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MIDWIVES COLLEGE OF UTAH

M I D W I F I N G M I D W I V E S

Adjustment Agreements Step-by-Step Process

How does this process work?

Generally speaking there are some concrete shifts and changes MCU can make to attempt to make reasonable accommodations for learning difficulties. Typically those involve accommodations around time allotment for testing and constructing creative options for completing assignments while still meeting the stated learning objectives of a specific class or assignment. It is the student's responsibility to make their accommodation needs known and to provide the appropriate documentation to support the need for the requested accommodation(s). It is important for students to remember that under the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations are provided to ensure equal access. Reasonable accommodations cannot fundamentally alter essential course or degree requirements. A student has the right to succeed or fail in a course based on his/her academic performance. Accommodations in no way guarantee a student success in a course.

Note: Accommodations are **not retroactive** and both our office and faculty must be allowed sufficient time to implement the accommodations. Extenuating circumstances are determined by our office and can include sudden acute onset of a psychological condition, hospitalization, flare up of an existing disability, an injury, recent onset of a disability or disability related complications, undue delay in documentation, or a late add of a course. In such circumstances, the Office of Student Life will assist with arrangements to provide accommodations and support.

What is the purpose of a reasonable accommodation?

The purpose of a **reasonable accommodation** is to provide a modification or adjustment that enables a qualified student with a disability to participate in courses, programs, activities, or services. A reasonable accommodation assures that a qualified student with a disability has rights and privileges equal to students without disabilities. Reasonable accommodations may include academic adjustments, auxiliary aids or services. Accommodations do not guarantee academic success; the student is still responsible for learning subject knowledge, demonstrating mastery of content, and meeting the same demands required of all students.

What does the term “reasonable” mean?

An accommodation is considered **reasonable** if it does not require substantial change in the curriculum or alteration of any essential elements or functions of a course, program, service, or activity. The Office of Student Life may consider reasonable alternatives to accommodation requests, though significance is given to a student’s preference.

What are the differences among academic adjustments, auxiliary aids, and services?

- An **academic adjustment** minimizes or eliminates the impact of any disability that would unfairly restrict a student’s access to MCU’s courses, programs, activities, or facilities. Examples might include: extension of time for tests, course substitution of nonessential requirements, priority registration, etc. (this is not an exhaustive list).
- An **auxiliary aid** might include adaptive equipment, assistive technology, FM systems, electronic textbooks or books in alternative formats, computers for testing, etc. (this is not an exhaustive list).
- A **service** may include a reader for tests, notetaker for a course, test proctors, sign language interpreters, real-time captioning, etc. (this is not an exhaustive list).

What is the first step?

Step One: Student provide / Submit documentation of your diagnosis and support parameters / options.

The first step is for you to provide us with some sort of documentation of your disability. That documentation can come from a therapist, or a psychologist, or a psychiatrist who has conducted some kind of assessment or testing and diagnosed you with a learning disability. Any documentation of your diagnosis will suffice. Typically, documentation also includes the types of accommodations that the professional who has diagnosed and assessed you determines will aid in your capacity for success in a virtual academic environment.

You certainly don't need to disclose to your professors individually what struggles you are having unless you are comfortable with that. After your general adjustment agreement is completed you may further create a Consideration Adjustment Agreement Form. This course specific agreement is intended to reflect additional or more specific flexibility applicable/relevant to how your disability manifests as you attempt to meet the learning objectives in a particular course. Its creation would be arranged in collaboration between you and the course instructor with an underlying/overarching general adjustment agreement acting as its foundation.

What is the second step?

Step Two: Student schedules a meeting with Student Life to discuss preferences and needs.

Once a student's application and documentation have been received an initial meeting can be scheduled. It will be important for us to hear from you regarding how your disability impacts your capacity to do coursework whether that be showing up and being present for live sessions (a significant component of your grade in many of your courses) or being able to complete reading and written assignments. This meeting establishes what your needs are, identifies your unique challenges and allows for an initial review of a draft adjustment agreement.

What is the third step?

Step Three: Student reviews draft adjustment agreement and makes edits / suggestions.

Academic accommodations are designed to ensure access to course content and programming while mitigating disability-related functional limitations that may adversely impact a student's ability to fully participate in a course or show mastery of content during routine coursework and examinations.

Accommodations do not guarantee academic success; the student is still responsible for:

- learning subject knowledge
- demonstrating mastery of content
- satisfying the essential requirements of courses
- showing progression toward major
- meeting the same demands required of all students

Course accommodations that are incorporated into adjustment agreements may include, but are not limited to:

- Flexed attendance
- Flexed due dates/deadline extensions on assignments
- Rescheduling exams or quizzes
- Extended time on exams or quizzes

This is a document which is worked on in collaboration with the student. The goal of the adjustment agreement is that it builds a foundation for support. In tandem with the recommendations of your therapist/psychologist/psychiatrist, it creates the opportunity for your instructors to do some creative problem solving around your identified learning difficulties which we hope can enable you to optimally succeed and progress in the program.

What is the fourth / final step?

Step Four: After review by the student, the Adjustment Agreement is finalized by Student Life, forwarded to the Registrar (directly by Student Life) and instructors (directly by student).

Remember. Academic flexibility is individually determined based on course content and structure. In order to receive academic accommodations, students are responsible for submitting their current adjustment agreement to the instructor in each course. This should be an

interactive conversation between the student and the instructor about the course requirements and the specific accommodations that the student anticipates utilizing in that course.

Contact Student Life as soon as possible if you:

- Are experiencing an exacerbation of disability-related symptoms that is causing a change with regard to your need for / reliance on consideration accommodations
- Have concerns with any of the consideration accommodations

The Director of Student, Life, Equity and Access (SLEA), Director of Student Services, and Dean are always available to consult with faculty and students on the creation of an adjustment agreement and brainstorm course specific accommodations.