



# TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER EL PASO

## Operating Policy and Procedure

### HSCEP OP: 77.14, Students with Disabilities

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso (TTUHSC El Paso) Operating Policy and Procedure (HSCEP OP) is to outline the procedures for establishing reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities.

**REVIEW:** This HSCEP OP will be reviewed by June 1 of odd-numbered years by the Office of General Counsel, and the assistant vice president of student services or his/her designees, with recommendations for revision forwarded to the vice president for academic affairs (VPAA) or his/her designee by July 1.

### POLICY/PROCEDURE:

#### I. Background

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 (42 U.S.C. § 12101 *et seq.*, as amended) mandates equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in all public facilities, programs, activities, services, and benefits derived from them. Title V, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794 *et seq.*), as amended, mandates equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities in all programs, activities, and services that are recipients of federal financial assistance. Both the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act are civil rights statutes that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability and, if applicable, obligate colleges and universities to make certain adjustments and accommodations and offer persons with disabilities the opportunity to participate fully in all institutional programs and activities. TTUHSC El Paso adheres to these laws and regulations, as well as those of the Texas Commission on Human Rights Act.

#### II. Faculty Notice

Faculty members must insert the following statement into each course syllabus:

“TTUHSC El Paso is committed to providing equal access to learning opportunities to students with documented disabilities. To ensure access to this course, and your program, please contact the Director of Disability Support Services (DSS), Dr. Tammy Salazar, to engage in a confidential conversation about the process for requesting accommodations in the classroom and clinical setting. Accommodations are not provided retroactively, so students are encouraged to register with DSS as soon as possible. More information can be found on the DSS website: <http://elpaso.ttuhscc.edu/student-services/disability-support-services>.”

#### III. Eligibility and Procedures for Establishing Reasonable Accommodations

- A. A student must register with DSS in the Office of Student Services and file appropriate documentation in order to be eligible for any disability benefits and services described in this operating policy. All documentation must be turned in to DSS 30 days prior to an exam.
- B. The university-approved mechanism for establishing reasonable accommodation is notification in the form of a letter of accommodation (LOA) from DSS. The LOA indicates

to faculty that the student has provided documentation in support of a disability and that the accommodation(s) noted are considered appropriate and reasonable. No further proof of disability is required of the student in order for faculty to implement the noted accommodations. Students presenting other kinds of verification to faculty should be referred to DSS in the Office of Student Services. Faculty must not provide accommodations prior to completion of the approved university process.

**Accommodations for Scanning Materials (if eligible):** Requests to have textbooks or documents scanned and recorded onto a CD must be delivered to DSS at least four weeks prior to the date needed. **A receipt showing purchase of the book to be scanned must be provided, along with the scanning request.**

**For Interpreter Services:** Requests for interpreter services should be made a minimum of 30 days before classes begin in order to ensure this accommodation is provided on the first day of class.

**Accommodations for Brailing Services (if eligible):** Requests for brailing services must be completed 30 days prior to the date that the material is needed. It is the student's responsibility to provide DDS with any and all materials needing to be brailled. Likewise, it is the students' responsibility to deliver and pick up completed materials from DSS.

A list of service providers that conduct assessments, render diagnosis of learning disabilities and/or attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, and make recommendations for accommodations for students can be requested from DSS. The Office of Student Services at TTUHSC El Paso does not endorse any particular service provider. Addresses and phone numbers are subject to change.

Before selecting a qualified professional, the student should ask what his/her credentials are, what experience he/she has had working with adults with learning disabilities and/or attention deficit disorders, and if he/she has ever worked with DSS in the Office of Student Services at TTUHSC El Paso. If he/she has not, the student may forward them the "Documentation Requirements for Specific Disabilities" (found on the DSS website or in the DSS office) to ensure they receive the proper testing required to be eligible for any disability benefits.

After the assessment has been completed, the student request a written copy of the assessment report, as well as make an appointment to discuss the results and recommendations with the professional. The student should request additional resources if needed, and always keep a personal file of all their records.

In order to obtain accommodations at TTUHSC El Paso, a copy of the report, along with an application, should be forwarded to DSS in the Office of Student Services. Please allow 10 university working days for process of the application.

- C. Faculty members are not required to provide accommodations for a student's disability needs unless the student provides a LOA from DSS. Ideally, letters of accommodation should be presented to instructors at the beginning of the semester; however, they may be submitted at any time during a semester. If a LOA is presented after a semester begins, the accommodation applies only from the date on the letter forward and is not retroactive. Letters of accommodation must be presented no later than 10 days prior to an exam. If the accommodation(s) are not implemented within one week, the student shall immediately contact DSS in the Office of Student Services.

- D. DSS will maintain the confidentiality of all medical and ADA information concerning students. These records will be kept separate from student educational records and will be accessible only to authorized personnel.

#### IV. **Student Rights and Responsibilities**

Each student receiving services through DSS has rights and responsibilities related to their accommodations.

##### **RIGHTS:**

It is the student's right to disclose the LOA to any and all instructors. The student may not need all accommodations for every class, but any professor that he/she needs an accommodation from **must** have a copy of the LOA.

It is the student's right not to use their LOA for any class during a semester. This does not affect their right to have accommodations again for any subsequent semester.

It is the student's right to request adjustments to their LOA regarding the accommodations for which they are eligible. Additions to an LOA must be supported by appropriate documentation.

It is the student's right to have their disability kept confidential. DSS will not share information regarding a student's disability with any faculty, staff, parent, or other entity, unless the student has given written permission to do so. In addition, the student is not required to disclose details of their disability to any faculty or staff outside of what is noted in the LOA.

It is the student's right to have their approved accommodations provided free of charge, as mandated in the ADA.

##### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

It is the student's responsibility to meet qualifications and maintain essential institutional technical standards for courses, services, and activities.

It is the student's responsibility to self-disclose as an individual with a disability and provide supporting documentation when an academic adjustment, auxiliary aid, and/or other service is needed. A completed application and documentation for accommodations must be completed 30 days prior to an exam.

It is the student's responsibility to follow up with each professor during the first week of class, or within one week of receiving the accommodation letter, if it is during the semester, to review the LOA. **The LOA becomes effective on the date it is received by the professor and is not retroactive.**

It is the student's responsibility to report problems with professors who are not allowing accommodations to DSS. This must be done during the semester the problem is occurring and not after grades have been given for the course. If an accommodation is not implemented within one week, the student shall immediately contact DSS.

It is the student's responsibility to notify DSS of any changes in their disability status or accommodation needs.

#### V. **Temporary Accommodations**

Students who have a short-term disabling condition, often due to injury or surgery, may apply for temporary accommodations for the duration of their functional limitations associated with their disability.

The eligibility process is the same as for permanent disability cases. Students must complete a Temporary Accommodation Application and submit the appropriate documentation with an anticipated end date. The director of DSS will determine appropriate accommodations.

DSS will send a Letter of Temporary Accommodations to the relevant faculty.

#### **VI. Provisional Accommodations**

At times, a student may require provisional accommodations. This is a conditional arrangement made on a case-by-case basis and is not an official, approved accommodation. This arrangement is not a substitute for a student with no documentation to receive accommodations, nor is it a replacement for a student whose documentation has been denied.

The following considerations for provisional accommodations are: 1) documentation is provided, even if it may be insufficient information to meet TTUHSC El Paso guidelines that present a diagnosis and substantiates a need for accommodations. Documentation presented at least two weeks before an exam will be eligible for provisional accommodations; 2) the director of DSS is in the process of reviewing documentation to determine the provision of accommodations; 3) appropriate documentation is in the process of being obtained, including any upcoming evaluation appointments.

Complete documentation must be received within four weeks of receiving provisional accommodations, or they will be waived. If a student has difficulty in meeting this deadline due to troubles making a testing appointment, they must contact DSS immediately.

DSS will send a Letter of Provisional Accommodations to the relevant faculty.

#### **VII. Appeal Process for Denial of Services or Accommodations**

Students who wish to appeal a decision made by DSS must do so in writing by submitting an appeal form located on the DSS website within 20 days after the receipt of the LOA from DSS or notification of denial of services. Appeals are considered by the assistant vice president for student services (AVPSS), as the vice president of academic affairs' designee.

#### **VIII. Right to Change Policy**

TTUHSC El Paso reserves the right to interpret, change, modify, amend, or rescind this policy in whole or in part at any time without the consent of employees, faculty, or students.

**Attachment A: Application for Disability Services**  
**Attachment B: Verification of Disability Form**