

Disability Services coordinates services for qualified students with disabilities who self-disclose and request services or reasonable accommodation. Reasonable accommodation(s) is (are) decided on a case-by-case basis.

Pellissippi State complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and its amendments. According to Section 504 and ADA, "a person with a disability is someone who has a disability that impairs a major life function, who has a history of having a disability, and/or who is regarded as having a disability."

### I. Role of Disability Services

Disability Services (DS) will establish appropriate requirements for determining the eligibility of students for accommodation and services based on a disability. All disability information will be maintained by DS for a period of three years after the student's last semester of enrollment, at which time the file will be destroyed by acceptable methods.

DS staff will determine, on an individual basis, any academic accommodations, auxiliary aids, academic adjustments, curriculum modifications or support services for which a student may be eligible. This determination is based on the functional limitations imposed by the disability in relation to the requirements of a particular course or program of study.

In addition, DS is responsible for the following:

- Providing information on disability services and how to obtain them to prospective and current students.
- Collecting information on students' disabling conditions and maintaining the information in confidential student files.
- Developing an accommodation plan for each semester that an eligible student requests services and/or academic accommodations. The student is responsible for scheduling the semester plan appointment after he/she has registered for classes each semester. The semester plan will include all the anticipated academic accommodations, auxiliary aids, and support services the student will need to have an opportunity to effectively participate in the educational process for the given semester.
- Arranging, coordinating and/or providing the specific individual services, incorporated into the semester plan, which are necessary to the student's effective participation in the educational process. Such services include, but are not limited to, preparing memos to faculty regarding the student's classroom accommodations; ordering alternate format

books; arranging note takers, readers, interpreters, etc.; preparing alternative format materials such as Braille; providing training and support on assistive computer technology; preparing an emergency evacuation list of the classroom locations of wheelchair users.

- Evaluating requests for disability-related curriculum adjustments to determine if the request is reasonable and justified or if there is another effective accommodation available that would allow the student access. For situations that involve questions about essential requirements or fundamental alterations of a particular course or program, DS professional staff will consult with the appropriate departmental faculty and college administrators prior to making recommendations regarding such adjustments or modifications.
- Serving as a resource to faculty, staff and administrators as they work with students with disabilities in their respective areas or deal with campus-wide disability issues.
- Referring students to appropriate College and community resources.
- Advocating for students in situations involving equal access to the College's programs

## II. Academic Access and Role of the Faculty

Faculty members are responsible for making reasonable academic adjustments and for providing reasonable services and accommodations to qualified students with disabilities to ensure equal access.

Academic departments and faculty are responsible for the following:

- Making reasonable classroom accommodations, course adjustments and academic program modifications as necessary to provide opportunity for qualified students with disabilities who present current accommodation plans to effectively participate in the educational process. Academic adjustments may include, but are not limited to, adaptation of teaching methods, test accommodations, allowing the use of auxiliary aids in the classroom, substitution or waiver of a course, and changes in the length of time permitted for the completion of a course. (Please see section IV, item N of this policy for details about a course substitution or waiver.) Extending the length of time for completing a course will be in agreement with the college's policy regarding I (Incomplete) or E (Extension) grades. See policy 03:11:01.
- Maintaining the confidentiality of student accommodation requests and issues.
- Consulting with Disability Services (DS) for clarification of a student's accommodations and/or any issue related to reasonable accommodation.
- Referring students to Disability Services (DS) who request accommodations but have not presented a written Accommodation Plan from Disability Services (DS).

### III. Role of Students with Disabilities in seeking accommodations and services from DS

Students are responsible for taking the following actions to obtain disability accommodations and services:

- Self-disclosing and registering with Disability Services.
- Providing appropriate information that establishes the existence of a qualifying disability and providing appropriate information regarding functional limitations, including a rationale for reasonable accommodation, if applicable.
- Making their disability related needs and specific requests known in a timely manner to the appropriate College personnel, i.e. DS staff, professors, other relevant college staff.
- Meeting with DS staff to complete an accommodation plan for each semester in which accommodation is needed.
- Providing a current Accommodation Plan to each professor for each semester in which accommodation is needed. Note: Students must provide professor(s) with a current plan with sufficient notice for the professor to arrange accommodation(s) in a timely manner.
- Notifying DS immediately when there is a question or dispute regarding an accommodation plan

The College is not responsible for providing services or making academic accommodations or adjustments until the above conditions have been met. Disability accommodations are not retroactive but go into effect at the time these conditions have been met.

### IV. Accommodations/Services

All student accommodations and disability services are coordinated on a case-by-case basis by Disability Services (DS) in Goins Administration Building Rooms 127, 131, 132, 134, 135.

Assistance with disability issues is available by appointment.

The following are examples of possible accommodations and services but should not be viewed as an exhaustive list.

#### A. Assistive Technology

Students are permitted to use campus assistive technology on a first-come, first-served basis after demonstrating proficiency on the assistive technology to a DS staff member. DS will provide training on specific assistive technology to qualified students with disabilities by appointment. Students may use their own assistive technology, as indicated on the accommodation plan. Use of campus assistive technology is limited to persons with disclosed disabilities and is available on all campuses.

B. Assistance with requesting alternate format materials and textbooks.

C. Extended time on a case-by-case basis if supported documentation regarding functional limitations has been submitted.

D. Alternate testing locations.

E. Assistance with outside disability community agencies' requirements related to enrollment at Pellissippi State

F. Provision of a note taker for eligible students. The provision of a note taker does not relieve the student from the responsibility of attending classes. Note takers are not required to provide notes when the student receiving the accommodation is absent from class.

G. Audio recording of classes.

Students are permitted to audio record lectures for personal study when listed on the accommodation plan

H. Alternate testing arrangements: screen reading software, readers

Eligible students may use screen reading software for tests and other print materials. Screen reading software and other technology is the preferred accommodation method as it promotes student independence and does not require another human for assistance. DS provides training in the use of screen reading software for students needing this accommodation.

In limited cases a reader may be used instead of screen reading software. When a reader is used the following guidelines apply:

1. Readers should always remain impartial and should not in any way influence the student's performance on the test. For example, the student's tutor would not be an appropriate choice for the reader. Further, the reader should read with even inflection in their voice throughout, so that the test-taker does not receive any clue to the answers to test questions by the way the information is read.
2. Readers are not allowed to elaborate on test items unless specifically advised by the instructor. The reader may simply read the item a second or third time, but is not allowed to define vocabulary words, concepts, or give other "hints". The student is allowed, if possible, to contact the instructor for clarification during the exam.
3. Readers should maintain appropriate behavior for a testing situation. For example, readers should not engage in extraneous conversation during the test.
4. The contents of the test are confidential and neither the reader nor the student should discuss the contents outside of the testing situation.

5. Readers should not be currently enrolled in the same course. If test validity is thought to be compromised, Pellissippi State reserves the right to discontinue reader services.

#### I. Reduced tuition rates for permanently disabled students

A reduced tuition rate is available for Tennessee residents who meet the requirements of the Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-3251. Obtain an eligibility form from Disability Services (DS). Completed forms should be returned to Students with Disabilities. See Pellissippi State policy 05:05:00 for additional information.

#### J. Scribes

In limited cases a scribe (writer) may be provided for a student who is unable to write or use dictation or speech- to- text software. When a scribe is assigned the following guidelines apply:

1. Scribes should always remain impartial and should not in any way influence the student's performance on the test. For example, the student's tutor would not be an appropriate choice for the scribe. Further, the scribe should write exactly what the accommodated student dictates and should not give any clues to the answers to test questions.

2. Scribes are not allowed to elaborate on test items unless specifically advised by the instructor. The scribe is not allowed to define vocabulary words, concepts, or give other "hints." The student is allowed, if possible, to contact the instructor for clarification during the exam.

3. Scribes and students should maintain appropriate behavior for a testing situation. For example, scribes and students should not engage in extraneous conversation during the test. Students may be referred to the Student Code of Conduct for inappropriate behavior during a task involving a scribe.

4. The contents of the test are confidential and neither the scribe nor the student should discuss the contents outside of the testing situation.

5. Scribes should not be currently enrolled in the same course. If test validity is thought to be compromised, Pellissippi State reserves the right to discontinue scribe services.

#### K. Classroom or lab assistant

A classroom or lab assistant may be assigned to a student as an accommodation if the accommodated student is unable to physically perform the requirements of a class or a lab. In these situations the assistant serves as the accommodated student's "hands" in completing the requirements of the class. The assistant performs the manual requirements at the verbal direction of the accommodated student, i.e. the accommodated student must tell the assistant how to complete a task. When an assistant is assigned the following guidelines are in effect:

1. Assistants should always remain impartial and should not in any way influence the student's performance on the task. The assistant should perform exactly what the accommodated student dictates and should not give any clues to completing the task.
2. Assistants are not allowed to elaborate on tasks unless specifically advised by the instructor. The assistant is not allowed to define vocabulary words, concepts, or give other "hints". The student is allowed, if possible, to contact the instructor for clarification during the task.
3. Assistants and students should maintain appropriate behavior for classes and testing situations. For example, assistants and students should not engage in extraneous conversation during the task. Students may be referred to the Student Code of Conduct for inappropriate behavior during a task involving an assistant.
4. The contents of the test are confidential and neither the assistant nor the student should discuss the contents outside of the testing situation.
5. Assistants should not be currently enrolled in the same course. If test validity is thought to be compromised, Mississippi State reserves the right to discontinue scribe services.

#### M. Sign language interpreters and transcription services

Qualified interpreters and transcriptionists are provided for eligible students who are deaf or hearing impaired. Students must request services for classes and college extracurricular activities or for meetings with faculty or staff. It is the student's responsibility to notify Disability Services (DS) staff at least 24 hours in advance when the student will be absent from class. Sign language interpreting /transcription services will be temporarily suspended after two "no-shows" or last-minute cancellations. Services can be restored only after a student meets with a Disability Services (DS) staff member. If the student can document an emergency or other situation that prevents 24 hour notice of absence, allowances may be made for suspension of services at the discretion of Disability Services (DS).

#### N. Course substitution and/or waiver of a course

Pellissippi State Community College will consider requests for course substitution and/or waiver from students with disabilities on a case-by-case basis. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and its Amendments and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 regulations Section 104.44(a) of 34 C.F.R. state that "postsecondary educational institutions may be required to modify their academic requirements to ensure that they do not discriminate, or have the effect of discriminating against a qualified disabled student. In addition, academic requirements that the college can demonstrate are essential to the program of instruction being pursued by the student or to any directly related licensing requirement will not be regarded as discriminatory."

A student requesting a course substitution and/or waiver must provide information related to his/her functional limitations that support the student's request. Information may include, but is not limited to, educational and psycho-educational testing related to the student's potential academic performance in the specific academic area, transcripts of the student's history of academic performance and other supportive material.

Upon receipt of a written student request, Disability Services (DS) will request a meeting with the vice president of Academic Affairs and an ad hoc group whom the vice president selects from appropriate academic department faculty and staff. Members of the ad hoc committee may include the following people: the vice president of Academic Affairs, a representative from Disability Services, the dean of the student's major area, and other individuals as determined by the vice president of Academic Affairs. The ad hoc committee will review the request and decide the appropriate course substitution and/or waiver, if any

Once a precedent-setting decision has been made regarding whether a course is essential to a specific academic program, Disability Services (DS) may request permission from the vice president of Academic Affairs to grant the same modification for requests by students meeting the same criteria. In all cases Disability Services (DS) will provide the vice president with a summary document when requesting permission to grant the modification. The vice president shall then have the option of allowing the modification by the director or calling a meeting of an ad hoc committee.

A course substitution and/or waiver will apply only to a specific course(s) as determined by the ad hoc committee and are only granted as long as the student's declared major area of study remains unchanged. A course substitution and/or waiver is specific to Pellissippi State and will not apply to other colleges or agreements negotiated with other colleges.

#### V. Guidelines for Documentation of Disabilities requiring current psycho-educational evaluations

Diagnostic criteria designed for use in determining eligibility for special education and compliance in grades K-12 are not always appropriate to address the issues relevant to the college environment. Established documentation guidelines applicable to higher education are needed to enable disability services personnel to address the following:

1. Provision of a clear and legitimate diagnosis of a disabling condition;
2. Demonstration of a substantial impact on one or more major life activities;
3. Support for the request for accommodations, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids based on current functional limitations at the college level.

The following guidelines are required for documentation of Specific Learning Disabilities, Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD), Autism Spectrum Disorders, including Asperger's Disorder and Intellectual/Cognitive Disorders including Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injuries. In addition, Disability Services may require persons with other disabling conditions to meet these documentation guidelines in order to demonstrate support for accommodation requests.

A. Evaluators should be qualified

Professionals conducting assessments, rendering diagnoses of and making recommendations for appropriate accommodations must be qualified to do so. The following professionals would generally be considered qualified to evaluate the previously listed conditions provided that they have training and experience in the assessment of learning problems in adolescents and adults: clinical or educational psychologists, school psychologists, neuropsychologists, medical doctors and others with appropriate training in educational assessment. It may be appropriate to use a clinical team approach consisting of education, medical and other professionals with training in the evaluations of these conditions.

The evaluator's name(s), title(s) and professional credentials should be on letterhead, typed, dated, signed and legible.

It is not considered appropriate for professionals to evaluate members of their families.

B. Documentation should be current

In most cases, a diagnostic evaluation should have been completed within the last three years using diagnostic measures meant for adults. Reevaluation may be warranted if the documentation is inadequate in scope, is not current or if the measures used were not meant for adults.

C. Documentation should be current, comprehensive and relevant to current functional limitations exhibited in an educational setting

D. Documentation should contain the following

1. Diagnostic interview. An evaluation should include the summary of a diagnostic interview. It may include a description of the presenting problems; developmental, medical, psycho-social and employment histories; family history and a discussion of co-morbid conditions where indicated.

2. Relevant assessment. The evaluation must provide clear and specific evidence that a disability does exist. Psycho-educational or neuro-psychological assessment is important in determining the current impact of the diagnosed condition on the student's ability to function in academic settings. The evaluation should include an assessment of intellectual/cognitive functioning, as well as academic achievement in the basic areas of Reading, Written Language



and Mathematics. Evidence of processing strengths and weaknesses should also be included. This may include assessment of short and long term memory, sequential memory, working memory, auditory and visual perceptual processing, and processing speed. An assessment of executive functioning is especially useful for college students. Subtest scores, standard scores (including age and grade norms), and percentile ranks should be provided for all standardized measures. All diagnostic reports should include an analysis of the student's educational functioning, including the areas of academic difficulty as well as the areas of strengths and compensatory skills. The data analysis should logically reflect a substantial limitation to learning for which the student is requesting the accommodation.

Test scores and subtest scores alone should not be used as the sole measure for the diagnostic decision. Selected subtest scores from measure of intellectual ability, memory functions, attention or tracking tests or continuous performance tests do not in and of themselves establish the presence or absence of a disability. Checklists and/or survey can serve to supplement the diagnostic profile but in and of themselves are not adequate for the diagnosis of disabilities and do not substitute for clinical observations and sound diagnostic judgment. See Appendix A for examples of acceptable tests.

3. Rule Out Alternative Diagnoses or Explanations. When warranted by the student's history and/or presenting symptoms, the evaluator should assess for co-morbid disorders which may confound the diagnosis. This process should include exploration of possible alternative diagnoses and medical and psychiatric disorders as well as educational and cultural factors impacting the individual which may result in behaviors mimicking other disorders. A comprehensive statement regarding the student's general emotional functioning should be included in the report.

4. A clear diagnosis. There must be clear and specific evidence of a disability. Individual "learning styles," "learning differences," "academic problems" and "test difficulty or anxiety," in and of themselves, do not constitute a diagnosis. The diagnostician should use direct language and avoid terms such as, "suggests" or "is indicative of." If the data indicate that a disability is not present, the evaluator should state that conclusion in the report. The report must include a specific diagnosis of the disabling condition based on the current DSM diagnostic criteria.

5. An Interpretative, Integrated Summary with Recommendations. A well written interpretative summary based on a comprehensive evaluative process is a necessary component of the documentation. The summary should include the following:

- demonstration that the evaluator ruled out alternative explanations for the diagnosis
- if relevant, an indication of whether or not the student was evaluated while on medication, and whether or not there has been a positive response to a prescribed treatment;

- discussion of the substantial limitations to life activities presented by the diagnosis and the extent to which these limitations impact the academic context for which accommodations are being requested; and
- specific recommendations for accommodations that are clearly linked to the presented data and how the functional limitations are mediated by the recommended accommodations.
- Disability Services (DS) will make the final determination for providing appropriate and reasonable accommodations.

## Appendix A. Acceptable Tests

Test instruments should be reliable, valid, and standardized on an appropriate norm group. The evaluator's clinical judgment is important in selecting assessment instruments that are reliable, valid and standardized on the appropriate norm group and which adequately assess the individual. The following list is offered as a resource of commonly used, generally acceptable tests and is not intended to be definitive or exhaustive.

### 1. Aptitude/ Intelligence/Cognitive Ability

- *Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS)*, most current edition should be used
- *Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Cognitive Abilities (WJ)*, most current edition should be used
- *Kaufman Adolescent and Adult Intelligence Test (KAIT)*, most current edition should be used
- *Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale*- most current edition should be used

*Note: The Slosson Intelligence Test - Revised, the Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test, and the Wide Range Intelligence Test are primarily screening devices and are not comprehensive enough for use in diagnosing disabilities.*

### 2. Academic Achievement

- *Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults (SATA)*, most current edition should be used
- *Stanford Test of Academic Skills*, most current edition should be used
- *Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement (WJ)*, most current edition should be used
- *Wechsler Individual Achievement Test, (WIAT)*, most current editions should be used
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*Note: The Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) is not a comprehensive test and therefore is not useful as the sole measure of achievement.*

Specific achievement tests, such as the following, are useful instruments when administered under standardized conditions and interpreted within the context of other, more comprehensive diagnostic information.

- *Nelson-Denny Reading Skills Test, most current edition should be used*
- *Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test, most current edition should be used*
- *Test of Written Language – (TOWL), most current edition should be used*
- *Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests , most current edition should be used*

### **3.Information Processing**

Information processing abilities may be described using information derived from subtests on the most current editions of the *WAIS*, *Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Cognitive Abilities*, as well as other relevant instruments.

Information pertaining to memory functioning is often beneficial. Tests such as the most recent edition of the *Wechsler Memory Scales* are appropriate.

### **4.Attention**

Behavioral factors relating to Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder may be assessed by history, questionnaires, or checklists. Normed questionnaires and checklists should be validated for use with the population of interest and appropriate for the purpose of differential diagnosis of AD/HD

5. Other. Other standard and formal assessment measures may be integrated with the above to help support a diagnosis. Testing must be current. Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) , Summaries of Performance and Reevaluation Summaries are not acceptable documentation. Reports must include the date(s) of testing.

## **VI. Formal Grievance Procedure**

Any Pellissippi State student with a disability who has reason to feel that he or she has been affected by discrimination or harassment on the basis of a disability should contact the Executive Director Equity and Compliance, who is also the college's Americans with Disabilities officer and Section 504 office and Section 504 coordinator, Equity and Compliance is located in Room 259 of the Goins Administration Building. The telephone number is (865) 539-7401.

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