



## Office of Disability Services

# Disability Services Handbook

**Welcome!** The Office of Disability Services at St. Andrews University works to ensure students who have disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate in educational and co-curricular offerings. We do this through an individualized student-centered approach and by promoting the *AHEAD Best Practices* using collaboration and engagement within the learning community. ([www.ahead.org](http://www.ahead.org))

This Handbook is designed to be a resource for disabled SAU students enrolled in both on campus classes and online learning courses

### ROLE & PURPOSE OF DISABILITY SERVICES

The Office of Disabilities Services (ODS) is available to:

- Problem solve issues relative to disability access,
- Provide equal access for individuals with disabilities.
- Facilitate the development of reasonable accommodations for students
- Provide services and accommodations to qualified students with disabilities
- Serve in an advisory and supportive capacity to faculty and staff.

The Coordinator of Disability Services meets in person, by phone, email or other electronic media, such as SKYPE or FACETIME, with students with disabilities to verify eligibility for specific academic adjustments referred to in this guide as accommodations.

The coordinator's office is located in the Health and Wellness Center in Pate Hall on the northwest side of campus. The disability services coordinator is available to meet individually with a student in person, by phone, by SKYPE or through FACETIME. Call or email to set up an appointment (910-277-5667 or 910-277-5040, [ODS@sapc.edu](mailto:ODS@sapc.edu) ).

### SHOULD I DISCLOSE MY DISABILITY?

You are never required to disclose your disability, but you may choose to disclose your disability in order to request reasonable accommodations. The Office of Disability Services Coordinator is the individual designated by the college to determine which accommodations are appropriate for each student's needs. The coordinator gives primary consideration to specific accommodation requests based on your documentation of a disability and past experience with using the accommodation. In some situations, you may request an accommodation you have never used before. This may occur in cases where the accommodations were not available in your previous education setting, or you may not have attended an educational institution since being diagnosed with a disability.

## **STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Colleges have an obligation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to provide qualified students with disabilities access to their programs and services. Institutions also have an obligation to provide reasonable accommodations. **HOWEVER, students** also have equal, if not greater, responsibilities to be partners with educational institutions in meeting their needs.

### **The qualified student has the responsibility to:**

- **Be a self-advocate for his/her learning needs.**
- Formally request Accommodations with the Disability Services Office and follow the procedures
- Provide current documentation
- Discuss accommodation needs with disability services officer
- Discuss the **accommodations memo** with instructors of the courses that you need to implement the accommodations
- Communicate with the Coordinator of Disability Services and the Director of the Center for Academic Success (also in the Health and Wellness Center at Pate Hall) as needed

### **A student has the right to:**

- Not be discriminated or retaliated against because he/she has a disability.
- Participate in and enjoy the educational programs and services offered by the institution in which the student has chosen to enroll, attend and participate.
- Appropriate accommodations.
- Have information about his/her disability kept confidential.
- Expect that other departments of the University will work cooperatively with the disability services coordinator and the student in providing accommodations and addressing legitimate needs.
- Choose not to self-identify with disability services or request accommodations.

## **FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES**

Each member of the faculty plays an important role in the implementation of accommodations to students with disabilities. Although providing reasonable accommodations are not negotiable; the manner by which accommodations are provided may be negotiable. In keeping with that role....

### **Faculty has the right to:**

- Expect students with disabilities to actively participate in the course. For on campus students to abide by attendance and participation requirements and for online learners to meet participation requirements.
- Expect students to observe the code of conduct.
- Expect that students will adhere to the academic integrity policy.
- Determine the curricula for their courses.
- Determine student progress and assign grades.
- Provide input regarding the accommodations employed in their courses.

- To question accommodations that would fundamentally alter the academic standards or compromise the mastery of essential competencies.
- Receive a copy of the accommodations memo for students enrolled in their courses each semester.
- Provide timely notification of specific needs.

**Faculty has the responsibility to:**

- Provide an atmosphere in which all students can learn course material.
- Include a **Reasonable Accommodation Statement** on the syllabus for each course taught.
- Provide accommodations in a fair and timely manner.
- Contact the Office of Disability Services Office with questions or suggestions regarding the appropriateness of an accommodation.
- Grade students based on their performance, without counting off for reasonable accommodation.
- Make academic adjustments in instruction as appropriate.
- If Internet resources and other technologies are used, then these resources must also be as accessible to students with disabilities as they are for other students.
- To conference with individual students either by meeting, in person, by phone or in the case of online learners through other electronic media with the student for discussion regarding the implementation of accommodations.

**GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNICATING WITH FACULTY MEMBERS**

- Call or email your faculty members as soon as you receive the Accommodations Memo in order to discuss the eligible academic accommodations you want to implement in your course. You need to meet in person, by phone, email, SKYPE or FACETIME with your faculty member to discuss your learning needs and the accommodations. You should provide a copy of your accommodations memo to your instructors within 2 days of the start of the semester.
- If you have questions or concerns about the course or your performance, make an appointment to speak to them during your faculty member's office hours. Be punctual for the appointment (whether the appointment is in person, phone, or through an electronic media such as SKYPE or FACETIME) and address your instructor in a respectful and courteous manner.
- E-mail your instructor if you have questions that are less complex.
- Faculty members have different policies for exams, due dates, and attendance. It is your responsibility to study each faculty member's syllabus. Adhering to your instructor's policies will benefit you.
- E-mail your instructor in advance if you need to be absent from /or if you are an online learner and there will be a period of time that you will not be participating in your course.
- Be ready to problem solve with your instructor. If any conflicts arise, devise potential solutions to propose to your instructor.

- Contact your Disability Services Coordinator if you need support or practice in talking with an instructor.

## **ONLINE LEARNING**

### **Is Online Learning for you?**

Trying to decide if you would do well as an online learner? It's not always an easy decision. Online courses require a lot of commitment because all participants must set aside time to meet "contact time" requirements. Lectures often require students to read and write all "in-class" communication. Some lectures are delivered live through our Google Collaborate or via video using the Moodle system.

Online students are typically able to decide when to work on an online course during the week, but will still have due dates and schedules to follow. Online courses are not easier or quicker than attending courses on-campus.

#### Recommended Computer Skills:

- ability to navigate through files and directories;
- ability to save a file to a specific drive and folder;
- ability to recognize file extensions and common file types (for example: .doc, .rtf, .puff);
- ability to create, save, edit, and rename documents;
- ability to close, minimize, and quit a computer program;

#### Recommended Word Processing Skills:

- ability to create and save a new file, or download, save, and open a file that is part of an assignment;
- ability to type and edit text on a screen or in a document; ability to change text format/style etc;
- ability to set margins, spacing, and tabs;
- ability to check spelling, grammar, and word usage;
- ability to print a document;
- ability to save in alternate formats, for example .rtf or .txt;

#### Recommended Internet/Web Skills:

- ability to connect to an Internet Service Provider;
- ability to visit a designated URL (web address);
- ability to use basic internet browser functions ;
- ability to set margins, spacing, and tabs;
- ability to search for resources on the web;
- ability to bookmark information on the web;
- ability to refresh the browser cache.

## ONLINE LEARNING AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities sometimes decide that taking online courses will be the solution to their accommodation needs. You may be considering online study for the same reasons. Please be aware that studying online can create the need for a whole different set of accommodations. You should enroll in an online course only after you have taken the time to carefully consider the requirements of the study and your strengths and weaknesses.

### Ask yourself these questions:

#### ***How well do I manage my time?***

The independent nature of online study requires a firm grasp on the ability to manage your time. You will be required to set a regular study schedule, keep track of assignments and due dates, as well as participate in online discussions. This may be more difficult without in-person reminders from a faculty member. This requires discipline and self-motivation to ensure that the course is not forgotten in your day-to-day activities.

#### ***Does my disability affect my ability to process and comprehend written information?***

For individuals with certain disabilities, managing the content, directions and discussion in an online course becomes increasingly difficult. Information in an online course is frequently delivered via written material on the course management system. The faculty member may not be immediately available to deliver the information auditory or to provide clarification for any misunderstood concepts or assignments.

#### ***Will I need to utilize assistive technology to complete this course?***

For some students with disabilities, the use of assistive technology is necessary. This can pose a challenge if some aspects of the online course management system are not compatible with the assistive technology you are using. Try to use your assistive technology with the sample course to identify any challenges that you will encounter while engaged in online study.

#### ***How comfortable am I with computers and technology?***

It is important to be aware of your current comfort level with technology and computers. Are you already accustomed to working with computers? If you have not already mastered at the very least some basic computer skills, your course material can seem much more mysterious and confusing. Accessing all course information and instruction in an online format can be intimidating and stressful for some students. Knowing your comfort level with computers and technology will allow you to determine whether or not online study is for you.

#### ***What do I expect of an online course?***

It's important to be aware of your expectations of online courses. No two courses (or faculty members) are exactly alike! What kind of interaction are you expecting from the faculty member? Are you expecting a lot of personal interaction or a little? Do you think

that you will have a lot of writing to do or not as much? What information are you basing your expectations on? Before the course begins, consider contacting the faculty member to find out as much as possible about the format of the course, the expectations the faculty members have of you, and what you need to do to successfully complete the course. The more information you learn about the study prior to enrolling and beginning the study, the better you can determine if online study is for you.

*Adapted from WNCC Transition Guide for Students with Disabilities (2014)*

## PROCESS FOR REGISTERING AND RECEIVING APPROVED ACCOMMODATIONS:

1. Go to Forms on the Left hand side menu of the ODS website.
  - a. Then click on Initial Forms
  - b. Complete the three forms in that section
2. Send the three forms and formal documentation of your disability (evaluation by a licensed practitioner) to the Office of Disability Services
3. Make an appointment with the Coordinator of Disability Services to discuss accommodations and receive an accommodations memo to give to all professors. Do this **before classes begin**.
4. Take a copy of your accommodations memo to **each** professor within the **first two days** of the semester.
5. Make an appointment with the Director of the Center for Academic Success to arrange for academic supports (i.e. academic study aide, testing, notetaker etc.)

**STUDENTS WILL NOT RECEIVE ACCOMMODATIONS UNTIL THE ABOVE ACTIONS ARE TAKEN BY THE STUDENT!**

