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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 Director of Compliance 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 Director of Compliance 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 fills out the [Adjustment Agreement Request Form](#)

The first step is for you to notify the Director of Compliance of your need for an accommodation by filling out the Adjustment Agreement Request Form. This requires providing 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.

## What is the second step?

*Step Two:* Student schedules a meeting with the Director of Compliance to discuss preferences and needs.

Upon submission of the Accommodations Request form, a link to the Compliance Director's calendar will be provided. The purpose of the initial meeting is to gain a better sense of what MCU can do to facilitate a student's access to MCU programming as well as answer any preliminary questions the student might have with regards to these processes and students' rights. The Director of Compliance's role is to collaborate with the student on an individualized, case-by-case basis to articulate reasonable accommodations to facilitate the student's active participation in MCU programming. The meeting establishes what the student's needs are, identifies the student's unique challenges and identifies accommodations that may be best suited

for the student.

## What is the third step?

*Step Three:* Review, sign and return for finalization

Following the meeting, the Director of Compliance will send the student a draft of the accommodation agreement. The student will review and either suggest any changes or sign and return it for finalization. The Director of Compliance will then sign and finalize the document and forward it to the student.

The signed and finalized adjustment agreement will be valid for a specified time-period (typically one year) to ensure the adjustment agreements most importantly reflect the student's needs (including capturing any changes to those needs throughout their time at MCU) and to incorporate any updates to MCU's technology or policies.

To be very clear, a student's rights to academic accommodations **do not expire at MCU and your agreement is presumptively renewed each term**. From the date of finalization on the agreement and through their entire tenure at MCU, the accommodations should be in effect.

## What is the fourth / final step?

*Step Four:* Dissemination to faculty members each term and to Testing Coordinator after Add/Drop period each term.

The student must then forward the adjustment agreement and email from the Director of Compliance to each of the student's faculty members and identify which course(s) the student is enrolled in. If a student has any proctored exams, they are to forward the adjustment agreement to the Testing Coordinator after the Add/Drop period and identify which courses have proctored exams. These adjustments need to be set up for every term, so it is important to send them as soon as your schedule is finalized.

The Director of Compliance will check in on students with Adjustment Agreements throughout their tenure at MCU to ensure the adjustment agreement remains up to date. Students can contact the Director of Compliance to make any changes to their Adjustment Agreement throughout their tenure at MCU. Because academic adjustments require coordination between different departments, it is imperative that the student allows enough time to facilitate administrative processes.

## Reminders:

**Remember.** 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.

**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 the Director of Compliance 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 Compliance, 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.