

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

1. Policy

In keeping with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, the College is committed to providing equal access to educational opportunities for qualified students with disabilities. The College shall provide reasonable academic accommodations to qualified students with disabilities as necessary to ensure equality of access to the courses, programs, services, and facilities of the College. However, students with disabilities are still required to adhere to all College policies, including policies concerning conduct and performance.

The student is responsible for demonstrating the need for an academic accommodations by providing College Accessibility Resource Center with documentation that establishes the disability, and the need for and appropriateness of the requested accommodation(s).

Documentation must be provided by a qualified professional who has made an individualized assessment of the applicant. Appropriate documentation may include a letter from a qualified professional or evidence of a prior diagnosis, accommodation, or classification, such as eligibility for a special education program.

The College is responsible for all costs of academic accommodations. The following sections provide procedures for students, faculty, and staff on academic accommodation requirements.

2. Student Responsibilities

It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate the need for an academic accommodation by providing Accessibility Resource Center with documentation that establishes the disability, and the need for and appropriateness of the requested accommodation(s). Documentation must be provided by a qualified professional who has made an individualized assessment of the applicant. Appropriate documentation may include a letter from a qualified professional or evidence of a prior diagnosis, accommodation, or classification, such as eligibility for a special education program. Accessibility Resource Center can provide information on the kind of documentation that is required.

Accessibility Resource Center will determine a student's eligibility and, in consultation with the student, will determine effective and appropriate academic accommodations.. Accessibility Resource Center may consult with other College departments, as necessary, in order to make a determination of eligibility and what academic accommodations are appropriate and reasonable. Accessibility Resource Center will provide the student with letters of accommodation to give to their instructors for each class requiring accommodations. Accessibility Resource Center is responsible for costs relating to academic adjustments that are part of instructional courses.

Once the student has established his or her eligibility for academic accommodations, Accessibility Resource Center will provide appropriate accommodations as expeditiously as

possible. Generally, accommodations will be in place within fifteen (15) working days; however, some adjustments can require a longer period of time to arrange. Therefore, students are encouraged to pre-register with Accessibility Resource Center before classes begin so that adjustments can be in place when needed at the start of the semester. If pre-registration is not possible, students should register at the start of the semester or as soon as the need for an adjustment becomes known, and Accessibility Resource Center will make every effort to accommodate the student's needs as soon as possible. Requests received right at or after the start of a semester may result in the student being without the accommodation for part of the semester. Students should be aware that an academic accommodation does not apply retroactively, so that grades earned on exams, assignments, or other classroom activities before the adjustment takes effect will not be changed.

2.1. Faculty Responsibilities

Faculty members must provide students with the academic accommodations identified in the letter from Accessibility Resource Center. If the faculty member has questions or concerns, or needs help with making the modifications called for, he or she should contact Accessibility Resource Center. If a student discloses a disability to a faculty member and requests an academic accommodation but the student does not have a letter from Accessibility Resource Center, the faculty member should direct the student to Accessibility Resource Center. It is not the faculty member's responsibility to decide whether the student has a disability and what accommodations are appropriate. Faculty can help the College meet its obligations to provide students with academic accommodations in a timely manner by stating on their class syllabus that students should inform them of any special needs as soon as possible. Students who do so should be referred to Accessibility Resource Center.

2.2. Appeal

In most instances the academic adjustment determination made by Accessibility Resource Center will be acceptable to the student and faculty. However, if that is not the case, the determination is subject to appeal. In addition, the student can appeal a determination by an academic unit that an accommodation would result in a fundamental alteration of a course or program. The Provost, or designee, will convene an ad hoc committee to consider the appeal. Members of the ad hoc committee will include representatives from relevant College departments as determined on a case-by-case basis. The ad hoc committee will make a recommendation to the Provost, or designee, whose decision on the appeal is final for the College. Every effort should be made to arrive at a determination of the appeal as expeditiously as possible.

3. Criteria for Determining Academic Accommodations

The College shall make academic accommodations for the known physical or mental limitations of a qualified student with a disability, unless the College can show that providing an adjustment would result in:

- a fundamental alteration of the service, course, program, or activity;
- an undue financial, administrative, or academic burden, and/or;
- a direct threat to the health or safety of the student or others.

3.1. Individual with a Disability

Disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

A physical impairment is a physiological condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss that affects one or more of the following body systems: neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory, speech organs, cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genito-urinary, hemic and lymphatic, skin, and endocrine. A mental impairment is a mental or psychological disorder such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities

3.2. Qualified Student with a Disability

A qualified student with a disability is a student with a disability who meets the academic and technical standards required for admission and participation in the programs and activities of Northern New Mexico College.

3.3. Academic Adjustment

An academic accommodation is a modification or adjustment to instructional methods and/or to a course, program, service, or facility of the College that enables a qualified student with a disability to have equal access and opportunity to attain the same level of performance and to enjoy equal benefits and privileges as are available to similarly-situated students without a disability. Determining reasonable academic accommodations must be done on a case-by case basis and in consultation with the student. The College is not required to provide the specific adjustment requested, but the accommodation must be effective to enable a qualified student with a disability to enjoy equal opportunity and access. All offers of accommodations are subject to applicable College policies.

3.3.1. Course or Program Modifications

The College shall provide such modifications to courses, programs, or educational requirements as are necessary and appropriate to enable a qualified student with a disability to enjoy equal opportunity and access. However, the College is not required to fundamentally alter the essential nature of a course or academic program. Reasonable academic accommodations may include, but are not limited to, extended time on an examination or paper, and oral instead of written examinations, where appropriate.

3.3.2. Auxiliary Aids and Services

Reasonable academic accommodation in the form of auxiliary aids and services may include, but are not limited to: note-takers, readers, Braille or large print materials, and sign language interpreters. However, the College is not required to provide devices or services of a personal nature such as personal attendants or personal devices utilized in activities of daily living.

4. Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator

The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator for Northern New Mexico College is the Accessibility Resource Coordinator. Students who believe that they have been discriminated

against on the basis of a disability may contact the Office of Equal Opportunity to file a complaint with the College's Dean of Students