

Accommodations 101

Accommodations are modifications to conditions that would otherwise cause a student, because of a disability, to be at a disadvantage relative to students without a disability in their access to the university's programs for students. Reasonable accommodations provide equitable access to programs or facilities and do not fundamentally alter the essential nature of a course or academic program. It is important to note that accommodations provide the student with access but do not guarantee the student's success. Accommodations can be requested by a student via the submission of an [OAAR Academic Services Request](#), which can also be accessed by visiting [OAAR's My.Chatham page](#) under Services and Departments.

The following list of accommodations are ones that are most commonly seen in the Office of Academic & Accessibility Resources (OAAR). This is not an inclusive list of all accommodations. Accommodations are determined on an individual, case-by-case basis and is unique to the needs of each student.

Alternate chair/table: The student needs a chair and/or table that is either wheelchair accessible or accessible to their specific needs. A standard desk with an attached seat is not accessible to that student. Please consider assisting the student with this request if the classroom chair or table is not accessible.

****Calculator:** The student needs the use of a calculator to assist with math calculations that are required but are not an essential learning objective of the course. This refers to both in the classroom and/or on exams. Faculty can determine the type of calculator that is appropriate and/or if a calculator is appropriate to use for an exam.

Captioned videos: The student needs to have all course videos captioned for full access to the materials. If assistance is needed to complete this task, please view information via the [Instructional Technology](#) page on My.Chatham. In addition, please ensure that any videos or movies that you use for your course have captioning available.

Consideration for absences: The student has documentation supporting their need for unexpected absences due to their disability. Often the symptoms of the student's disability or medical condition are unpredictable, or they need immediate medical attention. Students with this accommodation are informed that communication with the professor is key to this accommodation since the faculty member is the professional who sets the requirements for attendance for the course.

Digital recorder: The student is permitted to use a digital recorder in the classroom. Please note that when the student is provided with a recording device or software accommodation through our office, they are required to sign a recorded lecture agreement which can be sent to the instructor when requested.

Distraction reduced testing environment: The student needs to take an exam in an environment with less distraction than what the classroom can offer. This can be an area that is separate from the rest of the class that contains a small group of students, or it can be in the OAAR department. If the student requests to take the exam in OAAR, it is their responsibility to follow the appropriate steps to schedule in advance and to alert their instructors.

Enlarged font: The student needs enlarged font for classroom handouts, quizzes, exams, diagrams, etc. Please provide all course materials in the font and size communicated by the student and noted in the accommodation notification. In addition, please consider having all course content uploaded into Brightspace for easy, accessible access.

***Extended time for assignment completion:** The student has documentation to support the need for additional time to complete assignments in the event that symptoms of their disability are impacting their ability to meet the scheduled due date. They are expected to contact their instructor in advance of the due date to discuss reasonable extensions on assignments. This accommodation is not automatically applied to all assignments and must be requested by the student for the assignment that is being impacted by their disability.

Extended time on exams (time and a half [150%] and double time [200%]): The student is allowed more time than the amount of time given for any in-class exams, quizzes, or timed essays. Time and a half and double time can be easily calculated if the exam is being taken in the classroom or conference area with the professor. If the exam is being taken in OAAR, the student is responsible for following the appropriate steps to schedule a test in our office with the time extension.

Kurzweil Text-to-Speech software: The student uses software to read aloud textbook materials, electronic handouts, and any other documents available for the course. OAAR provides the student with a license to this software.

Laptop: The student may need to use a laptop to take notes during class, access assistive technology, or type exam or quiz answers. The student is instructed to use the laptop for classroom activities only and not for personal use during class time. Laptops used during exams in OAAR are monitored according to the specific testing guidelines set forth by the instructor.

Leave classroom temporarily: The student may need to exit the classroom quickly due to symptoms of or conditions related to their disability. Please allow the student to leave and do not draw attention to their brief absence. Permitting the student to sit in a chair closest to the door may help implement this accommodation.

Need to eat/drink in class: The student needs flexibility to eat or drink in class (if it does not pose a safety issue) due to the nature of their disability. This may be directly related to a student's need to provide medical care to themselves.

Notetaking or assistance with lecture notes: The student has been approved for notetaking support via Glean software. For details on how Glean works, please see the [Glean Introduction video](#). Please see the digital recording section above for additional details.

Preferential seating: The student may have a preference for classroom seating arrangements. They will likely sit where they are comfortable, but please assist the student with finding a location that they prefer.

Reader for exams: The student needs exams read to them via spoken voice, read aloud software, or access to a recorded exam. Students who have been approved for this accommodation will typically take their quiz or exam in OAAR. The reader is not permitted to answer any questions about the exam and can only provide information to the student directly from the exam. If there is a question regarding the exam, the student is permitted to contact their professor for clarification. If the exam is being taken in OAAR, the student is responsible for following the appropriate steps to schedule a test in our office with the time extension. If the professor and student decide the exam can be completed with the professor, that can be organized with the professor and OAAR would not need to be contacted.

Scribe for exams: The student needs help with writing or recording exam answers due to their disability. The scribe is typically a staff member of OAAR, but student assistants may be utilized.

Sign language interpreter: The student needs a sign language interpreter for full access to course materials. When this accommodation is in place, the certified interpreter(s) will attend classes with the student and give them a visual interpretation of the spoken language in class. It is likely that this accommodation will be paired with captioning services.

It is highly recommended that the faculty continue to look at, speak to, and ask questions directly of the student, not the interpreter, when any communication occurs. The interpreter is only there to relay the information to and from the student.

****Spelling forgiveness:** Due to their disability, the student should not be penalized for any spelling, grammar, or mechanical errors on in-class assignments and exams, when it is not an essential course learning objective. The student may be provided access to a dictionary or spell check device. Faculty can determine when this accommodation is permissible based on the course objectives.

**Students are notified that a reasonable amount of time must be coordinated with the professor.*

***Students are notified that under certain circumstances, (i.e., course requirements) not all accommodations may be permissible by the professor.*