



University of Illinois Springfield
Office of Disability Services
Student Resource Manual

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Welcome to the Office of Disability Services

Welcome to the University of Illinois Springfield Office of Disability Services!

As part of the University's student-centered approach, we are also dedicated to helping students achieve academic success regardless of physical, learning, psychiatric, sensory, or other documented disabilities. Our office is committed to assisting students with disabilities to achieve their academic goals by offering reasonable accommodations with the appropriate approved documentation. We take very seriously the individual needs of our students using our services and we are happy that you have chosen to attend the University of Illinois Springfield. Our office provides a warm, welcoming environment to assist you with your academic programs; however we are also here to help you to become self-advocates for your individual needs. If you have questions please contact us.

Contact Information

Office of Disability Services
One University Plaza, HRB 80
Springfield, IL 62703
(217) 206-6666, voice
(217) 206-6668, TDD
Email: ods@uis.edu

Office of Disability Services Staff:
Sarah Colby Weaver, Ph.D.
Director
Chrisa Potthast-Leezer
Disability Specialist
Kimberly Rutherford
Disability Specialist

Office of Access and Equal Opportunity

(Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance, Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Compliance)
Deanie Brown, J.D.
One University Plaza, PAC 491
Springfield, IL 62703
(217) 206-6222, voice
(217) 206-6511, fax

Rights and Responsibilities of UIS Students with Disabilities

Student Rights

Students with disabilities at University of Illinois Springfield have the right to:

- Information (in accessible formats)
- Confidentiality: information about your disability will not be disclosed without your written permission, unless it is required by law or on a need-to-know basis
- An equal opportunity to learn
- Reasonable and appropriate accommodations and services, determined on an individual basis.

Student Responsibilities

Students with disabilities at University of Illinois Springfield have the responsibility to:

- Register with the UIS Office of Disability Services
- Disclose your disability to the Office of Disability Services in a timely manner
- Provide appropriate documentation
- Follow all University policies and procedures for obtaining reasonable accommodations and services
- Meet the requirements and maintain the standards for all students for activities, programs, services, and courses.

Disability Laws

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990

According to the ADA, an individual with a disability is defined as a person who: (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more life activities; (2) has a record of such impairment; or (3) is regarded as having such impairment. Major life activities include but are not limited to walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, caring for oneself, and performing manual tasks.

The ADA prohibits discrimination solely on the basis of disability in employment, public services, and accommodations. The person in consideration must be otherwise qualified for the job, program, or service.

The ADA details administrative requirements, complaint procedures, and the consequences for non-compliance related to both services and employment. The ADA requires provision of reasonable, effective accommodations for eligible students across educational activities and settings.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs, public and private, that receive federal financial assistance. Section 504 includes institutions regardless of whether they have open door, selective, or competitive admissions practices.

People with disabilities have the same legal remedies that are available under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1991. Thus, individuals who are discriminated against may file a complaint with the relevant federal agency or sue in federal court. Enforcement agencies encourage informal mediation and voluntary compliance.

How these Laws Apply to Higher Education

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 were designed to ensure that colleges and universities are free from discrimination in their recruitment, admission, and treatment of students.

In the application of both laws, students with disabilities must be qualified to participate in University activities. A qualified student with a disability is one who meets the admission and essential eligibility requirements of a program or service, with or without:

- modifications of rules, policies, or procedures

- removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers
- provision of auxiliary aids and services.

Individuals who pose a *direct threat* to their own health or safety or the health or safety of others will not be considered qualified.

The law requires higher education institutions to ensure that all programs, services, or facilities are accessible to or usable by persons with disabilities. The law does NOT require:

- making each facility accessible if alternatives are effective
- a fundamental alteration of programs or services
- undue financial or administrative burden.

The University is under no obligation to change academic requirements which the University, programs, or majors “can demonstrate are essential to the program of instruction...or to any direct licensing requirement.”

The University does not have to provide personal attendants, individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or other devices or services of a personal nature, such as tutoring or typing (United States Office of Civil Rights, July, 2002).

The institution must provide auxiliary aids to ensure the participation of students in college classes and activities and must accommodate the academic participation of qualified students with disabilities.

The institution must NOT:

- limit the number of students with disabilities admitted
- make pre-admission inquires as to whether or not an applicant has a disability
- use admission tests or criteria that inadequately measure the academic level of visually impaired, hearing impaired, or otherwise disabled applicants because special provisions were not made for them
- exclude students with disabilities from any course of study solely on the basis of their disability
- counsel students with disabilities towards a more restrictive career than non-disabled students, unless such counsel is based on strict licensing or certification requirements in a profession

- measure student achievement using modes that adversely discriminate against students with disabilities
- institute prohibitive rules (such as the barring of tape recorders or other auxiliary aids) that may adversely affect the performance of students with disabilities
- select a site or a facility that would exclude participation of persons with disabilities.

The law does not require special treatment of students with disabilities, but does require that students be given the opportunity for equal participation in the University's programs. This is done by providing to eligible and qualified students appropriate academic accommodations and auxiliary aids necessary to facilitate the students' fullest possible participation in the University's academic programs.

University of Illinois Springfield has made every effort to develop policies and guidelines that are in keeping with federal policies and guidelines.

Admissions

Admission to University of Illinois Springfield is based upon an applicant's meeting published admission criteria of the University with no preferences provided on the basis of disability.

Students are notified of acceptance to UIS by a letter from the Office of Admissions.

Students seeking admission to the various programs and majors must meet the admissions requirements for the particular program and/or major with no preferences provided on the basis of disability.

Requirements for entry into, participation in, and completion of various majors and programs are available in the University catalog.

Program and course requirements will not be waived. However, reasonable accommodations are provided as appropriate means for a student with a disability to be able to satisfy published requirements for a program.

Please contact the UIS Office of Admissions (1-888-977-4847 or (217) 206-4847) to obtain admission applications or additional admissions information.

Instructions for Obtaining Accommodations

Students who would like to obtain disability-related accommodations must take the following steps:

1. Make sure that you allow a reasonable amount of time for appointments to be scheduled, documentation to be reviewed, and appropriate accommodations to be developed. Sometimes, this can take a semester, so *begin the process as early as possible*.
2. Go to the Office of Disability Services (HRB 80) to register with the office.
3. Provide the Office of Disability Services with appropriate documentation (medical, psychological, or other diagnostic reports) of your disability and associated functional limitations for which you are requesting accommodations. Your documentation must meet university criteria for documentation of your specific disability.

NOTE: A diagnosis of a disorder, condition, or syndrome in and of itself does not automatically qualify an individual for accommodations. **An Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.) or 504 Plan from the public school system is not documentation of a disability for the purposes of providing accommodations at the college level.**

4. Following approval of your documentation, meet with a disability specialist in the Office of Disability Services to sign a release of information form (required for accommodation letters) and provide letters to your professors requesting disability-related accommodations.

5. During the first two weeks of classes, deliver the letters requesting accommodations *in their sealed envelopes* to your professors, and schedule an appointment to meet with them to discuss the accommodations.

- You must *verbally* request accommodations from your professors in order to receive the accommodations. There may be more approved academic accommodations listed on the letter that you need at that time. Meeting with the professor allows you to discuss which accommodations you need and how the professor might implement the accommodations within that particular classroom situation.
- Allow at least two weeks for your professors to implement the accommodations.
- If you need approved accommodations for tests or quizzes (including final exams), request such accommodations from your professors at least two weeks prior to the scheduled test or quiz. It is your responsibility to submit an

ODS testing form to your Disability Specialist no less than seven (7) days prior to your test.

Note: Your professors will not provide disability-related accommodations without approval from the Office of Disability Services.

6. If you have problems with accommodations for a particular class, speak to your professor first. Discuss modifications to the accommodations that are within the scope of what has already been approved. If the problem persists, contact the Office of Disability Services for assistance.

7. Meet with the Office of Disability Services during the *first two weeks of every semester* to arrange accommodations for your classes.

Documentation of a Disability

In order to be eligible to receive disability-related accommodations, all UIS students must provide appropriate documentation of their particular disability. UIS has specific criteria that documentation must meet before accommodations are authorized. The documentation must include the following:

1. **Diagnostic Information:** Diagnostic data must be provided that shows a significant impairment to functioning. If the impairment interferes with cognitive functioning, diagnostic tests scores must substantiate a significant impairment and establish a clear link between requested accommodations and the impairment. A diagnosis of a disorder, condition, or syndrome in and of itself does not automatically qualify an individual for accommodations.

Note: If an impairment interferes with cognitive performance, evidence must be provided of this interference beyond poor grades in school.

2. **Degree of Impact:** Documentation must describe the degree of impact the diagnosed disorder has on the functioning of the student.

3. **Specific Documentation Criteria:** Documentation criteria are different for every disability

- Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders (ADD/ADHD)
- Autism Spectrum Disorders/Asperger's Syndrome
- Learning Disabilities
- Medical/Mobility Disorders
- Psychiatric Disorders
- Sensory Disorders
- Temporary Disabilities
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Confidentiality

The Office of Disability Services is committed to ensuring that all information regarding a student registered in the office is maintained as confidential as required or permitted by law or permitted by law. We recognize information/documentation regarding students as CONFIDENTIAL. No confidential information will be released by ODS unless the student provides written permission. We also adhere to FERPA, (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) where college students are considered adults and are allowed to determine who will receive information about them.

Who Has Access to Your Information?

No one has immediate access to student files except the Office of Disability Services staff. To protect confidentiality by ensuring limited access, all disability-related information should be filed with the Office of Disability Services.

Any information regarding a disability is considered confidential and only shared within the University when there is a legitimate reason. Information about your disability will not be disclosed to individuals outside of the University without your written permission unless required by law or on a need-to-know basis.

Written Permission

Information that is disclosed on your behalf is done with your written permission. Only general information related to services, policies, and procedures will be given to your parents or guardians without your permission in the form of a personally signed release of information.

Letters Approving Accommodations

On a semester-by-semester basis, as you request, your Disability Specialist will write letters approving accommodations based upon your approved documented functional limitations.

These letters will describe to your professors the accommodations approved for your disability but will *not* disclose the nature of your disability. The letter instructs the professor not to ask you about the nature of your disability. Whether or not to disclose the nature of your disability is your decision. You are responsible for delivering the letters to your professors in a timely, confidential manner.

University faculty and staff do *not* have a right or a need to access diagnostic or other information regarding your disability. However, faculty and instructors do need to know what accommodations are necessary or appropriate to meet your disability-related needs.

It is important to realize that you must request letters approving accommodations in person from the Office of Disability Services every semester for your classes and university activities. You must also sign a release of information for the disclosure of information relative to your disability.

Special Situations

On occasion, it may be necessary to disclose the nature of your disability in a letter approving accommodations in order to assist you in potential safety or emergency situations, such as fire drills, building evacuations, and specific medical situations. Questions about this policy should be directed to the Office of Disability Services.

Accessible Transportation

Access Springfield provides transportation for person with disabilities who are unable to use the SMTD fixed-route bus service. Individuals with disabilities must apply to become eligible to use the service. To become eligible, the individual must meet one of the three categories below:

1. An individual with disability who is unable, as the result of a physical or mental impairment, and without the assistance of another individual to board or disembark from any vehicle on the SMTD fixed-line system, which is readily accessible.
2. Persons who cannot use SMTD buses without lifts. (These persons are eligible for Access Springfield service if accessible, fixed-route vehicles are not available on the route on which they need to travel or at the time they need to travel.)
3. Anyone with a disability who cannot travel to or from a SMTD bus stop.

An application must be submitted online (<http://www.smtd.org/displayPage.asp?plD=17>) OR you may print the application and mail to: SMTD, 928 S. Ninth Street, Springfield, IL 62703. Once you are approved, call 217-522-8594 to reserve a ride.

University Services

Undergraduate Advising

The Office of Disability Services Disability Specialist does not serve as your academic advisor. You will receive academic advising through the Undergraduate Advising Center or from an advisor within your major.

Center for Teaching and Learning

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) offers help to students in improving skills in writing, grammar and usage, math and statistics, science, reading, studying, test taking, and through a peer tutoring program. Students are invited to make an appointment with a staff member at CTL. The staff in the Office of Disability Services works closely with the CTL staff to provide workshops to educate them about working with a student with a disability. Weekly appointments are available upon request from CTL. For more information on CTL, visit their website at <http://www.uis.edu/ctl/>

Technology

Adaptive technology computers are available to students registered with the Office of Disability Services. Speak with a Disability Specialist in the Office of Disability Services to determine if this technology would be helpful for you.

Absences

The attendance policy described in the UIS Undergraduate Catalog and other attendance policies listed on class syllabuses apply to all students, even if you are registered with the Office of Disability Services.

UIS policies and procedures that apply to all university students also apply to students with disabilities.

Counseling and Psychological Services

The Counseling Center, located in HRB 64, provides counseling and psychological consultation to UIS students. To schedule an appointment or obtain additional information, call 217-206-7122.

Health Services

The Campus Health Services, available to all UIS students, is located in BSB Room 20. Every semester, students are assessed a prorated Health Service Fee, which is included as a portion of your tuition. Please call 217-206-6676 to make an appointment or for additional information.

Discrimination Complaints

It is the policy of the University of Illinois Springfield campus to maintain an educational and work environment in which each member of the community may enjoy his or her rights as a human being free of discrimination or harassment.

Informal Grievance Procedure:

These procedures are applicable, though not exclusive, for all campus-based employees, including University administration employees, and students and applicants for employment and student admission at UIS.

- The complainant, or someone acting with the complainant's permission on his or her behalf, should lodge a complaint orally or in writing with the AEO. To encourage victims of discrimination to feel free to contact the AEO, callers may use a direct phone line to the AEO (217-206-6222) and in-person contact with the AEO may occur at a location other than the AEO office as agreed to by the AEO.
- Upon receipt of the complaint, the AEO shall first confer with the alleged victim to establish the nature of his/her complaint. The AEO shall provide a copy of the appropriate campus policy and inform the complainant of the avenues of external redress.
- Within fourteen (14) days, the AEO will inform the alleged discriminator of the nature of the complaint and of the identity of the complainant and will meet separately and/or together with the complainant, the alleged discriminator, and whomever else is necessary to ascertain the factual basis of the complaint and to attempt to resolve the complaint informally.
- The complainant may choose to file a formal grievance at any time.

Formal Grievance Procedure:

- Whether or not the informal resolution process is used, a person alleging discrimination may initiate the formal grievance resolution process by submitting a formal written charge of discrimination to the AEO within one year of the matter being grieved, if the grievant is a student.
- Upon receipt of the complaint, the AEO shall provide the alleged victim with a copy of the appropriate campus policy and inform him/her of avenues for external redress.
- Upon receipt of a written charge of discrimination or a request that formal procedures be instituted, the AEO will transmit copies of the grievance/request to the alleged discriminator, the appropriate unit head, and the appropriate vice chancellor.

- AEO will then proceed with an investigation of the grievance, which shall include an opportunity for the grievant to be represented throughout the grievance.
- In conducting the investigation, the AEO will have unrestricted access to all pertinent material, records, reports, documents and computerized information in the possession of any campus personnel, and the AEO shall be afforded the opportunity to interview all persons possessing relevant information.
- Both the grievant and the alleged discriminator may submit whatever information they deem desirable.
- Obstruction of an investigation of an allegation(s) of discrimination shall be grounds for disciplinary action or sanctions by the appropriate vice chancellor administration designee.

ADAPTIVE TECHNOLOGY LAB THE OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES

ZOOMTEXT XTRA FOR WINDOWS is designed specifically for the low-vision user. The application integrates multiple technologies with options for screen magnification (such as full screen enlargement up to 20X, selected zoom and split screen), choice of screen color and mouse type, size, and color. The developer of ZoomText, AiSquared, claims that it is the most advanced screen magnifier on the market. In addition to general magnification features, it offers a fully integrated magnifier and screen reader. The document reading module, called DocReader, is a full-screen environment for text-to-speech from any Windows application including web pages and e-mail.

NATURALLY SPEAKING PROFESSIONAL FOR WINDOWS is voice recognition software that uses true continuous speech. Continuous speech is defined as speech spoken naturally and at a normal pace of up to 160 words per minute and more, without pausing between words. Words are immediately transcribed on the screen and into the chosen document. Advanced features include custom speech commands for automating tasks, spell checking, pronunciation, context recognition, word usage, and text-to-speech. A comprehensive active vocabulary of up to 55,000 words is available. Including customized vocabulary files, the system can store a total vocabulary of 230,000 words. Naturally Speaking is claimed to be fully integrated with Microsoft Word and Corel WordPerfect.

JAWS FOR WINDOWS is a screen-reading software package developed by blind people for people who are blind. The application works with, but does not replace, most computer applications. It offers individuals who are blind the opportunity to use a computer not only for general applications, but also for online resources such as surfing the web and complex sentence structure

Read & Write Gold is a speech to text product that can read embedded text in websites, e-mails, and text based documents. In addition to reading text, Read & Write Gold has a built in dictionary, thesaurus, note-taking tools, text summary and highlighting tools, and a built in web based visual mapping application.
