

Polk State College Procedure

Subject	Reference	Date	Number
Accommodation for Students with Disabilities	FS1000.05 FS1007.25 FS1008.29 FS1008.30 SBE 6A-10.041 Polk State Board Rule 1.05 Polk State Board Rule 4.23	4/26/2012	5008

The purpose of this procedure is to establish and implement Board Rules 6Hx21 1.05 and 4.23 for Polk State College services to students with disabilities.

I. **Definitions**

To be eligible for disability-related services, students must have a documented disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Under the ADA and Section 504, a person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities (walking, breathing, seeing, hearing, sitting, learning, speaking, or taking care of oneself). This definition includes, but is not limited to:

- Persons with mobility impairments
- Persons with learning disabilities
- Persons who are deaf or hearing impaired
- Persons who are blind or visually impaired
- Persons with psychological disorders
- Persons with one or many serious contagious and non-contagious diseases, including AIDS, epilepsy, cancer, and tuberculosis

Per State Board of Education (SBE) 6A-10.041, *Hearing Impairment* is defined as a hearing loss of thirty (30) decibels or greater, pure tone average of 500, 1000, 2000 Hz, ANSI, unaided, in the better ear. Examples include, but are not limited to, conductive hearing impairment or deafness, sensor neural hearing impairment or deafness, high or low tone hearing loss or deafness, and acoustic trauma hearing loss or deafness.

Per SBE 6A-10.041 *Visual Impairment* is defined as disorders in the structure and function of the eye as manifested by at least one of the following: visual acuity of 20/70 or less in the better eye after the best possible correction, a peripheral field so constricted that it affects one's ability to function in an educational setting, or a progressive loss of vision which may affect one's ability to function in an educational setting. Examples include, but are not limited to, cataracts, glaucoma, nystagmus, retinal detachment, retinitis pigmentosa, and strabismus.

Per SBE 6A-10.041 *Specific Learning Disability* is defined as a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological or neurological processes involved in understanding or in using spoken or written language. Disorders may be manifested in listening, thinking, reading, writing, spelling, or performing arithmetic calculations. Examples include dyslexia, dysgraphia, dysphasia, dyscalculia, and other specific learning disabilities in the basic psychological or

neurological processes. Such disorders do not include learning problems that are due primarily to visual, hearing, or motor handicaps; to mental retardation; to emotional disturbance; or to an environmental deprivation.

Students seeking accommodations due to a disability are required to submit documentation of their disability and need for accommodations as soon as possible. The cost of obtaining documentation is the responsibility of the student. The qualification of the professional providing documentation needs to be clearly indicated, and the language by which the disability is described must be consistent with standard practice within the profession. A formal written diagnosis is required.

II. Documentation of Need for Accommodations

Specific diagnosis of disability and verification of disability by a professionally-trained educational diagnostician, psychologist, or psychiatrist; or verification of a disability by Vocational Rehabilitation, the Division of Blind Services, or other recognized provider agency as appropriate must be determined to be “acceptable” by the Associate Dean of Student Services or a designee.

The professional providing the documentation must be identified by name, title, place of employment, and the state/province in which the individual practices. This information should be clearly stated with the documentation. Documentation must include a description of the need for specific accommodations and must address the specific disability. Documentation for learning disabilities should follow the latest version of the Association on Higher Education and Disability’s *Guidelines for Documentation of a Learning Disability*. Documentation presented should be based upon assessment of the impact of the student’s disability on his/her performance at a given time in the student’s life. Students must provide recent (within the last 5 years) and appropriate documentation. All evaluations supporting the request for accommodations must be completed post high school graduation or award of a GED. Current documentation must validate the need for services based on the individual’s present level of functioning in the educational setting.

The appropriate clinical documentation should substantiate the disability and present evidence to establish a rationale supporting the need for accommodations. If the recommended accommodations are not clearly identified in the diagnostic report, the Associate Dean of Student Services or designee will seek clarification and, if necessary, more information. For conditions that are subject to change over time (including health-related disorders, learning disabilities, and psychological disabilities), the student may be asked to provide updated documentation for his/her file on an ongoing basis in order for accommodations to be continued. Polk State College reserves the right to request updated documentation to justify the need for future accommodations. The cost of obtaining documentation is the responsibility of the student.

III. Procedure for Acquiring Services

A. To apply for services, a student with a documented disability must contact the Associate Dean of Student Services or designee on either campus to complete a “Student with

Disability Accommodation” form. This should be done as soon as the student registers for the term, preferably at least two weeks before classes begin. It is the student’s responsibility to collect and provide all necessary supporting documentation required by Polk State College.

Polk State College is required to provide accommodations any time during the term once the student has registered and all documentation has been received.

- B. The Associate Dean of Student Services will verify the written documentation and is responsible for creating and maintaining a confidential data file on each student served. Each file should contain the following information as appropriate:
- “Student with Disability Accommodation” form
 - Documentation of disability
 - Activity/note log
 - Receipt of *Students with Disabilities Handbook* form
 - Copies of the accommodation letter provided each term
 - Signed and notarized “Release of Information” form
- C. The Associate Dean of Student Services or designee will make final determination about whether and which accommodations are appropriate and reasonable and can be provided to the individual.
- D. The Associate Dean of Student Services or designee is responsible for notifying in writing all appropriate faculty and service units as to the accommodations approved for each student. The Associate Dean of Student Services or designee will prepare an accommodation letter for each faculty member describing the accommodations that the student should receive. The accommodation letters will be delivered by the student receiving the accommodation to the individual faculty member on or before the first day of class.

The Associate Dean of Student Services will serve as a liaison between the College and such agencies as Vocational Rehabilitation and Division of Blind Services, ensuring that all necessary paperwork is completed no later than the last day for fee payment in any given term.

If an accommodation is not being provided, is not effective, or an additional accommodation is needed, the student should consult with the Associate Dean of Student Services or designee immediately.

IV. Services Available

Printed information providing information on college programs and assistance available at Polk State College for students/persons with disabilities will be available.

In the fall and spring of each year, a special inquiry workshop will be held for special-

needs students interested in attending Polk State College. Invitation will be through the Exceptional Education Department of the Polk County School Board and other local agencies.

A special orientation will be held each term for students declaring a disability. This orientation will include information on services available with an attempt to answer questions and develop a plan to provide appropriate services.

No services are available until/unless an appropriate disability is documented by the advisor.

Polk State College provides the following services for students with disabilities. Accommodations or services provided by the College may include, but are not limited to, those listed below:

A. Interpreting Services:

Typically, interpreter service is the responsibility of the student or the sponsoring agency (ex. Vocational Rehabilitation.) To achieve maximum efficiency in the use of interpreters, every attempt will be made to coordinate with students requiring these services and the agencies providing them.

B. Note-taking Assistance.

C. Services for Students with Visual Disabilities:

Assistance for students with visual disabilities is rendered in conjunction with the Division of Blind Services. Various types of equipment are available to facilitate the student's class work. Reader services are provided for students with a visual or other disability and may include recording textbooks, orally reading tests, or orally reading assignments.

D. Services for Students with Physical Impairments:

Students with physical impairments that affect mobility will find all College facilities accessible. If there are barriers, accommodations are granted or appropriate assistance is provided. Disabled parking is available for vehicles bearing the disabled parking permit issued by the State of Florida. The advisor will assist in arranging other needed services for special situations such as standing in lines.

E. Testing Accommodations

1. Individualized Testing: Upon recommendation of the provided accommodation report, individualized testing can be provided.
2. Extended Testing Time: Accommodations for extended testing time are defined as follows:

- Extended time is one and a half times the normal time to take a test. (Example: the student will be provided 90 minutes to complete a 60-minute test.)
- If a reader or writer is needed, two times the normal time to take the test will be provided. (Example: the student will be provided 120 minutes to complete a 60-minute test.)

Polk State College does not give unlimited testing time. Accommodations that recommend unlimited testing time will receive the extended time accommodation.

F. Tutoring: Tutorial services are provided in conjunction with the Teaching/Learning Computing Center (TLCC).

G. Books on Tape

H. Library Assistance

I. Priority Classroom Seating

J. Adjustable Height Table or Desk

K. Tape Recorder Use in Class

L. Classroom Computer Accommodations

M. Visual Aid (Large Print Tests)

N. Calculators:

Regarding mathematics exams specifically, *calculators as an academic accommodation will not be permitted if a primary purpose of the exam is to measure computation*. Since MAT 0018 refreshes basic arithmetic skills, calculators may not be used as an accommodation in this course when basic arithmetic is being tested. However, a fact sheet of addition and/or multiplication tables may be used as an alternate accommodation. The College will provide the addition/multiplication tables for use during the test.

Since the content of MAT 0028 does not primarily involve basic arithmetic, a 4-function calculator is an appropriate accommodation for this course. The College will provide the 4-function calculator for use during the test. According to Florida law, if a student has a disability that provides for the use of a calculator as an accommodation, then the student must be provided a 4-function calculator for the MAT 0028 exit exam.

For all math courses beyond MAT 0028, a student with the accommodation may use the 4-function calculator in a non-calculator portion of a test.

Any accommodation (*fact sheet, calculator*) that is non-standard for the other students requires the student to test in the Testing Center in order to use the accommodation. On some occasions, students opt to test with the class and forego the accommodation for that test.

V. Request for Substitution for Requirements

- A. Polk State College is committed to high educational standards and appropriate support services to facilitate learning. Therefore, requests for course substitutions will not be considered until the student has attempted the course(s) for which a substitution is requested.
- B. Substitution for requirements will be considered only if the appropriate disability documentation has been provided to the Associate Dean of Student Services or designee.
- C. Requests for substitutions of admissions/program/or graduation requirements will be screened by the advisor. Students will be required to submit documentation to substantiate that the disability can reasonably be expected to prevent the individual from meeting a specific requirement.
- D. All requests for substitution or waiver will be reviewed by the Substitution/Waiver Committee, which will recommend to the Vice President for Academic and Student Services action for each case. The Committee will be constituted and will operate under provisions of FS 1007.25 & FS 1008.29. Action by the Vice President for Academic and Student Services is final. The Committee will define and publish its operating procedure.
- E. Students will be notified in writing the action recommended by the Committee when approved by the Vice President for Academic and Student Services.
- F. The Dean of Student Services will be responsible for maintaining records of request for substitutions.

VI. Appeals

Students with disabilities who feel the College has not met their needs appropriately, other than issues of substitutions, may appeal to the Equity Committee for an appeal hearing. The decision of the Equity Committee is final.

History

Adopted: January 18, 1974

Revised: (re-numbered) June 18, 1980; June 29, 1981; April 12, 1988;
October 28, 1981; January 24, 1997 and October 30, 2007; April 26, 2012

Distribution

All Holders of the *Polk State College Procedure Manual*

			
Executive Responsible for Procedure	Date	President's Staff Member's Approval	Date
			
President's Approval			Date