



MHU Faculty/Staff Guide to Disability Services

The Office of Disability Services is coordinated through the Mars Hill University Counseling Center to assist students with disabilities achieve fair access to university programs, facilities, and university sponsored activities in accordance with federal regulations.

Staff: Judith Harris, Disability Services Coordinator & Counselor
 Contact: Phone: 828-689-1410 | Fax: 828-689-1445 | Email: judith_harris@mhu.edu
 Location: The Wellness Center – Robinson Infirmary, 2nd Floor Room 306
 Hours: Wednesday 8:30-5:00 or other times by appointment

<p>Legal Definition of a Disability:</p>	<p>The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 or the Rehabilitation Act define a disability as <i>any physical or mental condition that substantially limits one or more major life activities</i>. Students are not required, but may choose, to disclose the nature of their disability to their instructors. Some common disabilities include the following:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention Deficit Disorder • Autism Spectrum Disorders • Chronic Health Impairments • Communication Impairments • Hearing Impairments • Learning Disabilities • Mobility Impairments • Psychiatric Disabilities • Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder • Traumatic Brain Injuries
<p>Accommodations Request Procedures:</p>	<p>Students with a disability who wish to request accommodations must complete the <i>Disability Services Request for Academic/Housing Accommodations Form</i>, provide professional documentation of their disability, and meet with the Disability Services Coordinator. The <i>Request for Academic/Housing Accommodations Form</i>, along with further information may be found at www.mhu.edu/campus-life/support-resources/disability-services/. Once submitted the Disability Services Coordinator, and in some cases, the Disability Services Faculty/Staff Committee, reviews the accommodations request and supporting documentation. Students are notified by letter/email regarding their approved accommodations. Students with approved accommodations then are asked to meet with the Disability Services Coordinator to complete and obtain copies of their <i>Academic Accommodations Plan (AAP)</i>, an official signed document which alerts course instructors of the students’ need for classroom accommodations. Students are required to present their AAP to their instructors each semester in order to receive accommodations. Accommodations are not retroactively granted.</p>	
<p>Grievance/Complaint Process:</p>	<p>Concerns or complaints concerning the implementation of accommodations should first be directed in writing to the Disability Services Coordinator who will work to achieve a resolution. Issues may be vetted with the Disability Services Committee and/or with other university officials to determine a fair and reasonable resolution. If not resolved, grievances are directed to the Associate Vice President for Student Development.</p>	
<p>Suggested Disability Statement for Syllabus</p>	<p><i>“The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have an Academic Accommodation Plan (AAP) issued through MHU Disability Services, please arrange a time to present your plan and to discuss your specific accommodation needs. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation and do not have an approved AAP, please contact Judith Harris, MHU Disability Services Coordinator, located in 306 Wellness Center or at kkoontz@mhu.edu.”</i></p>	

<p>Temporary Disabilities:</p>	<p>While temporary disabilities such as broken limbs and concussions are not legally considered to be disabilities, reasonable and appropriate accommodations are afforded to students with temporary disabilities. The Office of Disability Services will assist students who have temporary disabilities with problem-solving regarding facilities, housing, and academic accommodations. Since students may not be aware of these services, Instructors/Staff should refer students to the Office of Disability Services when made aware that a student’s circumstances may involve modification of the usual program policies or procedures.</p>
<p>Federal Regulations:</p>	<p>The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 2009 affirm that individuals with disabilities should have equal access to social, economic, cultural and educational aspects of national life. Although a private university, Mars Hill University is a recipient of federal funds and therefore does not discriminate on the basis of disability in employment or admission. MHU makes reasonable accommodations as needed for persons with documented disabilities.</p>
<p>What to Expect:</p>	<p>In post-secondary education settings, students are expected to self-identify as a person with a disability. Students who wish to declare a disability and request accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services, provide appropriate documentation of their disability, describe how their disability limits them in the college setting, and articulate how their requested accommodations will provide equal access. The student should present an approved <i>Academic Accommodation Plan (AAP)</i> to instructors in a timely manner prior to the need to implement accommodations. The Disability Services Coordinator is available to help students to navigate the accommodations process, to request appropriate and reasonable accommodations, and to help ensure that students receive the accommodations to which they are entitled. The Coordinator also supports faculty and staff in achieving fair access and provides consultation and assistance as needed.</p>
<p>Accommodations:</p>	<p>Specific accommodations are developed through careful review of professional health care and/or psychological documentation and the student interview. Accommodations are not designed to modify, lessen, or waive program requirements and must be determined to be “reasonable.” Typical accommodations include, but are not limited, to the following: extra time for tests or in-class assignments, note-taker arrangements, use of technology to record notes, read-aloud exams, low-distraction or separate test setting, alternate forms of assessment, etc. If the instructor has a question or concern about the implementation of an accommodation, he/she should contact the Disability Services Coordinator.</p>
<p>Implementing Separate Settings:</p>	<p>MHU does not have a central dedicated separate testing center with designated full-time proctoring staff. Test accommodations that require a separate setting are achieved in several different ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The instructor may elect to facilitate the test session through use of a nearby office/conference room during regular test time, during office hours, or with assistance of an SI or other department employee. Web applications or software may also be utilized to achieve read-aloud settings. • The DS Coordinator may assist by providing a separate setting or implementing other accommodations in the Wellness Center (72 hours advance notice requested). • Students with an <i>Academic Accommodation Plan (AAP)</i> who are also registered with <i>Student Support Services</i> may with advance notice request to arrange to take exams within the SSS Center (Marshbanks Hall). The requested accommodations on the SSS test form should similarly reflect the approved accommodations on the student’s AAP.
<p>Faculty Online Resources:</p>	<p>http://www.washington.edu/doi/Faculty/ The Faculty Room is a space for faculty and administrators at postsecondary institutions to learn about how to create classroom environments and academic activities that maximize the learning of all students, including those with disabilities.</p> <p>http://www.itcs.umich.edu/atcs/instructional-accessibility-tips.php Top 10 Instructional Accessibility Tips</p> <p>http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html Transition information for students & parents</p> <p>http://www.ahead.org/students-parents/students Transition information for students & parents</p>