



Center for Academic and Accessibility Resources (C.A.A.R.)

60 West Olsen Road #5300  
Thousand Oaks, CA. 91360

Located within Pearson Library  
(805) 493-3260 Voice (805) 493-3472 Fax  
TTY to Voice (800) 735-2929 California Relay Services

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# Policy of Non-Discrimination with Respect to Students with Disabilities

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## I. GENERAL POLICY

The University's policy is to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and state and local requirements regarding students and applicants with disabilities. Under these laws, no qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of that disability, be denied access to or participation in the services, programs and activities of the University.

It is the policy of the University that qualified students who have disabilities shall be given auxiliary aids and academic accommodations to ensure access to the University's overall educational program. The University accommodates students with disabilities on an individual basis. Individual students receive reasonable and necessary accommodations based upon specific information and assessment data documented by a qualified professional.

## II. ADMISSION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The University does not discriminate on the basis of disability. Information provided during the admission process concerning an applicant's disability shall be provided on a voluntary basis and shall be kept in accordance with state and federal laws regarding confidentiality.

### 1. Documentation of the Disability

An applicant who wishes to have his or her disability considered as a factor in the admission process must identify the disability, and provide an explanation of why it is a factor at the time of application. If the applicant wishes the disability to be considered a factor, it will be necessary to provide appropriate documentation of the disability.

An applicant who does not wish to have his or her disability considered may wish to make that fact known to his or her references.

### 2. Information on the Disability Retained in the Student's File

Information and letters of reference will be retained in the general student files. Information relating to a student's disability, need for accommodation or educational aids will, to the extent possible, be maintained in confidential student files in the office of the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities.

3. Applicants Not Wishing to Self-Identify in the Application Process

Students who are offered admission are provided information about the University's policy regarding students with disabilities and are strongly encouraged to contact the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities at least six weeks in advance of a course, workshop, program or activity for which accommodation is requested or as soon as realistically possible regarding disabilities that may require accommodation. This is to allow adequate time for documentation, for evaluation of documentation, and for arranging specific accommodations. Last-minute requests may not be accommodated because of the time required to make suitable arrangements.

### **III. ENROLLED STUDENTS**

1. Identifying the Need for Accommodations

Students who do not require accommodations need not make their disabilities known.

Students with disabilities who require accommodations are responsible for making these needs known to the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities in a timely fashion, and for providing appropriate documentation and evaluation in applicable cases. Students should not assume that because his or her application indicates the presence of a disability that this information is known to the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities, or other persons able to make suitable accommodations.

Information about disabilities in students' records is treated as confidential under applicable laws, and is only provided to individuals who need to receive such information on a need-to-know basis. Faculty members who are advised of a disability are advised that this information is confidential.

In some cases where only minor accommodations are required (such as requesting to sit in the front row because of visual or hearing impairment), the student should feel free to simply request this of the faculty member. If requests are not responded to adequately, the student should make the request to the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities.

2. Accommodations

The University will provide in a timely manner auxiliary aids and academic adjustments for students with disabilities as are necessary to ensure access to the University's services, programs, and activities. These accommodations may include the use of students' tape recorders during lectures, readers, library assistants, interpreters, note takers, and additional time to complete assignments.

Modifications of examinations may also be permitted to overcome limitations of perception or expression imposed by the disability; for example, examinations may be verbally presented to blind students or the duration of examinations may be increased to allow students with neuromuscular problems to write out answers. The purpose of this modification is to provide access for qualified students with disability to participate equally and fairly with other students, not to change the criteria by which the academic performance of students is measured. Accommodations will not be provided if they fundamentally alter the nature of the program or if they would be unduly burdensome either financially or administratively.

Students requesting accommodations should identify his or her needs as early as possible to the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities. The Documentation Review Committee for Students with Disabilities (DRCSD) will review requests for accommodations.

3. Verification of Physical Disabilities

A student with a physical disability must provide professional certification certified by a licensed physician, psychologist, audiologist, speech pathologist, rehabilitation counselor, physical therapist, occupational therapist or other health care provider who is qualified in the diagnosis of the disability. This verification must provide information about: (1) the student's present level of functioning in the major life activity affected by the disability, (2) data that support the request for each particular accommodation sought by the student, and (3) other information reasonably requested by the University to determine the qualification of the student and the accommodations needed. The student shall provide the necessary documentation to the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities. The cost of providing this documentation shall be borne by the student.

4. Verification of Learning Disabilities

A student with a learning disability must provide professional testing and evaluation results which reflect the individual's present level of processing information and present achievement level. The cost of and responsibility for obtaining the professional verification shall be borne by the student. (See CLU Guidelines for documentation of specific Learning Disabilities)

#### **IV. GRIEVANCE RPOCEDURE**

Grievances should be made in writing and should be presented within ten working days following the decision that is being appealed so that relevant documents may be obtained, individuals involved may be interviewed, and action may be taken promptly if it is needed. Replies to appeals will be provided within forty-five days, with the goal of providing an equitable decision for all involved.