

Manual of Policies and Procedures for Student Affairs

Subchapter 3.2 Student Accessibility and Resources

Subchapter 3.2-100. General Provisions

Sec. 3.2-101. Purpose

The mission of Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) (formerly Disability Services) is to provide students equal access to all educational, social, and co-curricular programs through coordination of services and reasonable accommodations, consultation and advocacy. We work collaboratively with students, faculty, and staff to create an inclusive educational environment.

Sec. 3.2-102. Definitions

a. In this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning,

1. "case manager" means a university employee in Student Accessibility and Resources who provides direct services to students with accessibility needs and consultation services to faculty and staff regarding on-campus situations which constitute an accommodation challenge.
2. "ADA Coordinator" means the university employee who monitors compliance with Federal Laws related to disability and university students. The ADA coordinator is often the same employee as the case manager.
3. "Faculty Notification Letter (FNL)" is a letter issued to the faculty listing approved eligibilities /accommodations that the student is entitled to use.
4. "qualified professional" means a professional who has particular expertise in the area of the condition/disability.
5. "student" means a person currently enrolled in residence at the university, or who is accepted for admission or readmission to the university, or who has been enrolled at the university in a prior semester or summer session and is eligible to continue enrollment in the semester or summer session that immediately follows, or who is attending an educational program sponsored by the university while that person is on campus;
6. "university" means The University of Texas at Tyler;
7. "UTHSCT" means The University of Texas Health Science Center Tyler.
8. "faculty or staff" means a current employee of The University of Texas at Tyler.

Sec. 3.2-103. Introduction

a. Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) offers services to all eligible (currently enrolled) students at The University of Texas at Tyler. SAR views disabilities as an integral part of diversity here at The University of Texas at Tyler. In general, we believe that disability in and of itself is simply an individual difference not a deficiency. SAR strives to be progressive in our operations and creative in student and faculty support, actively promoting awareness and successful experiences that encourage independence and self-reliance.

b. Students learn about accessibility services through a variety of avenues. Some of these include: SAR brochure, internet, e-mail, new student orientation, outreach days, The University of Texas at Tyler catalog, registration advertisements, and student newspaper; faculty and staff referrals.

Sec. 3.2-104. Application

a. A student who would like to be considered for accommodation services must request services themselves through Student Accessibility and Resources. The student requesting services should obtain an application information packet from the SAR office or access SAR online services at <http://www.uttyler.edu/disabilityservices/request.php>. Click on "Eligibility Application" and complete the application and upload any supporting documentation at least four weeks prior to the beginning of the semester. Information on types of documentation accepted can be found at the link above.

b. After the application and documentation has been received the student will receive an e-mail directing them to make an appointment with a case manager or ADA coordinator. A personal history interview with the student and the case manager is necessary in order to provide proper accommodations or assess what type of documentation may be needed in order to proceed with determining eligibilities.

c. Once specific eligibilities have been determined by the case manager and student, has met with a case manager, Faculty Notification Letters (FNL) are sent electronically to the instructors. Additionally, the student has access to an electronic copy. To assure that accessibility services are received the first week of class, the student must request accessibility services at least 15 days prior to the beginning of each succeeding semester.

d. The student should discuss with the faculty member relevant information that will assist in providing the approved accommodation. The faculty member will assure that the student receives the approved accommodation(s). The case manager is available to the student and faculty member for consultation.

e. Grievance Procedures – Unresolved issues with an instructor can be brought to the students' case manager for mediation. Complaints concerning the SAR office can be brought to the attention of the Director of Student Services in person or in writing. A written decision will be mailed to the complainant within ten (10) working days of its receipt.

f. Retaliation - No student will be penalized, disciplined or prejudiced for exercising the right to make a complaint, filing a grievance or discrimination complaint, or who has assisted or participated in the investigation of a complaint under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), its amendments or The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504.

g. The Student Accessibility and Resources Office is open 8 am – 5 pm Monday through Friday.

Sec. 3.2-105. Description of Services

a. Academic accommodations and other services are addressed and provided on an individual basis determined by student self-report, personal history interview, and if determined necessary, supporting documentation. Some of the services available to qualified students are:

1. FNL listing approved eligibilities provided to faculty
2. Extended time, readers, or scribes for in class coursework and examinations
3. Volunteer note takers
4. Sign Language Interpreters/real-time captioning/transcription services
5. Supportive counseling
6. Accessibility information
7. Alternate format textbooks/materials
8. Registration assistance
9. Referral to other campus and community resources
10. Consultation with faculty and staff regarding on-campus situations which constitute an accommodation challenge
11. Sponsored student support group

b. Computer software equipment and technologically designed for individuals with specific disabilities is available in the SAR lab and Testing Center. Some equipment is available for check-out according to approved eligibilities. (Failure to return equipment in good working condition may result in referral for disciplinary action including withholding grades and transcripts until item is returned or payment for replacement of item is received.)

Sec. 3.2-106. Requirements of Qualification

a. In order to receive accommodations, the student must meet the requirements of qualification which include: student self-report via intake forms, personal history interview with case manager, and supporting documentation when determined necessary by case manager.

b. To establish that an individual is covered under the ADA and guidelines established under ADAAA, 2008, documentation may be required in order to provide verification information and appropriate academic support (this may not apply to physical, sensory or learning disabilities that are determined permanent or unchanging. If documentation is required it should include:

1. specific diagnostic statement identifying the disability, date of the current diagnostic evaluation, and the date of the original diagnosis;
2. psychological, psychiatric and/or medical history relevant to the disability for which accommodations are being requested;
3. statement as to permanency of each condition/disability;
4. information on how each condition/disability affects the individual with regard to physical, emotional, or cognitive limitations and the severity and limitations within the classroom environment;
5. treatments, medications, assistive devices, services currently prescribed or in use;
6. described and justified specific recommendations for accommodations such as extra time for testing, note taking assistance, auxiliary aids, etc;
7. credentials of the diagnosing qualified professional including information about license or certification and area of specialization;
8. correspondence that is typed or printed on the evaluator's official letterhead.

c. A qualified professional must conduct the evaluation. Information on supporting documentation and qualified professionals may be found at <http://www.uttyler.edu/disabilityservices/request.php> by clicking on the supporting documentation links.

d. Diagnoses of disabilities documented by family members will not be accepted due to professional and ethical considerations even when the family members are otherwise qualified by virtue of training and licensure/certification. The issue of dual relationships as defined by various codes of professional ethics should be considered in determining whether a professional is in an appropriate position to provide the necessary documentation.

Sec. 3.2-106. Eligibility for Services for UTHealth Northeast students

a. The university also contracts with UTHealth Northeast to provide support services for the students enrolled in their program. The services provided through SAR are:

1. collect and evaluate requests for disability support services from students referred by UTHealth Northeast;
2. provide recommendations for appropriate accommodations for UTHealth Northeast students with identified disabilities;
3. provide access to specialized equipment and resources for student accommodations;
4. work with UTHealth Northeast to resolve student grievances related to disability support.