

Office of Disability Services

FACULTY GUIDE

ODS Mission:

The Office of Disability Services facilitates the process of academic accommodations for students with disabilities, and works in collaboration with the professional schools of the Health Sciences Center in an attempt to ensure full participation in all activities, programs, and services of the institution. Accommodations provide equal access to the learning environment; they do not give students with disabilities an unfair advantage over other students.

Syllabus Statement:

Accessibility Statement: LSUHSC-New Orleans is committed to creating an inclusive and accessible environment according to the [ADA](#) and [Section 504](#) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Students in need of accommodations should contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at ods@lsuhsc.edu. Please keep in mind that accommodations take effect when an accommodation letter has been generated; the accommodation plan is not retroactive. New accommodation letters need to be requested every academic term in which the student is enrolled. More information can be found on the [ODS website](#).

Accommodation Plan Process:

Students are responsible for self-disclosing the need for accommodations to the Office of Disability Services. The first step is for the students to complete and submit a [Student Intake Form](#). The students will also need to submit appropriate documentation from licensed provider(s)/professional evaluator(s) or medical professional(s). Documentation should adhere to the [LSUHSC Documentation Guidelines](#). The intake form and the documentation from the provider(s) are reviewed by the Office of Disability Services to determine reasonable accommodations. The Office of Disability Services will reach out to the student to set up an intake meeting where a proposed accommodation plan will be discussed, modified if needed, and approved. After the meeting, the Office of Disability Services will create a letter describing the approved accommodation plan; the letter will be provided to the student. The student will present the accommodation plan to their respective faculty members and discuss logistics of the accommodations.

Technical Standards:

Some programs require students to meet certain technical standards encompassing the following skills: observation; communication; motor function and coordination; intellectual abilities: conceptual, integrative, and quantitative; and behavioral and social attributes. Students are expected to be able to perform these skills with or without reasonable accommodations. An otherwise qualified student may not be excluded solely because of a disability if a reasonable modification or accommodation can be made by the institution. Reasonable accommodations must not fundamentally alter a program, service, or activity or create an undue burden on the institution.

F.A.Q.

What is a disability?

It is a physical or mental impairment that a student has that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities; the student has a record of such an impairment; or the student is regarded as having such an impairment. Major life activities include but are not limited to seeing, hearing, speaking, walking, breathing, eating, sleeping, thinking, and learning.

What is a reasonable accommodation?

It is a modification or adjustment to a job, a course, a program, the work environment, or normal and standard operating procedures that enables a qualified individual with a disability to enjoy an equal opportunity. It cannot fundamentally alter the nature of a course or learning objective.

What are some common accommodations?

Accommodations plans can include but are not limited to the following: extended time, low distraction testing environment, private room for testing, access to notes, access to recorded lectures, enlarged font, consideration of absences, ability to leave class abruptly, and the ability to take breaks. Accommodations are specific to each individual student and not to a particular diagnosis.

Do I have to provide the accommodations?

Yes, you must provide the accommodations according to federal law. They are requirements not suggestions. The only exception is if the accommodation would create a fundamental alteration. A fundamental alteration occurs when the accommodation would change the nature of the program being offered. This must be specifically tied to a learning objective and justification provided.

What do I do if I receive an accommodation letter?

Keep the information private; do not share student names or specific accommodations with anyone that does not have a need to know. Do not discuss specific accommodations or call out students with accommodations during class or testing. Avoid asking the student to disclose their diagnosis or explain why they need a specific accommodation. As their instructor, your role is to implement the approved accommodations, not evaluate their medical or psychological needs. Respecting student privacy helps ensure compliance with the ADA and reinforces a supportive, inclusive learning environment.

What do I do if a student discloses a disability or requests an accommodation without an accommodation letter?

Thank the student for reaching out to you. Inform them that they will need to contact the Office of Disability Services to start the process to create a personalized accommodation plan. Do not discourage students from requesting accommodations or diminish their experience. It's important that all students feel supported in accessing the resources available to them.

What if students without disabilities complain that accommodations are unfair?

Accommodations are designed to provide equal access and remove barriers to the learning environment. It allows them to have the same opportunities as students without disabilities to demonstrate their learning. Students with disabilities do not have an unfair advantage over students without disabilities.