

Texas Woman's University University Regulation and Procedure

Regulation and Procedure Name: Academic Accommodations for Students

**Regulation and Procedure
Number: URP: 01.242**

Policy Owner: Student Life

POLICY STATEMENT

Texas Woman's University ("TWU" or "University") does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission, treatment, or access to its programs or activities. The University is committed to providing equal educational access for qualified students with disabilities in accordance with state and federal laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as Amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. To this end, all academic units will make reasonable and appropriate adjustments to the classroom environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies in order to facilitate equality of educational access for persons with disabilities.

APPLICABILITY

This policy is applicable to TWU Students, Faculty, Staff, Guests, and University Affiliates.

DEFINITIONS

1. "Accommodations" means modifications to a course, program or educational requirements as are necessary and reasonable so that such requirements do not discriminate or have the effect of discriminating against a student on the basis of a disability. Academic requirements that are essential to the course, to a student's program of instruction, or which relate directly to licensing requirements will not be regarded as discriminatory. Modifications may include but are not limited to: extended time for exams, preferential seating, flexibility with attendance requirements, reduced distractions in testing environments, degree modifications, and relocation of classrooms to accessible locations.
2. "Auxiliary Aids and Services" means accommodations that assist students with disabilities in the educational setting. Auxiliary aids and services may include but are not limited to digital textbooks, note-takers, sign language interpreters, enlarged text, and real-time captioning. Devices or services of a personal nature such as personal care attendants, individually prescribed devices, or readers for personal use are not provided by the University.

3. “Disability Services Coordinator” means the official in the Disability Services for Students office responsible for determining and coordinating reasonable accommodation, modification, and auxiliary aids and services for qualified prospective, newly admitted, or currently enrolled students.
4. “Faculty” means a person who teaches a course offered for academic credit by TWU, teaching assistants, instructors, lab assistants, research assistants, lecturers, adjuncts, assistant professors, associate professors, and full professors. This also includes clinical faculty, visiting faculty, and adjunct faculty.
5. “Guest” means any individual not affiliated with TWU.
6. “MyDSS” means the online portal accessible through the DSS Website, used by DSS registered students to request faculty notification of DSS approved accommodations.
7. “Person with a Disability” means a person who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities; who has a record of such impairment; or who is regarded as having such an impairment.
8. “Programs” means one of the following:
 - a. “Academic Programs” means any combination of courses and requirements leading to a degree, certificate, major, minor, or concentration. This includes both in-person and online courses and requirements.
 - b. “Non-Academic Programs” means all co-curricular programs, employment, activities, or services offered by the University. This includes both in-person and online programs, employment, activities, and services.
9. “Qualified student with a disability” means a student with a disability who meets the academic and technical standards required for admission and participation in educational program(s) and activities.
10. “Staff” means each classified, administrative, and professional employee who is appointed to work at least 20 hours each week for a period of four and one-half months, excluding students employed in positions for which student status is required as a condition of employment and those employees holding teaching and/or research positions classified as faculty.
11. “Student” means a person taking courses at TWU, a person who is not currently enrolled in courses but who has a continuing academic

relationship with TWU, or a person who has been admitted or readmitted to TWU.

12. “University Affiliate” means any individual associated with TWU in a capacity other than as a Student or Employee who has access to TWU resources through a contractual arrangement or other association. This includes the following individuals:
 - a. Contractors and Vendors: an individual, business, or governmental entity that has a fully executed contract to provide goods or services to TWU. This includes employees of contractors or vendors and independent contractors.
 - b. Employee of a Governmental Agency: an individual employed by a federal or Texas state agency.
 - c. Employee of a TWU-Affiliated Institution: an individual who works for organizations that are tightly aligned with the University.
 - d. Pre-Employment Individual: an individual who will be hired by the University and the hiring department has sponsored their access to TWU resources.
 - e. Other University Affiliate: any individual who does not fit into any other category and needs access to TWU resources.

REGULATION AND PROCEDURE

I. Referral of Students to Disability Services for Students (“DSS”)

If a faculty or staff member is made aware that a student believes themselves to be a qualified student with a disability in need of accommodations or auxiliary aids and services, the student should be referred to DSS for consultation with a Disability Services Coordinator.

II. Student Eligibility for Accommodation

A. DSS coordinates accommodations for TWU academic programs. A student is eligible for accommodation or auxiliary aids and services if they are documented as a qualified student with a disability and the Disability Services Coordinator has met with the student and determined that the functional limitations of the disability require such accommodation or auxiliary aids and services.

1. Prospective students may request reasonable accommodation (e.g., for testing, campus tours, or orientation) at any

time during the application process by submitting a written request to the hosting department (See URP 01.240: Campus Access for People with Disabilities).

2. Students may request reasonable accommodation for a non-academic program by following URP 01.240: Campus Access for People with Disabilities.
3. Newly accepted and currently enrolled students are responsible for initiating a disability-related request for accommodation or auxiliary aids and services with DSS as early as possible in the semester through their MyDSS Portal, and prior to the time when the accommodation or auxiliary aids or service will be needed.
4. A student who encounters difficulty physically accessing a class or academic program in a TWU facility should meet with DSS to coordinate reasonable accommodations.
5. The Disability Services Coordinator has the discretion to determine the type of documentation necessary to establish eligibility for DSS services. Any costs related to this initial documentation will be the responsibility of the student.

III. Determination, Limitations, and Notification Regarding Eligibility

A. Determination

1. The University is required to provide reasonable academic accommodations and auxiliary aids and services that are necessary to afford students with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in TWU's academic programs.
2. The Disability Services Coordinator determines accommodations on a case-by-case basis, based on the documentation, the student's history, and specific functional limitations.
3. The Disability Services Coordinator will determine whether accommodation or auxiliary aids or services are reasonable following an individual assessment of a student's written documentation and a personal meeting with the student.
4. When necessary, the Disability Services Coordinator will collaborate with individual faculty members to identify reasonable accommodations that provide students with an equal opportunity without modifying essential course requirements.

B. Limitations

1. The University is not required to make accommodations or provide aids or services that would result in a fundamental alteration of an academic program or impose an undue burden on the University.
2. The University is not required to alter or modify a course or academic program to the extent that it changes the fundamental nature of that course or program.
3. Decisions regarding accommodations or auxiliary aids and services may require consultation with TWU faculty or administrators to consider the fundamental nature of a course or academic program.
4. Accommodation notification emails are not retroactive and thus will not apply to coursework attempted or due prior to faculty receipt of verification of DSS approved accommodations.

C. Notification

1. The Disability Services Coordinator will provide eligibility notification regarding DSS registration status (registered, provisionally registered, pending documentation, or denied) and any approved accommodations or auxiliary aids and services via the student's TWU email account.
2. Student accommodation notification emails must be requested by the student each semester. DSS will communicate a student's approved accommodations to faculty only after a student's MyDSS portal request.
3. DSS communicates a student's approved accommodations to faculty through accommodation notification emails.

IV. Student Responsibilities

- A. A student has no obligation to inform the University that they have a disability; however, if a student desires an accommodation or other disability-related service from the University, the student must self-identify as having a disability.
- B. A student who wishes to request disability-related accommodations or modification of certain generally applicable academic requirements must provide DSS with timely, relevant, and complete written documentation of the disability for which accommodation is requested.

- C. DSS approved students who are eligible for academic accommodations must request faculty accommodation notification emails through the MyDSS portal using TWU student login credentials in order to initiate the accommodation process for their specific courses they have been approved accommodations for.
- D. As early as possible in a semester, a student who has been approved for accommodation or use of auxiliary aids and services should seek a confidential meeting with the faculty members whose courses they have been approved accommodations for (in-person, virtually, or via telephone) to:
 - 1. Confirm email receipt of the accommodation notification; and
 - 2. Make arrangements for implementation of the approved accommodation(s) or use of auxiliary aids and services.
- E. Students are strongly encouraged to request faculty accommodation notification emails through the online MyDSS portal well in advance as faculty members have up to five (5) business days to provide approved accommodations.
- F. Students must request accommodations each semester that they desire to receive them. Faculty are not responsible for providing accommodations if they have not received the faculty notification from DSS for the current semester.
- G. Any student who feels that the granted accommodations are ineffective should inform the Disability Services Coordinator immediately so that alternate accommodations may be considered.

V. Faculty Responsibilities

- A. Faculty members may not deny an approved accommodation without consulting the Disability Services Coordinator to consider alternate means to accommodate a student's disability. At the request of a faculty member, DSS will review accommodations for a specific course to consider their impact on the fundamental nature of a course or academic program.
- B. Faculty members may not disclose the student's disability to anyone without the written consent of the student.
- C. After receiving an accommodation notification, faculty members have up to five (5) business days to provide the approved accommodations. This is to allow time for administrative planning.
- D. Faculty are not required to honor requests for accommodation that have not been approved by DSS.

E. Course syllabi shall include the following statement:

1. Disability Access Policy Statement: Texas Woman's University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic, or temporary medical conditions), please contact me via email, phone or during office hours, so that we may privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, please register with Disability Services for Students (DSS). After registration, contact me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion.
2. DSS contact information: <https://twu.edu/disability-services>; dss@twu.edu; 940-898-3835; CFO Ste. 106

VI. DSS Informal Resolution Process

- A. Disability Services for Students and the Student Accountability and Growth Education ("SAGE") Center are committed to working with TWU students with disabilities to resolve disagreements regarding the need for or implementation of accommodations. A student requesting an accommodation or use of auxiliary aids or services may seek dispute resolution in accordance with the procedures below if the student either disagrees with a decision of DSS, or is dissatisfied with an accommodation.
- B. Informal Resolution. Students have fourteen (14) business days to notify the DSS Director if their initial accommodations do not address their accessibility needs. If the DSS Director cannot reach agreement with the student to resolve the concerns informally, the student may appeal to the SAGE Center.

VII. ADA Coordinator

- A. The ADA Coordinator, in the SAGE Center, shall receive and respond to complaints of discrimination on the basis of disability, including allegations of failure to accommodate; oversee the University's response to requests for accommodation from students; and oversee the response to campus accessibility issues in collaboration with other offices.
- B. Students who believe that they have been discriminated against on the basis of having a disability, a record of disability, or being regarded as disabled may file a complaint with the SAGE Center.
- C. The ADA Coordinator's office is located in Old Main Suite 106. The ADA Coordinator can be reached by calling (940) 898-2968, or by emailing civility@twu.edu.

VIII. Grievance Procedures

- A. If a student is unsuccessful in their engagement of the DSS Informal Resolution Process detailed above, they may proceed with the following actions.
- B. Formal Resolution. A SAGE Center investigator will review all written materials submitted by the student and will interview, as necessary under the circumstances, the student, DSS staff, faculty, and any other person deemed relevant to the issue. The SAGE Center will render a decision and inform the student via their TWU student email account.
- C. Appeal Process. If the student is not satisfied with the decision reached through formal resolution, an appeal may be filed with the SAGE Center director pursuant to the URP 06.230: Student Grievance. A student is not required to exhaust informal and formal resolution methods before filing a grievance.

IX. Ineligibility

- A. The ADA applies to all qualified students with a disability. Students who are not qualified students with a disability are not entitled to reasonable accommodation, and are not eligible to receive counseling or other assistance from DSS. DSS shall not issue any communications, directions or suggestions to faculty, staff, or administrators regarding students who have not been certified as ADA-eligible.
- B. Students who are not ADA-eligible but still have an issue affecting their academic performance may seek assistance from the Office of Student Life. These officials will respond to all such requests in accordance with established academic policies.
- C. A student seeking resolution to a non-disability related dispute concerning academic status arising from an administrative or faculty decision that the student regards as incorrect or unjust should refer to URP 02.220: Academic Administrative Complaints and Appeals.

X. Student Employees

Student Employees must request accommodations through the Office of Human Resources (See URP 06.500: Student Employment).

REVIEW

This policy will remain in effect and published until it is reviewed, updated, or archived. This policy is to be reviewed once every six years. Interim review may be required as a result of updates to federal and state law or regulations, Board of Regents policies, or internal processes or procedures.

REFERENCES

[URP 01.240: Campus Access for People with Disabilities](#)

[URP 06.230: Student Grievance](#)

[URP 02.220: Administrative Complaints and Appeals](#)

[URP 06.500: Student Employment](#)

[The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990](#)

[Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines](#)

[The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504](#)

[Texas Accessibility Standards](#)

FORMS AND TOOLS

None

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