



CONCORDIA
UNIVERSITY
TEXAS

OFFICE OF ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Accessibility Services Handbook

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Welcome & Confidentiality Statement

Welcome Tornado! Your adventure of faith, learning, and life-changing experiences is about to begin! The team in the Office of Accessibility Services will be here to support you and advocate for your needs as a student.

Confidentiality Statement

Concordia University Texas (CTX) and the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) recognize that student disability records contain confidential information and are to be treated as such. Therefore, documentation of a student's disability is maintained in a confidential file in the Zielke Academic Support Center and is considered part of the student's education record. Information related to a disability may be disclosed only with the permission of the student or as permitted by the University's student records policy and federal law.

At the same time, however, students' right to privacy must still be balanced against the university's need to know the information to provide requested and recommended services and accommodations. Therefore, in the interest of serving the needs of the student, the provision of services may involve staff disclosing disability information provided by the student to appropriate university personnel participating in the accommodation process. Information may also be disclosed to appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency if this knowledge is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. This is limited to a specific situation that presents an imminent danger to a student, other students, or other members of the school community.

Accommodation Letters

With confidentiality in mind, students registered to receive accessibility services with the OAS must grant written permission for their list of services and accommodations, in the form of a letter, to be shared with their professors each semester they are enrolled at CTX. [Students should email](#) their permission 2 weeks before the start of the semester, but letters can be sent out at any point in the semester. If permission is not granted and the letter is not shared before the start of the semester, accommodations cannot be retroactively applied to coursework. Accommodation letters do not include any disability-related information.

Roles & Responsibilities

For the success of our learning community at CTX, students, faculty, and OAS Staff need to understand and be held accountable for their roles and responsibilities in providing services and accommodations for students with disabilities.

Students are responsible for:

- Providing OAS Staff with [a registration form](#) and any supporting documentation necessary for verification of the disability.
- [Requesting the accommodation letter be sent out each semester in writing.](#)
- Requesting accommodations as far ahead of time as possible. Some accommodations cannot be effectively arranged if they are requested on short notice.
- Discussing the accommodations with faculty and staff members as needed.
- Notifying the Director of Accessibility Services immediately if there are any concerns or difficulties in receiving accommodations.

OAS Staff is responsible for:

- Determining the reasonable accommodations and clarifying what documentation is needed to determine eligibility for services, if any.
- Maintaining student files confidentially.
- Writing and sending accommodation letters to faculty upon student written request.
- Releasing disability-related information only on a need-to-know basis to other University personnel.
- Assisting to resolve any problems a student or professor expresses about the accommodation process in the classroom.

Faculty/Staff is responsible for:

- Administering the accommodations recommended by the OAS.
- [Contacting the OAS](#) if there are concerns or questions about accommodations, how they will be provided, or additional support that may be needed.
- Knowing the essential elements of their course or program.

Reduced Course Loads & Substitutions

All students at CTX are required to complete the academic and program requirements necessary for graduation. In addition to courses required for a chosen major, all students must meet the specific requirements under the University's Common Experience. Students with disabilities are not excluded from these requirements, yet there are supports in place to help manage navigating the university experience.

Reduced Course Loads

Students whose disabilities are such that they cannot reasonably carry a full-time academic load (at least 12 credit hours during the fall and spring semesters) may be classified as full-time students. This brings many benefits from financial aid eligibility, opportunities to live in University housing, participation in extra-curricular activities, and academic honors (e.g., Dean's List designation). Students wishing to take a reduced course load must have documentation from a licensed professional that supports this accommodation. If you have any questions about documentation or starting this process, please [email the OAS](#) and we would be happy to guide you through the steps.

Course Substitutions or Waivers

Students with disabilities are entitled to protection under federal laws and may make written requests for course substitutions and/or waivers if the student's disability substantially limits the successful completion of a required course.

Written requests need to be submitted to the OAS as soon as possible so that there is ample time to form a decision before the student may need to take a required course or the designated substitute.

Once the written request has been received, the University will convene a committee composed of the Director of Accessibility Services, the ADA Compliance Officer, the Dean of the College in which the student is enrolled, the Course Professor, and any other professional deemed appropriate to the committee to review the request and determine the appropriate accommodation within program and licensure standards, if any.

Requesting and Utilizing Accessibility Services

While a student at CTX, some key accessibility services may be interacted with frequently. These services include our Testing Center and the partnership between the OAS and the University Bookstore to provide alternative formats to hardcopies of textbooks.

Textbook Accommodations

Students may be granted an accommodation for an alternate format of the hard copy of their course text. Within the University's included textbook structure, students need to remember the following items about this accommodation:

- The OAS will reach out about two weeks before the semester begins to gain insight into your preferences about gaining digital or physical access to the course texts.
- Students should respond promptly to allow the OAS, in partnership with the University Bookstore, to give access to the desired format without any delays or additional steps.
- Only one copy, physical or digital, of the course text will be offered under the included textbook structure. If a student's disability requires access to both physical and digital copies, his or her situation will be considered on an individual, case-by-case basis.
- If a student receives the incorrect text format, the student should reach out to the OAS immediately so that different arrangements can be made.

Utilizing the Testing Center

Another frequently utilized service is the Testing Center, located on the upper level of Cedal Hall (Building C) in the Zielke Academic Support Center. This space is dedicated for students with disabilities, allowing them to access a reduced distraction environment for their testing accommodations. Testing accommodations are best met in the Testing Center. Extra time cannot be granted in the traditional classroom setting as other classes typically need to use the space immediately after your class time or your professor may have other classes or responsibilities after your class time. It is highly recommended that you utilize this service to its maximum potential to reach your academic goals.

Testing Center Scheduling

To get exams scheduled in the Testing Center, students should:

- [Email the OAS](#) at the beginning of each semester to request their accommodation letter be sent out to their professors.
- Complete the Student Testing Center Agreement to inform OAS staff which courses they expect to use their testing accommodations for. Students also review and agree to follow the expectations of the Testing Center, listed on the following page, in this Agreement.
 - OAS staff will reach out to professor(s) for all the scheduled testing dates in the course(s), scheduling the exams for the student all at once.
- Respond to the reminder email sent by the OAS to confirm the exam is still happening at the expected time.
- Show up on exam day ready to show their mastery of the content.
- If a make-up exam needs to occur, the student must show proof of communication with the professor.

Testing Center Expectations

When utilizing the Testing Center, students are expected to follow these standards of behavior and academic integrity:

- No personal items are allowed in the testing room.
 - This includes backpacks, books, notes, food, drinks, blankets, and/or hoodies. All belongings are to be left in the designated area. Students will only be allowed to take in the materials that the instructor has allowed for use on the given exam.
 - All electronic devices such as cell phones, smartwatches, tablets, and/or computers (unless approved for the exam) are to be turned off and left in the designated area.
- All students are responsible for knowing and using their agreed upon accommodations.
- Arriving late (up to 30 minutes) will not extend the scheduled ending time for the exam.
 - If a student arrives more than 30 minutes late for a scheduled exam, the OAS may not administer the exam. It will then be the student's responsibility to go to the classroom to take the exam or speak to the instructor about rescheduling the exam.
- Before beginning the exam, breathe, pray, and use the restroom.
- Advise the Accessibility Coordinator or other OAS staff of any personal health needs that will require frequent breaks. Prepare ahead for snacks or medications during these breaks.

Testing Center Expectations (continued)

- Only the extended time agreed upon will be allowed, no additional time will be given.
- Students are to remain in the testing room unless permitted to leave by OAS staff.
 - In case of emergency, the incomplete exam must be returned to the Accessibility Coordinator. If a student leaves the room without informing the Accessibility Coordinator or other OAS staff, the exam will be taken up and returned to the instructor.
- All students are held accountable under the Academic Integrity Policy.
 - If a student is observed engaging in an act of academic dishonesty, the test will be taken up and the incident will be reported to the instructor. Students are monitored through security cameras in the Testing Center.
- Students will return all exams and any additional materials to the Accessibility Coordinator when completed. No exam materials are permitted to leave the Testing Center. The Accessibility Coordinator or OAS staff will return the exam to the instructor.

Special Situations

There will be times when a student at CTX requires temporary or other special considerations for their disability management.

Temporary Disabilities

Temporary disabilities are considered mental or physical impairments that last for a short period of time. These conditions, like a concussion or broken foot, are typically resolved in weeks or months.

The process to register for temporary disability services is as follows:

- 1 Contact the [Office of Accessibility Services](#) to discuss needs and, if appropriate, submit documentation from a medical professional. It is helpful to know any adverse side effects caused by medication and receive recommendations for accommodations from a professional.
- 2 Once approved to receive accommodations, the student and the OAS Staff will develop an accommodation letter for the student to give to professors outlining the agreed upon accommodations and their duration.

Students who are utilizing mobility aids such as electric scooters, wheelchairs, canes or crutches are advised to [utilize the ADA Approved Campus Map](#) to navigate how they will get to and from their classes. Wheelchairs, scooters, and other mobility devices are considered personal devices and are not provided by the university.

Students requiring the use of accessible parking spaces must have a state-issued parking placard or plates. This placard will allow students to park in any marked handicap space on campus for the duration of their permit.

Have Questions About Your Situation?

We understand that disabilities and their manifestations vary from person to person. If you have any questions or concerns about how your disability will impact your educational journey or residential life at CTX, please [get in touch with the OAS Staff](#).