

Policy and Procedure

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Division/Department:	Disability Services
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Subject:	Access for Students with Disabilities (Student procedure for Access to Disability Services and/or Filing a Disability Complaint)
Authorities:	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and MnSCU Board Policy
Purpose:	

1. To communicate college policy regarding students with disabilities.
2. To provide the procedure for requesting accommodations.
3. To describe the process by which Pine Technical College students may file a disability complaint.

Policy:

Pine Technical College values diversity and is committed to ensuring equal access and opportunity to all students and guests. There are several laws that address the college's responsibilities regarding individuals with disabilities. These include the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Rehabilitation Act, and the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

The college has two basic duties under the law regarding individuals with disabilities:

- First, the college must not discriminate against individuals on the basis of disability. A 'qualified' individual with a known disability is someone who, with or without reasonable accommodation, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs, services, or activities provided by this college. The college may not treat qualified individuals with disabilities differently from individuals without disabilities or have a policy that disparately impacts individuals with disabilities.
- Second, the college must provide access to its programs and services, and reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with known disabilities.
- The term "qualified individual with a disability" means an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable modifications to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, or communication, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities.

In order to determine and provide effective accommodations, the college may request additional information. This may include documentation from appropriate professionals.

An individual with a disability is any person who:

1. Has a physical, mental or emotional impairment, that substantially or materially limits one or more of their major life activities;
 2. Has a record of such an impairment;
- or
3. Is regarded as having an impairment.

Disability Services works with students with disabilities and college officials to resolve questions of 'reasonable accommodation' and other issues related to the college's compliance with disability laws.

Because each person's situation is unique, Disability Services asks that any interested student meet with the Disability Services staff. Documentation requirements vary by situation. Disability Services will talk to the student about documentation during the initial conversation. No student should delay meeting with Disability Services out of concern for not having appropriate paperwork. Accommodations will not be applied retroactively.

An accommodation is a modification or support that gives a student with a disability an equal opportunity to participate and benefit from college. Accommodations are adjustments to how things are usually done. The purpose of effective accommodations is to increase a student's chances for success.

Reasonable accommodations can be provided in various ways. The following are brief descriptions and examples of the most common categories of accommodations that permit a qualified student with a disability to effectively participate in the educational process.

1. Changes to a classroom environment or task; examples might include, but are not limited to:
 - extended time for an exam,
 - the use of a dictionary or spell checker,
 - materials in alternative formats such as large print, audio tape or computer disk.
2. Removal of architectural barriers; examples might include, but are not limited to:
 - adapting a classroom to meet the needs of a student who uses a wheelchair.
3. Exceptions to policies, practices or procedures; examples might include, but are not limited to:
 - priority registration or accessing assignments early.
4. Provision of auxiliary aids and services; examples might include, but are not limited to:
 - providing a sign language interpreter,
 - providing a note taker.

In accordance with the law, there are some modifications that the college does not provide as a reasonable accommodation. Examples include:

- personal devices such as wheelchairs, or glasses,
- personal services, such as private tutoring or personal attendants (Note: Tutoring services may be available elsewhere at the campus.),
- modifications that lower or change course standards or program standards,
- modifications that would change the essence of a program, such as allowing a student in an auto mechanics program to take a written test on repairing an engine instead of actually repairing an engine or allowing a student in a public speaking class to substitute a written paper for an oral presentation,
- services that are unduly burdensome, administratively or financially.

Procedure:

Student Responsibilities:

1. Contact Disability Services to schedule an intake meeting and request services.
2. Provide appropriate evidence to support the need for accommodations.
3. Discuss accommodations that work with Disability Services staff for the purpose of creating an accommodation plan.
4. Meet in person, by phone, or by email with Disability Services **each semester to request accommodations for the term:**
 - Alternate format texts - request as soon as known and allow at least three weeks.
 - Braille text – request as soon as possible. Availability will depend on whether the book is already available in a Braille format.
 - Sign language interpreters – request as soon as need is known and allow at least two weeks in advance.
5. Receive copy of instructor accommodation letters sent by email from Disability Services.
6. Inform Disability Services of any schedule changes or changes in accommodations/modifications as they arise.
7. Notify Disability Services if accommodation services are not received or if accommodations are not effective.

8. Check in with Disability Services at least two times each semester to discuss any changes and effectiveness of accommodations.
9. Attend classes, complete assignments and tests.

Faculty Responsibilities:

1. Identify concerns about student performance through the Academic Alert system.
2. If a student identifies a known disability or suspects a disability, refer students to Disability Services for services and, if needed, additional assessment.
3. Contact Disability Services for advice on working with a student with a known disability or a possible disability.
4. When an accommodation letter is received, make materials and tests available to all students at the same time, including alternate format materials.
5. If an accommodation letter is received, contact Disability Services to discuss any problem with providing the accommodation or concern that providing an accommodation will interfere with meeting essential requirements for the course or program.

Disability Services:

1. Meet with students requesting services in a timely manner to start a file in Disability Services; obtain student information for identifying accommodations and providing the student with information on Disability Services at Pine Technical College.
2. Work with the student to identify an accommodation plan, based on determination of a known disability and information provided. Third party documentation may be necessary to identify accommodation needs in an academic setting, or to update information on changes in the disability.
3. Send letters of accommodation for each class, instructions for accessing accommodations, such as alternate test site or obtaining alternate format materials. Letters are emailed in PDF format to the student and instructors receive a blind copy.
4. Provide a copy of the accommodations for students receiving testing accommodations to the testing coordinator.
5. Provide accommodations in a timely manner, allowing reasonable time to implement accommodations.
6. Arrange accommodations each term upon request of the student.

7. Maintain confidentiality regarding disability information and keep documentation in a locked file, separate from other student files, and/or on a private computer file. Information is shared only on a need to know basis.
8. Provide general information and assistance to faculty and staff who work with people who have disabilities.
9. Act as liaison to agencies serving students with disabilities, such as Rehabilitation Services, State Services for the Blind, and school transition groups.

Complaint Process:

If the student believes they have not received reasonable and appropriate services, or have been discriminated against or harassed because of a disability, they may file a complaint.

1. Meet with Disability Services staff to discuss the concern. When possible, the complaint will be resolved at this level.
2. File a formal complaint using the Grievance Procedure provided in the Student Handbook. Complaints concerning disability discrimination will be referred to the campus ADA Compliance officer.
3. Students have the right to file a complaint directly with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights by calling 1-800-421-3481 (Voice)/1-877-521-2172 (TTY) or the Minnesota Department of Human Rights by calling 1-800-657-3704 (Voice), or for TTY communication contact Minnesota Relay service at 7-1-1.

Responsibilities: Disability Services, Student Affairs, Chief Student Affairs Officer/Dean of Student Affairs, Human Resources

Dissemination: College webpage, S drive, Student Handbook, Student Affairs communication pieces, Disability Services

Reviewed by Campus Roundtable: 1/14/2013

Reviewed by Faculty Shared Governance: 1/16/2013

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