# The Center for Student Access (CSA) Faculty Handbook

## Preface

This handbook has been prepared for faculty as an introductory overview of disabilities and potential classroom accommodations.

To some degree, instruction for students with disabilities should be individualized. Each student with a disability will have a different level of functioning even within the same disability category. Compensatory skills will also vary from one student to another. Consequently, while the information presented in this handbook can be used as a general guide, the student with the disability can be regarded as the expert on his/her particular needs. However, the student need not divulge his or her disability when communicating with faculty.

It is our hope that you will find the information contained in this handbook useful as well as insightful and that it will serve to improve the quality of services delivered to the College's students with disabilities.

## Introduction

The Center for Student Access (CSA) works with students with disabilities here at LCC. We do this by providing accommodations and other services that students can use under the [Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)](https://www.ada.gov/pubs/adastatute08.htm) and [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](https://www.dol.gov/agencies/oasam/centers-offices/civil-rights-center/statutes/section-504-rehabilitation-act-of-1973).

## Contact Information

[CSA Website](https://www.lcc.edu/services/access/contact.html)

[Contact Us](https://www.lcc.edu/services/access/contact.html)

## Process

The accommodation process begins when a student with disabilities reaches out or is referred to The Center for Student Access to request accommodations. Staff then schedules an intake appointment for the student to meet with an Access Consultant. Documentation must be provided before accommodations can be established. IEPs, 504 plans, psychological evaluations, and letters from relevant medical or mental health practitioners can all be used as documentation as long as they list the student’s diagnosis and the functional limitations they experience as a result. The ADA considers a person to have a disability if they possess a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Major life activities can include, but are not limited to, thinking, learning, reading, walking, test-taking, seeing, hearing, etc.

At the intake appointment, the Access Consultant reviews documentation and has a conversation with the student about the disability-related barriers they experience. Access Consultants engage in the interactive process whereby they lead a discussion regarding appropriate and effective accommodations. Depending on the nature of the student’s disability and the accommodations they are requesting, CSA may also include relevant faculty in this conversation as well.

Once appropriate accommodations are determined for a student, the Access Consultant issues an Instructor Memo (our letter of accommodation) to the student. The Instructor Memo includes the student’s name, their student number, and the approved accommodations. It does not include any specifics related to the student’s disability and CSA keeps documentation, meeting notes, and diagnoses confidential.

Students are expected to share their Instructor Memo with their instructor(s) as soon as possible. Ideally, this is the first day or week of classes. In the event that accommodations are established partway into the semester (or if the student elects not to provide their Instructor Memo to their instructors), accommodations cannot be applied retroactively. However, the instructor is free to make considerations given that there are current accommodations in place. In the event that a student encounters an issue with their accommodations, we ask that they inform CSA as soon as possible so we can work to resolve the issue.

When students are ready to renew their accommodations for the next semester, they are able to make this request through the Accommodate system, which includes a student portal. Access Consultants review these renewal requests and either approve them or reach out to the student when more information is needed.

If you have any questions or concerns about a student’s accommodations, please contact CSA.

## Accessibility v. Accommodation

Accommodations differ from accessibility. Accommodations are adjustments or services that provide access to materials, environments, and experiences for an individual student based on their unique needs. The goal of accessibility is to maximize the number of people who can utilize materials, environments, and experiences independently, regardless of ability or disability.

Put simply, accommodations are tied to an individual but accessibility benefits everyone.

## Testing Accommodations

Tests should be taken at or about the regularly scheduled time as stated in the course syllabus. Extended time for tests does not mean extended time to study for tests. Extended time for testing will be defined as either one-and-one-half (1.5x) to double (2.0x) the time other students in the class are allowed for the same time-based assessment. Take-home tests do not qualify for extended time.

It is expected that students will complete their assessments at the campus where they are taking their class. Instructors must send the tests for the students with testing accommodations to Testing Services at the campus where the class meets and complete a cover sheet indicating that the test is to be administered within a specified, extended time period. Alternately, an instructor’s office may serve as the distraction-reduced testing area if the student agrees to this arrangement.

Students may need to know the test date range from their instructor to be able to make accommodation arrangements such as distraction-reduced testing and Reader Services.

If you have questions about this process, please contact [Testing Services](https://www.lcc.edu/services/testing/contact.html).

## Audio Recording

Students who receive this accommodation have agreed to follow strict guidelines concerning use of lectures, intellectual property rights, and disposal of lectures. Students may use either a dedicated audio recorder or audio recording software on a computer or mobile device.

## Lecture Notes

If an instructor has any notes or presentations they use to teach the class, but are not providing them to all students, the student with the approved accommodation would be provided that content. You have no obligation to create notes if you do not have notes available. If content is posted in D2L, the student is responsible for retrieving it.

## Note Taking

The instructor needs to ask the class for a volunteer without disclosing the accommodated student’s name if there is a student in their class with note taking as an approved accommodation. It is the student’s responsibility to give the instructor the carbonless paper from CSA, although an instructor or the volunteer note taker may also pick it up from CSA. The volunteer note taker, if there is one, gives the notes to the instructor, and the student will make arrangements to retrieve notes from the instructor.

For online classes, the process will be the same, except there is no carbonless paper, so the instructor will receive digital notes from the volunteer, remove any identifying information, and send the notes to the student with the accommodation to maintain confidentiality.

## Preferential Seating

Students who require preferential seating will discuss their specific need with their instructor. If the student has not arrived to class within the first 15 minutes of instruction, this seat may be freed for a classmate.

## Additional Breaks

Students may be approved to leave the classroom if needed.

## In-Class

Student may be supported in class by a variety of individuals including a reader/scribe, sign language interpreters, and CART captionists. These staff members do not tutor, explain, reword, or partner with a student with disabilities. Please contact CSA if there are any questions or concerns about in-class support.

## Reader/Scribe

A reader/scribe is an approved accommodation for students with disabilities that require the use of an additional set of “eyes” and/or “hands” in order to ensure equal access to the environment. The primary duty of a reader is to read tests aloud verbatim and/or scribe tests for students. A reader may also serve as an in-class reader/scribe for a student. If a test is to be read or scribed, the student must make arrangements with Reader Services prior to the test date. Please refer the student to CSA.

## Sign Language Interpreters

Sign language interpreters uses sign language to facilitate communication between Deaf and hearing individuals. There may be two interpreters for one student in your class. Interpreters typically need to be at the front of the class in view of the student. Interpreters may be added to your course if online. Please address the student directly when they are working with an interpreter.

## CART Captioning

Real-time captioning provides a student with a real-time transcript of a live lecture. Captionists typically work remotely and students may use additional technology in the classroom.

## Assistive Listening Device (ALD)

An ALD is a transmitter and receiver which is designed to amplify sound and eliminate background noise. The instructor wears a microphone (transmitter) and the student wears the receiver. Since the other students will not have microphones, it will be important for the instructor to repeat their questions and comments.

## Braille

CSA creates Braille for students. We may work with you to obtain course material ahead of time to be able to get the Braille to a student in a timely manner.

## Alternative Text

CSA provides alternative text for students that need to be able to receive their textbooks in a different format. Typically, this means being able to have an audio version of their textbook through a text to speech program. Obtaining and producing these texts can take some time.

## Adaptive Furniture

Modifications can be provided based on individual needs. Examples of such adaptations include the following: special desks, tables and/or chairs, option to sit or stand, alteration of equipment or work stations as well as special seating arrangements. CSA will make arrangements through Physical Plant. The instructor is asked to ensure that the equipment (chair, table, etc.) is available to the student with the disability.

## Equipment

Students may borrow various equipment from CSA depending on their needs. For example, SmartPens, ALDs, and talking graphing calculators among other types of equipment.

## Extended Deadlines

The extended deadlines accommodation will be listed as an approved accommodation on the student’s Instructor Memo. Students approved for this accommodation may need periodic extensions on assignments due to their disability. Students will contact their instructor(s) to request an alternate deadline if needed. There are some limitations: this accommodation does not cover non-disability related reasons for needing an extension nor does it cover assignments or experiences that would be fundamentally altered by completing them at a later time. This accommodation is only valid for the duration of the semester, and students are still required to complete all course work. If a student still has outstanding work at the end of the semester, please follow your department’s guidance on Incompletes.

A fundamental alteration is anything that significantly changes the nature of the assignment/experience or how the student is assessed. A common example would be an online discussion board as the purpose of such an assignment is generally for students to engage in a conversation with their classmates on a topic. Completing a discussion board assignment after the class has moved on undermines the central purpose of the assignment (to converse with classmates). Likewise, in courses where tests are reviewed in the next class meeting, allowing a student to complete a test after this point would significantly alter the nature of the assessment as answers to questions would be publicly available when they were not to the rest of the class.

If you have any questions or concerns about how this accommodation should be implemented in your course, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. We can discuss specific assignments and situations to help determine if allowing a student to complete them later would result in a fundamental alteration. If use of this accommodation becomes excessive or affects course integrity, please contact the CSA.

## Flexible Attendance

The flexible attendance accommodation will be listed as an approved accommodation on the student’s Instructor Memo. Students approved for this accommodation possess disabilities that are chronic in nature and may periodically experience incapacitating flare ups. It is intended to allow for flexibility in attendance and deadlines when a student experiences a disability-related flare up. There are some limitations: this accommodation does not cover non-disability related absences nor does it cover assignments, assessments, or experiences that would be fundamentally altered by completing them at a later time. This accommodation is only valid for the duration of the semester, and students are still required to complete all course work. If a student still has outstanding work at the end of the semester, please follow your department’s guidance on Incompletes.

Because the goal of accommodations is to provide access to students with disabilities, we cannot penalize students who are utilizing this accommodation. However, the accommodation cannot fundamentally alter the nature of the assignment or your course. Fundamental alteration would anything that significantly changes the nature of the assignment/assessment/experience or how you assess a student. A common example would be an online discussion board as the purpose of such an assignment is generally for students to engage in a conversation with their classmates on a topic. Completing a discussion board assignment after the class has moved on undermines the central purpose of the assignment (to converse with classmates). Likewise, in courses where tests are reviewed in the next class meeting, allowing a student to complete a test after this point would significantly alter the nature of the assessment as answers to questions would be publicly available when they were not to the rest of the class.

Students are required to contact their instructor(s) about missing a class or deadline as soon as is possible and safe. While this often will be before a class meeting/deadline, there are occasions where this notification may come after the fact (this is often the case with hospitalization). We ask that students include lcc-accessibility@lcc.edu on communications related to this accommodation.

If you have any questions or concerns about how this accommodation should be implemented in your course, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. We can discuss specific assignments, assessments, and situations to help determine if allowing a student to complete them later would result in a fundamental alteration. If use of this accommodation becomes excessive or affects course integrity, please contact the CSA.

## Service Animals

Service animals are dogs or miniature horses which are trained to provide a service to a person with a disability. These services can include guidance (as with leader dogs), assistance in performing tasks, and indicating and reacting to changes in their handler (low blood sugar, panic attacks, etc.). It is important to note that animals that are not dogs or miniature horses and those which are not trained to perform a service, do not meet the legal definition of a service animal.

Unlike many of the other accommodations offered by LCC, a service animal does not need to be approved by The Center for Student Access. If a student decides to discuss their service animal with CSA, we may add that the service animal is allowed on campus/in the classroom on their Instructor Memo. Service animals do not require any sort of certification or paperwork (beyond those required for all dogs/miniature horses), and may or may not have a collar or harness noting they are in a working capacity. Service animals need to be under the control of their handler at all times, be housebroken and clean, and not display disruptive or aggressive behavior. If you have any questions or concerns about service animals, please contact CSA.

## Pregnancy and Parenting

Title IX prohibits discrimination upon the basis of sex which includes pregnancy or any related conditions. Students may be entitled to reasonable modifications under Title IX and/or accommodations under the ADA while pregnant to address any barriers they may experience as a result. In specific situations, with appropriate documentation, qualified pregnant students will be afforded the same rights and accommodations afforded to students with temporary medical conditions.

If a student notifies you that they are pregnant or have a pregnancy-related condition, please refer them to the Student Title IX Coordinator as soon as possible.

The Student Title IX Coordinator’s office can be reached by phone at 517-483-9632 or by email at thompsc@lcc.edu.

## Best Practices

It is imperative that you do not identify students with ADA accommodations. This private and confidential information and should never be shared with colleagues or in the classroom where other students can hear.

Do not ask students about their underlying condition or diagnosis. Students are only required to provide disability-related documentation to CSA if they are pursuing accommodations.

If you do not know what to do, ask the person with the disability. Ask before helping.

If you have a concern that a student may not be able to perform an academic task due to a mental or physical condition or limitation, please contact The Center for Student Access.

When teaching, please remember to provide information in both audio and visual formats. This is helpful for students that may be deaf, hard of hearing, or blind, but is also useful for students that have different learning styles.

Take the time to resolve technical issues for students utilizing captioning, sign language interpreters, reader/scribes, etc. before the lecture begins. Even if the lecture runs late, it is better to provide access.

Speak so students can see your mouth and expressions as much as possible. Some students may be lip reading for better comprehension.

Speak directly to persons with disabilities, not their interpreter, reader, or aide.

Avoid “talking down” to persons with disabilities.

Be patient and give your full attention to persons who may have difficulty communicating; some people need more time to express themselves.

Keep paper and pen handy for exchanging notes with persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, have speech disabilities, or other disabilities that affect communication.

Students with disabilities may need 1:1 time during office hours.

Do not assume that a student either has or does not have a disability. Refer students to The Center for Student Access amongst other College resources such as Academic Success Coaching, Counseling, Tutoring Services, etc.

# Definitions

504 Plan: 504 Plans are used in the K-12 system when an individual has a disability which can be managed on a lower level (usually by classroom instructors) vs. special education support teams. Parental approval and involvement are not required for 504 Plans to be implemented.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): Legislation which protects the civil rights of persons with disabilities. An overview of the ADA is found later in this handbook, and a link to the full-text has been provided.

Americans with Disabilities Act, as Amended (ADAAA) (2008): This major law change (which became effective January 1, 2009) expanded the definition of “disability” from being “an impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment” to also include:

• Expansion of the definition of “major life activities”

• New definition of who is “regarded as” having a disability

• Modification of regulatory definition for “substantially limits”

• Specification that “disability” includes any impairment that is episodic or in remission if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active

• Prohibition for consideration of “mitigating measures” when assessing whether an impairment substantially limits a person’s major life activities

(United States Department of Labor, 2016).

Disability: An individual is regarded as being a person with a disability if this person “has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, [is] a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or [is] a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment” (U.S. Department of Justice, 2009).

Functional Limitation: “a reduction, due to severe physical or mental impairment, to the degree that the individual requires services or accommodations not typically made for other individuals in order to prepare for, enter, engage in, or retain employment” (State of Connecticut, n.d.).

IDEA: a law used commonly used in K-12 to ensure that children with disabilities have access to special education services.

Impairment: “a problem in body function or structure” (World Health Organization, 2016).

Individualized Education Plan (IEP): Form utilized in K-12 to prescribe reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Unlike the 504 Plan, an IEP requires parental involvement in order to implement. Persons with IEPs often receive the services of special education teachers or from additional support staff provided from the intermediate school district (ISD) or from the greater school district, itself.

Major Bodily Functions: Includes, but is not limited to: functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive organs (United States Department of Labor, 2016).

Major Life Activities: Includes, but is not limited to: caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working (United States Department of Labor, 2016).

Medical Model of Disability: This model of disability assumes that the individual with the impairment is innately disabled, and it is the individual’s problem that s/he is unable to access the environment. (Democracy Disability and Society Group, 2003).

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Person-Centered Language: Person-Centered language is a construct which has come out of the social model for disability. In this communication style, the person and not his/her disability, comes first.

Social Model of Disability: This disability model assumes that an individual presents to the world with an impairment(s), and society either provides access to this individual or directly disables the individual.

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 (Nick’s Crusade, 2011).

References

Democracy Disability and Society Group (2003). Image: “Medical Model of Disability.” Retrieved 27 July 2016 from <http://ddsg.org.uk/taxi/medical>model.html.

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