Policy on Persons with Disabilities

Mars Hill College affirms its intent to comply with federal regulations regarding persons with disabilities, specifically with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The College does not discriminate on the basis of disability in employment or admissions, and the College makes reasonable accommodations as needed for persons with documented disabilities. Questions and grievances should be directed to the Disabilities Coordinator.

The Disabilities Coordinator

The Disabilities Coordinator is the contact person through which any Mars Hill student with a declared, documented disability makes an official request for timely, reasonable accommodations. The Coordinator reviews the request and the disability documentation and then acts on each request per disability guidelines. Whenever there is a question as to the appropriateness of the accommodation request or documentation, the Coordinator presents it to the Committee on Disabilities.

The Committee is composed of the Dean of Students, the Director of Residential Life, the Disabilities Coordinator, a faculty member at large, a faculty member with expertise in disability issues, a member of the Student Support Services staff, a medical professional, and a mental health professional. The Vice President of Academic & Student affairs serves as an ex-officio member.

Documentation Guidelines

Mars Hill College students who are requesting timely, reasonable accommodations on the basis of a declared disability are required to submit documentation to verify eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Protection under these laws is based upon detailed, professional documentation of a physical or mental disability that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

Students requesting accommodations have the responsibility of ensuring that their documentation meets the following guidelines:

1. Testing and/or documentation must be current, within the last five (5) years.

2. The documentation must show evidence of a clear, specific diagnosis.

3. In the case of a learning disability, standard test scores must be provided.

4. Documentation must come from a qualified professional. The general expectation is that evaluators have degrees in their profession and are fully trained, certified, and/or licensed in their profession.

5. Documentation must be typed on official letterhead and must include the names, titles, and professional credentials of the evaluators.

6. Documentation should include a written summary of the background information about the student’s relevant educational and medical history that relates to the disability.

7. Objective evidence of a substantial limitation to learning must accompany any request for accommodation.

8. Specific recommendations for accommodations must be included as part of the documentation.

DOCUMENTATION MUST MEET THE COLLEGE’S DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES AND MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE DISABILITIES COORDINATOR BEFORE AN ACCOMMODATION REQUEST CAN BE PROCESSED.
Disability Accommodations Process

1. The Disability Information Release/Accommodations Request Form and official documentation should be mailed to the Disabilities Coordinator (forms are available from Admissions Office and from the Disabilities Coordinator).

2. Documentation is reviewed by the Disabilities Coordinator and/or the Committee on Disabilities.

3. Letter is sent to student indicating status of documentation:
   a. If documentation meets guidelines, Coordinator’s letter apprises student that he/she has been approved for permitted accommodations. Once the semester starts, the student must meet with Coordinator to request specific accommodations for each course to be documented on an official Academic Accommodation Plan. The student is responsible for sharing the official Academic Accommodation Plan with instructors or school personnel.
   b. If documentation does not meet guidelines, Coordinator’s letter advises student to seek out additional information/documentation.

Before any accommodation(s) can be granted -

Students requesting accommodations must:
• Return the Request form with documentation attached before the semester starts.
• See the Coordinator at the beginning of the semester to request an official Academic Accommodation Plan to communicate specific and approved accommodations with instructors or school personnel.

Additional Information

Mars Hill College students who are requesting timely, reasonable accommodations on the basis of a declared, documented disability are required to submit documentation to verify eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Protection under these laws is based upon detailed, professional documentation of a disability that currently substantially limits one or more major life activities relative to the general population. Documentation must meet the College’s Guidelines for Documentation. If the student’s documentation does not meet the College’s Guidelines, the student may seek out additional private evaluation or further information from his/her evaluator and supply this information to the Committee on Disabilities for reconsideration.

Grievances are handled by the Committee on Disabilities. The burden of proof rests with the student filing the grievance to prove that s/he has experienced treatment which has adversely affected the student’s status, rights, or privileges at the college. All grievances must be filed in writing within sixty (60) calendar days of the alleged injustice.

For questions or concerns, contact:
Disabilities Coordinator
PO Box 6714, Mars Hill College
Mars Hill, NC 28754
(828) 689-1410 or (828) 689-1196
fax (828) 689-1445
Email: disabilityinfo@mhc.edu

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