

University of Rochester

A Guide for Students with Disabilities

Welcome to the University of Rochester

The Disability Support Coordinator in your school is committed to assisting students with disabilities with the implementation of reasonable accommodations in the classroom, the residence halls, libraries and elsewhere on campus. We encourage students with disabilities to assess their needs realistically, to take advantage of appropriate support, and to be clear and precise about gaining assistance.

It is a personal decision to disclose the existence of a disability and to request an accommodation. A decision not to disclose this information will be respected. Any discussion with the Disability Support Coordinator to consider this decision will be treated confidentially to the maximum extent possible. Students who request an accommodation must provide appropriate documentation to the Disability Support Coordinator. More information about our documentation requirements can be found later in this document.

The University remains flexible regarding the types of reasonable accommodations that can be made. Our belief is that accommodations should be determined based on individual situations and that a particular accommodation is not necessarily useful for every student. General accommodations made to qualified individuals in the past have included:

- ◆ Provision of an orientation tour and introduction to accessible routes on campus
- ◆ Provision of assisted listening devices, note takers, and ASL interpreters
- ◆ Arrangements for extended test time, alternative test locations, and the use of adaptive equipment

Students with disabilities are invited to offer suggestions for accommodations that have worked in the past. The Disability Support Coordinator in your school will work with you and your instructors to make arrangements for the implementation of reasonable classroom accommodations.

Equal Opportunity

The University of Rochester values diversity and is committed to equal opportunity for all persons regardless of age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and military/veteran status, or any other status protected by law. Further, the University complies with all applicable nondiscrimination laws in the administration of its policies, program and activities.

Questions on compliance with the Equal Opportunity Statement should be directed to the particular school and/or to the University's Equal Opportunity Coordinator, Harriette Royer, University of Rochester, Box 270039, Rochester, NY 14627-0039. Phone: (585) 275-9125. See HR Policy 100.

The Equal Opportunity Coordinator also serves as the coordinator for grievances concerning claims of discrimination arising under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VI of the Civil Right Act of 1964, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

¹ According to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Amendments Act of 2008, an

individual with a disability is defined as someone who has 1) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity, 2) a record of having such an impairment, or 3) who is regarded as having such an impairment.

² Some schools of the University have established Technical Standards Committees to develop specific standards for participation in their educational programs. Students admitted to those schools are required to meet those standards, with or without accommodations.

University of Rochester

Accommodation Policy for Students with Disabilities

The University of Rochester is committed to providing equal educational and employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the ADA Amendments Act of 2008¹, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

To ensure equality of access for students with disabilities, the University provides reasonable accommodations including auxiliary aids and modifications to courses, programs, services, activities or facilities. Accommodations may not be required in those situations where the accommodation would fundamentally alter the nature of the program, cause undue hardship on the school, or jeopardize the health or safety of others. Accommodations must specifically address the functional limitations of the disability.

Overview

Students with disabilities are an essential part of the University's diversity. They bring a broad spectrum of talents and achievements to our community. In recognition of these contributions, the University provides disability support coordinators in each school with responsibility for ensuring the provision of a system and a culture that encourages opportunity and achievement for students with disabilities.

This document sets forth University procedures for students with disabilities seeking accommodations and provides information about how requests for accommodations are processed and what is required. It details the process for self-identification, providing supporting documentation, confidentiality protections, the policy on classroom assignment, and a process for students seeking further consideration of a decision with which they are dissatisfied.

This decentralized system is coordinated through the office of the University Disability Resource Coordinator (UDRC). The UDRC also coordinates the activities of the Eligibility Assessment Team. The Eligibility Assessment Team is convened by the UDRC on an as-needed basis and at the request of schools. The Eligibility Assessment Team reviews documentation of the existence of a disability to determine eligibility for accommodations and advises schools about the implementation of reasonable accommodations.

Members of the Eligibility Assessment Team generally include the UDRC and a core group of specialists from the fields of medicine, psychology, and education. The UDRC may appoint other representatives to the Eligibility Assessment Team on a case-by-case basis.

Requests for Accommodations

Students are encouraged to make requests for accommodations well in advance, in accordance with time lines established by each school. The process begins with self-identification. When a student chooses to disclose the existence of a disability, supporting documentation should be forwarded to the local Disability Support Coordinator. The local Disability Support Coordinator will work with the UDRC and, when appropriate, the Eligibility Assessment Team and any Technical Standards Committees² to verify eligibility.

Students should make an appointment with their local Disability Support Coordinator at the beginning of each semester or quarter to secure academic/course-related accommodations and support services (e.g., housing, parking, library access, etc.) and to provide written permission to notify instructors about the accommodations that are needed.

Deciding to Disclose

Choosing to disclose the existence of a disability is a topic some students may wish to discuss informally with their Disability Support Coordinator or the UDRC. Both the UDRC and the local Disability Support Coordinator will treat such conversations confidentially to the maximum extent possible. A student will not be considered to have self-identified a disability until the student has specifically expressed a desire to do so.

Supporting Documentation

Upon disclosing the existence of a disability, students may be asked to forward supporting documentation to the local Disability Support Coordinator. Supporting documentation must be submitted on letterhead that is dated, typed, and signed and be provided by a qualified physician, psychologist, audiologist, speech pathologist, rehabilitation counselor, physical therapist, occupational therapist, or other health care provider. Supporting documentation should not be provided by a family member. The diagnostic report should, where appropriate, include:

- ◆ History of onset of the diagnosis
- ◆ The methodologies used to determine the diagnosis
- ◆ The diagnostic statement
- ◆ A description of the current functional limitations of the disabling condition as they relate to the major life activity impacted by the diagnosis
- ◆ The suggested accommodations

The supporting documentation should include specific recommendations for reasonable accommodations with a detailed explanation or rationale as to why each accommodation is recommended with reference to the specific functional limitations of the individual in an educational setting. The University often will provide the specific accommodations requested, but may not be legally required to do so if there is another effective accommodation available.

If the supporting documentation is not adequate or does not reflect the individual's current level of function, the University may request that a student provide additional documentation to further support specific test results or clinical observations.

The cost of obtaining professional documentation is borne by the student. If the initial supporting documentation provided by the student is not sufficient to establish the need for reasonable accommodations, the University has the discretion of requesting supplemental documentation. The cost of obtaining the supplemental documentation is also borne by the student.

In the event of the need for a second evaluation, by someone other than the student's care provider, the University will bear the cost if it is not covered by a third party payer. In circumstances in which the cost of providing documentation of a disability increases the student's cost of obtaining an

education, the University will consider such expenses in the student's financial aid package.

Confidentiality

Supporting documentation regarding the existence and the nature of a student's disability is generally considered private.

Accordingly, without written consent from the student and except as stipulated below, information contained in the disability file is kept confidential to the maximum extent possible. Disability-related information will also be kept separate from the student's academic record.

Access to a student's disability file is limited to the local Disability Support Coordinator, the UDRC, and other University officials who require access to the information to perform their professional responsibilities, or who need access to protect the health or safety of the student or others.

Arrangements for Accommodations

The Local Disability Support Coordinator will consider a wide variety of factors, including the nature of the disability and its effect on the student, the documentation provided, evidence of past accommodations that the student has received, and other relevant facts. If accommodations are to be provided, students should meet with the Disability Support Coordinator to review the information included in their personal accommodation letter which lists the student's in-class accommodations (e.g., extended time, alternate test location, note taker, FM system, etc.).

With the student's written permission, the disability support coordinator will then make arrangements to implement the accommodations and notify faculty and University service units of the need to provide accommodations through a personal accommodation letter. It is the student's responsibility to discuss details about any specific classroom needs directly with the instructor.

Requests for Further Review

If a student is dissatisfied with a decision concerning accommodations, both informal and formal processes are available to request further review. The initial review consists of an informal review of all relevant materials by the local Disability Support Coordinator, in consultation with appropriate committees. The purpose of this local review is to mediate and resolve differences.

If a student is dissatisfied with the decision made at the informal level, the student may formally request that the decision be reviewed by the Dean of the school or by his or her designee. The Dean may request a report and recommendations from the University Disability Resource Coordinator and, when appropriate, the Eligibility Assessment Team. A final appeal of the Dean's decision may be made to the Provost who may accept or reject the appeal or, at his or her discretion, assign it to a designee.

Policy on Classroom Assignment

It is the policy of the University of Rochester to provide accessible classroom space for students and instructors with disabilities. This policy is administered by the Office of the Registrar in each school which maintains, or has access to, information about the accessibility of all classroom space for persons with disabilities.

The Registrar's Office will obtain the names of all known incoming students with mobility impairment at the beginning of each academic year or semester. Students with mobility impairment may also

identify themselves to the Registrar at any time. During class registration, the Registrar will monitor those students' class schedules to determine whether anticipated class locations are accessible. If a student with mobility impairment registers for a class located in an inaccessible room, the Registrar will ensure that modifications are made to allow access to the class which may involve making temporary or permanent modifications to create access to the assigned room or moving the class to an accessible location.

If an assigned room has unique features or houses special equipment necessary to the program, the University will either modify the room or relocate the class and move the equipment (or provide equivalent equipment in the new room).

If the Registrar learns that the instructor for a class has a disability and needs accommodation, the room will be modified or the class will be relocated to a room accessible to that person.

If a Deaf or hard-of-hearing student requires an Assistive Listening Device (ALD) as an accommodation in the classroom, one will be provided. A student may request such a device from the local Disability Support Coordinator.

Support Services

Attendant Care

The University does not provide personal care attendants. Students in need of attendant care should contact the **University Disability Resource Coordinator at 275-9125**. The coordinator can provide assistance in finding attendants through an outside agency. At least one month's lead is advisable to secure attendants.

Audio Recording Class Lectures

Students with disabilities must obtain the instructor's permission prior to taping class lectures.

C-Print Captioning Service

C-Print is a computer-aided speech-to-print captioning service. This technology is used to improve the classroom experience for students who are hard-of-hearing or Deaf. C-Print service is available through the **University Disability Coordinator's Office** by calling **275-9125**.

It is important for administrators, service providers, instructors and students to understand that, just as students with similar disabilities may have different needs, C-Print may not be the best classroom option for all hard-of-hearing or Deaf students. For Deaf students whose primary language is ASL, C-Print may not be as helpful as an ASL interpreter. For students whose primary language is English and who have experienced some level of hearing loss, C-Print can be a useful classroom tool.

Dietary Needs and Dining Services

Dining areas are accessible in Susan B. Anthony Residence Hall, the Frederick Douglass Dining Center, the Meliora Restaurant, and Wilson Commons. The staff at all University dining locations will assist patrons with disabilities in their use of the facilities. Students with dietary restrictions should contact the director of **Dining Services** at **275-8757**.

Note Takers

Some students with a documented disability require the assistance of a note taker. Students are expected to attend and participate in class regardless of whether they are receiving the assistance of a note taker.

The College utilizes the LiveScribe system. The Pulse Smartpen employs technology links audio (i.e., class lectures) to what students write (i.e., their notes). Students can audio record each class session and have the option of playing back their lectures at differing speeds, download their notes online, jump ahead in their notes, and bookmark special pages. For additional information about the LiveScribe system, contact your school's Disability Support Coordinator or the **UDRC** at **275-9125**.

Parking, www.rochester.edu/parking

River Campus 275-3983

Medical Center 275-4524

If the distance from the student's assigned parking area to the student's destination cannot be managed due to a disability, documentation must be provided, indicating the severity of mobility impairment. The student will then be reassigned to the next available closer-in lot.

Snow Removal Hotline 275-0000

University Facilities operates the Snow Removal Hotline from November to April each year. Students with disabilities who encounter weather-related problems while navigating the campus during those months should contact the Snow Removal Hotline for assistance.

Test Taking Accommodations

Students with disabilities should discuss the need for extra time on exams or for alternative testing arrangements with the Disability Support Coordinator. It is important to make these arrangements early in the semester to avoid any conflicts and to do so with the instructor's knowledge. Students must give written permission to the Disability Support Coordinator to notify their instructors about the requested accommodation.

Tutoring Services

Tutoring services are available for a fee, or at no charge in some schools, to all University of Rochester students regardless of the existence of a disability. Student should contact the school **Disability Support Coordinator** for information about the availability of tutoring services.

University Counseling Center

www.rochester.edu/UCC **275-3113**

Full-time undergraduate and graduate students are eligible to receive prepaid, time-limited psychotherapy for their emotional health concerns at University Counseling Center (UCC). The cost of visits is covered by the mandatory health fee that all full-time students pay. Services are offered on an individual, couple, or group basis, depending on the student's needs, and are generally time-limited. Individuals in need of services not available at the Counseling Center may be referred to other agencies, some of which may provide services on a fee-for-service basis, often on a sliding fee scale. A 24-hour on-call phone service is available throughout the year.

University Health Service 275-2662

www.rochester.edu/uhs

The University Health Service (UHS) provides primary health care services for students and other members of the University of Rochester community. All full-time undergraduate and graduate students pay a mandatory health fee, which covers the cost of visits to the primary care physicians, nurse practitioners, and registered nurses at UHS.

UHS staff members are experienced in responding to the medical, counseling, and wellness needs of students and can provide ongoing care for health concerns. The staff will work with a student's private physician to assure continuity of care.

Vocational Rehabilitation

Students should contact their school's **Financial Aid Office** for information about vocational rehabilitation benefits.

**University of Rochester
Disability Resource Coordinators**

**The College Center for Excellence in
Teaching and Learning** **275-9049**
Pam Spallacci, Elizabeth Carpenter, Amy Clark

Eastman School of Music **274-1106**
Melissia Schmidt

School of Nursing **275-2375**
Nancy Kita

Medical School **275-4537**
Brenda Lee

**Medical School
Masters and Ph.D. Programs** **275-4522**
Linda Lipani

Simon School **275-8177**
Laura Gavigan

Warner School **275-1009**
Brenda Grosswirth

University Disability Resources
Harriette Royer **275-9125**