

Accommodations FAQs: Professors

What is an accommodation?

Accommodations are modifications to conditions that would otherwise cause a student, because of a disability, to be at a disadvantage relative to students without a disability in their access to the university's programs for students. Reasonable accommodations provide equitable access to programs or facilities and do not fundamentally alter the essential nature of a course or academic program. Course content and objectives cannot be modified.

What are some examples of accommodations?

Examples of accommodations may include, but are not limited to, extended test time, a separate test location, assistive technology, note-taking services, a test reader, a test scribe and/or the use of computer for testing, preferential seating, and enlarged print. Other accommodations specific to the student's disability must be requested and approved. All accommodations are determined on a case-by-case basis.

Can I ask students to disclose their disabilities to me?

Please do not ask students to disclose their disability/diagnosis to you. It is the student's right to maintain that information as confidential. The only way that you may be aware of the student's disability/diagnosis is if it is voluntarily offered to you by the student.

How do I approach a student who is having a difficult time in class and I suspect may have a disability?

There are several approaches you can take with the student who is having difficulty in your class:

- Request a private meeting with the student. Communicate your concerns and ask the student to offer his/her thoughts and ideas with encouragement to work together to assist the student with the successful completion of your course
- Offer the student campus resources to aid with making improvements. Discuss and provide contact information for the tutoring center, writing center, math assistance center, success coaches, and ODS as options to look into.
- Submit a CARE referral. Faculty are encouraged to submit CARE referrals regarding students of concern. No concern is too big or too small for submission and if needed, the student will be connected with ODS.

What do I do if students ask for an accommodation that is not on their accommodation letter?

Please refer the student to ODS to request an additional accommodation or ask them to submit a supplemental request using *Accommodate*.

Does information regarding student accommodations and disabilities have to remain confidential?

Yes. Professors must maintain complete confidentiality.

How do I know if an accommodation is reasonable?

The accommodations that a student has been approved for by ODS are deemed reasonable. If there is a question regarding reasonableness of a specific accommodation for a specific student, please contact the director of ODS, Dr. Natalie Burick, at your convenience to discuss.

What do I do if a student's accommodation allows for class absences?

If a student has a consideration for absences accommodation, this means that ODS has documentation to support that the student may need additional absences beyond what the professor allows. Any student with this accommodation is encouraged to attend all classes. In addition, the student is instructed to follow the consideration for absences

procedure developed by ODS to come up with a contingency plan with the professor in the case where absences become an issue. Ultimately, the professor has the final say regarding if and how absences will affect a student's grade.

How can I accommodate pop quizzes?

Please consider the following recommendations for pop quizzes in your course:

- It is always encouraged that if faculty are able to provide testing accommodations to a student for a pop quiz, (i.e. a separate testing space not in the classroom, extended time before, during or after the class period, etc.) to do so. This is the best course of action for a pop quiz.
- If the faculty member is unable to accommodate the student in the classroom and would like to utilize ODS for support, it is encouraged that the faculty communicate with students who have testing accommodations at the beginning of the semester (or before the pop quiz occurs) to discuss a plan of action for pop quizzes. Once a plan is made, faculty can communicate with ODS when a pop quiz will take place and ODS will schedule that student in our office at that time.
- Faculty may consider communicating with the student when there will be a pop quiz in advance so that the student can schedule his/her testing appointment in ODS at least 48 hours before the exam.

What do I do if I believe that an accommodation will affect my course?

If you believe that an accommodation will affect your course, please contact the director of ODS, Dr. Natalie Burick. You may also want to discuss your concern with the student so that all parties are on the same page.

Does a student have to use their accommodations in class?

Students may choose when to use and not use his/her accommodations.

If a student has a note-taking accommodation, do I have to take the notes for them?

If a student has note-taking as an accommodation, it is likely that he/she will have a note-taker assigned through ODS for the semester. This does not mean that the student does not have to take notes; the notes provided by a volunteer student note-taker are supplemental only.

If a note-taker cannot be found, ODS will typically ask the professor to make an announcement to the class (without including the name of the student who is need of notes) or help us identify a student who the professor recommends we reach out to individually. In addition, if the faculty has power point presentations available to all students, this can assist the student if there is not a note taker for the class.

If a note-taker is still not found, ODS may offer the student an accommodation for recording lectures to give the student full access to the lecture material with the ability to complete the notes on their own outside of class.

What if I have questions?

Please contact ODS using the information listed below:

Main Office Line: 724-738-4877

Email: disabilityservices@sru.edu

Location: 105 University Union

Dr. Natalie Burick, Director: natalie.burick@sru.edu

Kim Coffaro, Assistant Director: kim.coffaro@sru.edu