Welcome!

Disability Support Services (DSS) at the University of Central Arkansas is committed to compliance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and other relevant state and federal legislation. The mission of DSS is to maximize each student's educational potential while helping him or her develop and maintain independence. Our philosophy is one that encourages self-awareness, self-determination, self-advocacy, and independence in a comprehensively accessible environment.

While complying with the letter of the law, DSS also embraces its spirit by providing services to all students with permanent or temporary disabilities to ensure that all university programs and activities are accessible.

You are encouraged to visit DSS and learn more about the services available to you. Early planning is essential for many of the resources and accommodations provided, so we ask that you contact us at the earliest possible date in order for us to assist you with your needs.

This handbook is designed to be a resource as well as provide an overview of expectations for those students registered, or who will be registering with the Disability Support Office. If the handbook does not answer all of your questions please visit our office located in the Student Health building, suite 212, or call us (501) 450-3613.

On behalf of the DSS staff, we look forward to getting to know you!

Crystal Hill, Director
UCA Disability Support Services
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...Important University Phone Numbers...

Disability Support Services .............................................. (501) 450-3613
Academic Advising Center ............................................ (501) 450-5149
Campus Recreation ....................................................... (501) 450-5712
Career Services ............................................................ (501) 450-3134
Counseling Services ..................................................... (501) 450-3138
Financial Aid Office ...................................................... (501) 450-3140
Housing Office ............................................................. (501) 450-3132
HPER Fitness Center ..................................................... (501) 450-3463
Library ................................................................. (501) 450-3174
Math Lab ................................................................. (501) 450-3147
Multicultural Student Services ............................... (501) 450-3135
Registrar’s Office ......................................................... (501) 450-5200
Student Accounts ....................................................... (501) 450-5015
Student Health ........................................................... (501) 450-3136
Writing Center ........................................................... (501) 450-5123
University Police/Parking ............................................. (501) 450-3111
INTRODUCTION

What is a disability?

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), any person who has a physical or mental condition which substantially limits one or more life activities (such as walking, seeing, hearing, working, or learning) meets the definition of an individual with a disability. Also entitled to protection from discrimination are individuals with record of such a condition, or individuals who are regarded as having such a condition. Disabling conditions may include but are not limited to:

AIDS/HIV  Epilepsy  Hearing Impairments
Addictions  Head Injury  Visual Impairments
Muscular Disorders  Cancer  Mobility Impairments
Learning Disabilities  Heart Disease  Orthopedic Impairments
Diabetes  Speech Impairments  Perceptual Impairments
Gastrointestinal Disorders  Psychological Disorders  Neurological Disorders

What is Disability Support Services?

Disability Support Service assists the university in creating an accessible community where students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in their educational experience at UCA.

The office is located in the second floor of the Student Health building in suite 212. Office Hours are 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Friday.

Mission and Philosophy

Mission: Maximize each student's educational potential while helping him or her develop and maintain independence.

Philosophy: Our philosophy is one that encourages self-awareness, self-determination, self-advocacy, and independence in a comprehensively accessible environment.
Application Process:

Students with disabilities may be eligible for services and reasonable accommodations at the University of Central Arkansas. In order to request services, students must:

- Visit Disability Support Services or call (501) 450-3613 and schedule an appointment with a DSS staff member.
- Complete an application and appropriate release forms.
- Meet with a DSS counselor for an intake interview.
- Submit official documentation.

Accommodation Approval/Denial:

Visiting DSS does not guarantee that a student will be recognized by the university as a person with a disability or that they will receive accommodations. After completing the application process listed above, DSS staff will inform you if your file/accommodation requests have been approved, denied, or if additional documentation is required. DSS staff will also share detailed information concerning the steps that led to your particular eligibility determination. This decision is generally rendered within 2 days of completion of the intake appointment and submission of appropriate documentation. Although we encourage advanced planning, accommodations are provided only to students who have been officially accepted to the University of Central Arkansas.

Eligibility and Documentation:

Eligibility is determined based on the information provided in the medical or psychological documentation. DSS counselors will review the documentation to determine if the student meets DSS eligibility criteria. For the purposes of higher education, the Americans with Disabilities Act defines a disability as a significant impairment of one or more major life activities. Major life activities include, but are not limited to: caring for oneself, eating, performing manual tasks, walking, running, seeing, depth perception, hearing, speaking, breathing, digesting, sleeping, moving, learning, and reading.

Although the following information is helpful and will be evaluated, DSS does not accept the following as disability documentation:

- Individual Educational Plans (IEP's)
- 504 Plans
- Veterans or Social Security Administration disability determination letters
- Vocational Rehabilitation acceptance letters
- Prescription pad notes or general letters from physicians
- Letters written by other University/college disability service providers
Documentation Criteria

The following information outlines documentation requirements by disability type:

1. Attention-Deficit /Hyperactivity Disorder

   The documentation should include:
   - A current diagnostic statement.
   - Information regarding diagnosis, medication, and recommendations

2. Learning Disabilities

   The documentation should include:
   - A written report of a psycho-educational evaluation completed within the last three years. The report should include a complete intellectual assessment with all sub-tests and standard scores reported. It should also include a comprehensive academic achievement battery with all sub-tests and standard scores reported. The academic achievement battery must include current levels of academic functioning in relevant areas such as reading (decoding and comprehension), mathematics, and written and oral language. Grade equivalents are not useful unless standard scores are also included.
   - A diagnostic statement specifying that the student has a learning disability. An explanation of how the exam score(s) were used to arrive at the diagnosis of a learning disability in reading, math, written language, etc. And recommendations regarding the academic services and accommodations that would be beneficial to the student.

   Recommendations should be based on test scores; for example: "extended exam time in math is recommended because the student has a 15 point discrepancy between his/her achievement sub-test score in math and his/her intellectual score."
   - Tests we accept: Wechsler Adult Intelligence Test (WAIS-III), Differential Ability Scales (DAS), Kaufman Adult Intelligence Test (KAIT), Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement - Revised (WJ-R), Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT). This list represents a sampling of acceptable exams and is not exclusive. We welcome the results of other measures used as part of a comprehensive assessment.
3. **Physical Disabilities**

The documentation should include:

- The diagnosis describing the medical condition or disability. Is it persistent and long term? If it is temporary, how long will the condition last? Is it stable, progressive or capable of improvement?

- A brief but complete medical history relevant to the disability or condition. How and when did the condition occur? What has been the course of the illness?

- The current plan of treatment. Will the treatment have any effect on the student's functioning in an academic environment? Please list all medications and side effects.

4. **Substantial Functional Limitations**

The documentation should include:

- The major life activities that are affected

  (i.e., breathing, caring for self, hearing, learning, seeing, walking, performing manual tasks, etc.) How does the medical condition or disability affect the student's daily living activities required in an academic environment? What are the student's functional limitations? Include supporting evidence, i.e. exams administered or techniques used with dates, results, and scores. Are the functional limitations substantial? That is, when compared to the norm, are there activities that this student cannot do, is significantly restricted in doing, or should not do because of the medical condition or disability? Are there any activities that would present a current significant risk of serious injury or death for the student or others?

- **Recommended Accommodations**

  Is there a history of accommodations being provided in other settings? What reasonable accommodations do you expect the student to need while at UCA? Please include rationale for this recommendation by associating the recommended accommodations with the student’s functional limitations. That is, why does the student need this accommodation? What functional limitation or symptom requires this accommodation?
5. Psychological Disabilities

The documentation should include:

- A diagnosis describing the psychological condition or disability. Provide DSM IV Axis I through V diagnosis. Provide the current and average Global Assessment of Functioning (GAF) as well as the GAF during episodes. Is it temporary or permanent? If it is temporary, how long will the condition last? Is it stable, progressive, or capable of improvement?

- A brief but complete history of illness relevant to the disability or condition. How and when did the condition occur? What has been the course of the illness?

- The current plan of treatment. Will the treatment have any effect on the student's functioning in an academic environment? How often does the student receive treatment or counseling and with whom? Please list all medications and side effects.

**Please note:** A brief statement listing only the diagnosis is not sufficient since a medical diagnosis is not necessarily a disability. We need documentation that clearly indicates that the medical diagnosis results in substantial limitations in major life activities applicable to our academic environment. In order to qualify for DSS services and accommodations, applicants must provide a written report on letterhead, signed by a qualified medical provider or specialist, with information about degrees, license or certification and area of specialization. Reports must be current unless the condition is stable and not capable of improvement.

Confidentiality

DSS follows relevant state and federal regulations with regard to confidentiality. DSS records are maintained in locked filing cabinets and secure electronic files. These files are retained for approximately five years, after which they are destroyed.

In compliance with federal regulations, DSS may share a limited amount of disability-related information with University personnel who demonstrate a legitimate need to know. Such instances include:

- to advocate for academic adjustments or services,
- in the case of risk to self or others, and
- child or elderly abuse.

Students should keep copies of their medical information for their personal records. **DSS will not return any medical information once it is placed in the DSS record, nor will we send medical information to other colleges or to employers.**
What is a Reasonable Accommodation?

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines reasonable accommodations as the provision of services, such as interpreters, note-takers, extended time on examinations, architectural access, program modification and other adjustments, which accommodate for the limitations presented by a documented disability. Participants must be otherwise qualified for the program in which they are enrolled.

Neither Section 504, nor the ADA, requires universities to lower their academic standards or substantially alter the essential elements of their courses or programs to accommodate students with disabilities. The requirement to provide reasonable accommodations is designed to afford an equal opportunity for students with disabilities. Achieving reasonable accommodations for a student with a disability involves shared responsibility among students, faculty, and staff.

Not all students require the same accommodations, even if they have the same disability. Reasonable accommodations are determined on a case by case basis to address the individual needs of the student. Accommodations are based on the individuals functional limitations addressed in their documentation.

What accommodations are available?

Please note the following is not an exhaustive list of accommodations but are the most common accommodations:

- Extended exam time
- Note-takers
- Preferential Seating
- Captioned Videos
- ASL Interpreting
- Transcription Service
- Scribes (for exams)
- Distraction Reduced Exams
- Alternate Format Textbooks

In order to receive Alternate testing, you must qualify for this accommodation based on your documentation on file in the DSS office. If you qualify, then you must:

- Complete an accommodation request form in the DSS office.
- Make appointments with your professors to discuss the letter and tell them at that time that you will need an alternate testing (e.g., extended time on exam).
- If your professor cannot accommodate your need for alternate testing, then you must make arrangements to take your exams with DSS proctors.

If you would like to take a exam in DSS you must:

- Read, review, and sign the Exam Guidelines Agreement with a DSS staff member.
- Schedule exam date/time at least 3-5 days prior to the exam date. (Please provide the course title and your instructor’s first and last name when you schedule). Exams may be scheduled from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Monday-Friday.
• Remind your professor, at least one-week prior to each exam, that you will be taking the exam in the DSS office (in order to confirm that the arrangements have been made correctly).
• Exams must be delivered in a sealed envelope by the professor. Exams cannot be mailed, faxed or delivered by the student.
• Once DSS staff has scheduled your exam, your exam time cannot be changed without instructor approval.
• Arrive on time. Late arrival will result in a comparable deduction in the time scheduled for the examination.

**Please note:** If there is not an Exam Agreement on file, you will not be able to take your exam in the DSS office and it will be returned to your instructor.

2. Alternate Format Materials:

Alternate format materials are available for eligible students when possible and in accordance with all copyright laws and exceptions. Every attempt is made to provide alternate format in the most efficient and effective way possible. DSS tries to provide the student’s preferred format but this may not always be possible. Generally, DSS does not provide multiple alternate formats of the same material such as electronic format and large print.

**Classroom texts on CD**

Requesting classroom texts on CD
• Purchase required textbook(s) and provide a copy of the receipt(s).
• Sign and date an Alternate Format Services and Student Responsibilities agreement.
• Pick up CDs when ready from the DSS front desk and sign to acknowledge receipt.
• Report any difficulties to DSS staff as soon as possible.

**Please note:** Materials that are particularly difficult to convert may take longer. DSS will accept but cannot guarantee completed materials by the due date without sufficient notice.
3. **Voice Recorders:**

If you qualify for the use of a voice recorder for in class use based on the documentation that is on file with the DSS office, you must:

- Complete a Request for Accommodations Form.
- If you have a voice recorder, you may use your own.
- If you need a voice recorder, the DSS office has voice recorders available for check-out.
- Make appointments with your professors and discuss your needs for a voice recorder.

4. **Priority Seating:**

If you qualify for priority seating based on your documentation on file in the DSS office, then you must:

- Complete a Accommodation Request Form.
- Make appointments with your professors to discuss the accommodation letter and tell them you will need priority seating in class.

5. **Standardized Exam Accommodations:**

Standardized exams, such as the LSAT and GRE, have their own documentation requirements. Don’t assume that the documentation that you provide to DSS will suffice for external testing agencies. There is generally a separate application form for accommodations in addition to the application to take the exam.

**Student Responsibilities:**

- Provide and update student information, including name, telephone number, and e-mail address for DSS records each semester.
- Recognize that your UCA e-mail account is the official method of communication for the University. Students should check their e-mail often for information regarding registration, financial aid, DSS, and other services.
- Voluntarily identify disability related needs to DSS.
- Provide current and complete documentation to DSS.
- Formally request needed accommodations and services in a timely manner.
- Notify DSS of any changes or concerns regarding services and accommodations, or if classes have been dropped/added.
- Abide by policies within the UCA Student Handbook.
- Attend classes and maintain the academic standards set by the University, as well as by the college and the department of the student's major.
- Communicate with faculty regarding administrative, academic, and disability-related needs.
- Make arrangements for personal needs, transportation, and study assistance.
• Use services responsibly and treat service providers and faculty with respect and courtesy.

DSS Responsibilities:

• Provide information and services enabling students with disabilities to participate in UCA programs, services, and activities.
• Review disability documentation and determine eligibility for accommodations and services on behalf of the university.
• Provide services in a timely fashion, in accordance with DSS published procedures.
• Keep disability related information confidential.
• Support faculty and staff in the provision of reasonable accommodations.
• Advocate responsibly for the rights of persons with disabilities.
• Consult with university administration, faculty, and staff on policy and procedures related to accommodations and access, as required under current federal and state law.

Faculty Responsibilities:

• Refer students to DSS to have disabilities documented and appropriate accommodations determined.
• Include a syllabus statement for each course, informing students about the availability of reasonable accommodations.
• Help provide reasonable accommodations, including the use of auxiliary aides, note-takers, interpreters, and access to printed and web-based materials.
• Show confidence in students’ abilities to achieve their intellectual, personal, and academic potential.
• Keep disability related information confidential.
• Discuss all student related information directly with the student, rather than with his/her aide or interpreter.

Grievance Procedures:

• For academic concerns not resolved after discussion with the professor, you may schedule a meeting with the administrator at the next level up. The order is: the Department Chair, the Dean, and the Provost.
• If you have a complaint about Disability Support Services that you have not been able to resolve with the Director, your next step would be to contact the Dean of Students at: (501) 450-3416.
• After exhausting the aforementioned avenues of addressing your concern(s), you may submit an appeal as outlined within the Disabilities Grievance Policy on pages 32-35 of your UCA Student Handbook.
• For other non-academic issues first contact the Director of the particular program. If the concern is not resolved, appeal to that person’s supervisor. Inquire about the chain of command, as it will vary.
ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF DSS STUDENT HANDBOOK

The DSS Student Handbook contains important information about the Disability Support Services Office, and I understand that I should consult a DSS Program Coordinator regarding any questions not answered in the handbook. I accept the terms of the handbook. I also understand that it is my responsibility to comply with the policies contained in this handbook, and any revisions made to it.

I request an alternate format copy of this handbook _____Yes _____No

If yes, please indicate format:
____Enlarged Text _____Electronic format text _____Braille

I have received a copy of the DSS Student Handbook on the date listed below. I understand that I am expected to read the entire handbook.

__________________________________  __________________
Signature of Student               Date

VOTER REGISTRATION

University of Central Arkansas encourages all students to register to vote in the appropriate state and county. DSS Office provides students an opportunity to register to vote. Would you like to do so at this time?

_____ Yes, I’d like to register.
____ No, I decline the option to register.
-Voter Registration Form (Page 1 only)-

- Please perforate this page for removal from handbook.