

Disability Services Policy and Procedures Handbook

Table of Contents An Equal Opportunity Institution

MISSION STATEMENT

LEGAL GUIDELINES

SERVICES WE PROVIDE

HOW TO ACCESS SERVICES AND ACCOMMODATIONS

ACCOMMODATIONS PROCEDURES

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

APPEAL PROCEDURE

Cowley College Disability Services Program is committed to assisting individuals living with a disability in achieving their educational goals by providing appropriate accommodations and services based on individual documented need. We encourage independence and self-advocacy among the students we assist.

“Students, who self-identify at the time of application or admissions, seek assistance early and us appropriate accommodations are more likely to achieve academic success.”

(Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability, Vol. II #2 and 3, P .21, Spring/Fall 1995)

Mission Statement

The purpose of the Disability Services Office at Cowley College is to ensure that students living with a disability have equal access to all program activities offered at the college. The ultimate goal is to eliminate any barriers that exist on campus due to the presence of a disability.

Legal Guidelines

The Disability Services program operates un the following regulations:
“no otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States shall, solely by reason of handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” Rehabilitation Act, Section504, 1973.

“no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of public entity.” Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990.

Introduction

This handbook has been prepared as a reference guide when auxiliary aids and services are needed by students living with a disability. The suggestions presented here are not meant to substitute for interaction between students and the staff or faculty, but rather to facilitate communication and discussion. Every student living with a disability will have a different level of functioning even within the same disability category. The degree of limitation and the compensation skills of each student living with a disability will vary widely. It is helpful to consider that each student living with a disability comes to Cowley College with an educational history and some knowledge of what educational accommodation will be most effective for them. The information in this handbook is a general guide on how to support students who approach learning in diverse ways.

Services We Provide

The Disability Services Program coordinates services for students who have a documented permanent or temporary disability. The staff serves as the liaison

between the Cowley College faculty, staff and the student population. Services are provided at no cost to enrolled students on an individual basis and with respect to privacy in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1988.

Types of disabilities that may qualify for services from the Disability Services Program Include but are not limited to:

Visual Impairment, Traumatic Brain Injury, Physical Impairment, Medical Impairment, Deaf/hard of hearing, Seizure disorders, Substance abuse, Specific Learning Disabilities, A D D and/or ADHD, HIV and/or AIDS.

Types of services may include but are not limited to:

Alternate formatted texts, or copy of instructor notes, Sign Language Interpreters (deaf/hard of hearing), extended test/quiz time, test in distraction reduced site, test/quiz read, record lectures and assistive technology.

Services We Do Not Provide

The Disability Service Office does not offer: Reduced standards in courses, exemptions to graduation requirement, personal care assistance or services which fundamentally alter the requirements of the course.

How to Access Services and Accommodations

For accommodations in course assessment placement testing:

Students who have had testing accommodations in the past are encouraged to request accommodations for the Cowley College assessment tests. It is important that students are placed accurately into courses and that placement results are accurate to the students' true abilities. Students who desire placement testing accommodations must schedule an intake meeting with the Student Accessibility Coordinator prior to the date of the testing. All documentation must be on file with the Disability Services Office and the intake session with the Student Accessibility Coordinator must take place before testing accommodations will be provided.

For accommodations in specific courses: Students living with a disability should contact the Cowley College Disability Services Office as soon as they enroll for classes to schedule an intake conference. Prior to the conference, students must obtain a copy of their disability documentation. A release of information form and the guidelines for documentation requirements are available from the Disability Services Office or from the college webpage at

At the intake conference, students will bring a copy of their disability documentation, confer with the Student Accessibility Coordinator to request accommodations, and review the process to receive accommodations. The Disability Services Office is not bound by nor limited to the recommendations found in the documentation, but will use the documentation as a guide for determining reasonable accommodations on a case by case basis. The Student Accessibility Coordinator will then assist the student in determining the appropriate accommodations for each course and develop their personalized plan of assistance.

Students with physical disabilities-limited accessibility:

Obtain a physician's statement documenting the disability and suggested accommodations. Provide this statement to the Student Accessibility Coordinator.

Students who received Special Education Services in the past: Contact their local Special Education Office, Cooperative or Interlocal for a comprehensive psychological report including aptitude and achievement testing administered within the last three years and a copy of the Individual Education Plan. Provide copies of both reports to the Cowley College Student Accessibility Coordinator.

Students who did not receive Special Education services in the past: Have the disability diagnosis made by a licensed professional in a field directly related to the disability. Understand that the college can refer students to appropriate professionals but does not diagnosis or pay for diagnosis of disabilities. Provide the Student Accessibility Coordinator with an official report detailing the disability and the recommended accommodations.

Students with psychological disabilities: Provide a copy of the psychological evaluation made by a professional certified to make the diagnosis. Provide a description of how the disability impacts learning.

Accommodations Procedures

1. Once students have filed the appropriate disability documentation, completed the program application with the Disability Services Office and have enrolled, they must schedule an intake conference with the Student Accessibility Coordinator to arrange services.
2. It is the philosophy of the Cowley College Disability Services Program that students take an active part in developing an accommodations letter which best suits their needs. Each student will assess their need and available accommodations and work with the Student Accessibility Coordinator to develop their educational plan. A new letter must be developed at the start of each semester.
3. Once the plan has been developed, the Student Accessibility Coordinator will make copies of the accommodations letter. The student will be responsible for giving the letter to each instructor. The Student Accessibility Coordinator will provide the letter to instructors of the student's on-line classes. It is important that everyone involved in the accommodations process understand their role. The Student Accessibility Coordinator will not disclose the nature of the disability to the instructors merely that the student will be receiving accommodations. While the student is encouraged to discuss their disability with each instructor, it is ultimately their decision.
4. The following is a partial list of accommodations detailing the responsibilities of both the student and the Disability Services Office in the provision of services. By following the stated procedures, services can be met in a timely and effective manner. All questions regarding any of these procedures are to be directed to the Student Accessibility Coordinator.

Testing Alternatives

Any student whose documentation supports the need for extended time (double time), oral tests, scribed services, or a distraction reduced environment.

Disability Services Responsibilities:

The instructor and the Student Accessibility Coordinator will determine the most suitable testing environment for your needs.

Many times, the instructor will provide the testing accommodation within the class; however, if an instructor is unable to do so, they will make arrangements with the Disability Services Office to provide the service. The Student Accessibility Coordinator will advocate for of the student if an instructor is hesitant to provide the accommodation.

Students Responsibilities: Contact your instructor to discuss the requested testing accommodation needed within the first week of class. Only request the testing accommodation that is listed on your accommodations letter. Remind your instructor prior to the exam of the accommodations needed and to send the test to the Disability Service Office. Schedule your testing time with the Student Accessibility Coordinator at least two days prior to the exam date. Come to your testing appointment ready to take the test.

Alternate Format Texts

Any student who has a documented disability which affects access to printed materials. This includes blindness, low vision, learning disabilities, and other physical impairments.

Disability Services Responsibilities: The Disability Service Office will provide the alternate format textbooks and other course related materials to the student as soon as possible. Please be aware that schedule changes and late enrollment can result in a delay of services. The Disability Services Office will provide the alternate text if available. Most texts are available in an electronic format. Computer software will be made available for electronic text in student computer labs and/or for personal computers away from campus. Permission to use the text is required from the publishers and this may take up to a week or more to receive. Braille formats may take some time to obtain as well. Let the Student Accessibility Coordinator know about your request as soon as possible.

Student Responsibilities:

Students must notify the Student Accessibility Coordinator immediately with any concerns or schedule changes prior to the Start of the semester. Alternate format texts are not a substitute for the necessity of the actual textbook. Students must

purchase the required text for each course and provide a copy of their paid receipt for textbooks to the Student Accessibility Coordinator. Students should contact the Student Accessibility Coordinator immediately if they are having technical difficulties.

Texthelp Read and Write: Read and Write is a literacy software with tools designed for reading, writing, study and research support. It has reader software that works with library articles, websites, and alternate format textbooks. This software works across numerous platforms and is easy to install. It has been downloaded to student computer labs at the college and is available to students at no cost.

Sign Language Interpreter Services

Deaf and hard of hearing students needing sign language interpreter services should contact the Disability Services Office as soon as possible. Locating and arranging these services can be difficult due to the limited number of sign language interpreters in the area.

Disability Services Responsibilities: Contact interpreter services and make arrangements based on the student's schedule. Coordinate schedule for interpreter and arrange for payment of services.

Student Responsibilities: Contact the Disability Services Office as soon as possible in order for services to be arranged. Meet with the interpreter to discuss class procedures and establish meeting places prior to class. Notify the interpreter of absences at least 24 hours in advance if possible. Attend class regularly and participate fully in the assigned activities.

Rules: Students who fail to notify the Student Accessibility Coordinator of absences 24 hours prior to class for three times will have their interpreter services suspended until they meet with the Student Accessibility Coordinator. After five unexcused absences, the interpreting services may be suspended for the remainder of the semester and another means of accommodating the student will be provided. Interpreter will be required to wait no longer than fifteen minutes at classes or activities for the student using their services. Arrivals to class or activities after fifteen minutes will be considered no shows.

Service Animals

Students who require the assistance of a service animal defined by the A D A as a guide dog, or signal dog are welcome at Cowley College. Students must provide their own service animal.

Disability Services Responsibilities: The Disability Services Office will provide instructors and students with orientation to designated areas of campus where it is permissible to relieve the animal. The Disability Services Office will notify the student's instructors regarding the provision of a service animal in the classroom.

Student Responsibilities: Contact the Disability Services Office to notify them that you will be using a service animal for the semester. Provide proper identification for the animal which includes: Licensing with the city, and a health statement including vaccinations from a licensed veterinarian. Provide the animal with some type of commonly recognized identification symbol. Keep the animal on a leash and maintain full control of the animal at all times. The student is responsible for cleaning up after the animal.

Additional Accommodations

There are many other accommodations which can be provided to students. Accommodations such as interpreters for the hearing impaired, mobility assistance, scribes, readers, and digital recorders are available. Due to the individualized nature of each of the above accommodations, the Student Accessibility Coordinator will make detailed arrangements with the student regarding the responsibilities of each party. Students requesting additional services should contact the Disability Services Office. Additional services will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Factors affecting additional services will be dependent upon disability, documented need, and the compliance requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Assistive Technology

Cowley College provides assistive technology software which is available to all Cowley College students. Contact the Student Accessibility Coordinator for

assistance downloading the software. This software is available on all student computers at the college and may also be installed on the student's personal computer.

Appeal Procedure

If a student living with a disability believes that they are not receiving the accommodations requested, the following process is recommended:

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that accommodations be developed in a give-and-take dialogue process between the institution and the person living with a disability. The student needs to meet with the Student Accessibility Coordinator to discuss and explore appropriate, and reasonable accommodations. The student and the Student Accessibility Coordinator may need to meet with the instructor as well. Colleges are not required to provide the requested or preferred accommodation. They are required to provide reasonable, appropriate, and effective accommodations for disabilities which have been adequately documented and for which the accommodation has been requested. Therefore, the student should ask, "is the accommodation that has been offered reasonable and effective?"

If a student has considered both paragraphs above and believes the accommodation that has been offered is not reasonable or effective. The student should schedule a meeting with the Student Accessibility Coordinator who arranged the original accommodation. If the accommodation is related to a specific course of study or action by a specific instructor, the student's instructor may be asked to attend the meeting. If the student is not satisfied with the results of the meeting, the student may file a grievance through Cowley College's Student Grievance procedure. The grievance procedure is available through the Student Affairs office located in Galle-Johnson Hall. A complaint can often be resolved in a timely manner by following the above information. However, a student can also file a complaint with the Vice President of Student Affairs located in Galle-Johnson Hall.

Notice of Non-Discrimination: Cowley College is dedicated to providing equal opportunities to all individuals regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, genetic information, marital status, political affiliation or other legally protected category. The college will provide all qualified individuals reasonable accommodations in the work and educational environment and ensure equal access to all college programs, activities and facilities. The college does not discriminate in admissions, educational programs, or employment on the basis of any factor outlined above or prohibited under applicable law. This prohibition against discrimination applies to college employees, students, contractors, or agents of the college and to anyone participating in a college sponsored event or activity. Inquiries

concerning the college's compliance with its non-discrimination policies may be referred to the Vice President of Student Affairs or the Director of Human Resources at 125 S Second St, Arkansas City, KS 67005 or by calling 620-442-0430.

Revised May 2022.