

How To Request Academic Accommodations

WORKSHEET: [From The Dorm's "A Stronger Return to College & Campus Life: A Guide"](#)

College brings new academic demands, and if you have a disability, mental health condition, learning difference, or chronic medical condition, you may be eligible for academic accommodations designed to help you thrive.

This worksheet explains how to request accommodations and set yourself up for success in your new academic environment.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

The office where you receive accommodations may go by different names depending on your school. **Look for offices or departments with names such as:**

- Office of Disability Services
- Student Accessibility Services
- Center for Disability Resources
- Office of Accommodations and Accessibility
- Academic Support Services
- Office of Special Services

CHECKLIST FOR REQUESTING ACCOMMODATIONS:

- ☐ **Step 1: Start Early.** Don't wait until classes begin to apply, as schools can take up to 10 days or more to respond after an application is submitted. Before you get started, ask yourself these questions:
 - ☐ Which office handles accommodations at your school? (Names vary).
 - ☐ What documentation do you already have (IEP, 504 plan, prior clinical letters), and is it recent enough (generally within 1–3 years)?
 - ☐ Who can write you an updated clinical letter if your existing documentation is outdated or was based on childhood testing?

- ☐ **Step 2: Submit an Application.** Fill out the online accommodation/disability registration application. You will be able to find this by either reaching out to your school's disability office or by visiting the accommodations section of their website.
 **Note:** *Some schools don't require documentation to start the application. Apply anyway and discuss next steps with someone in your school's disability office.*

- **Step 3: Gather and Submit Documentation.** This can usually be submitted by email, fax, mail/in-person drop-off, or through a portal.

What your documentation usually must include:

- **Diagnosis:** A clear statement of the disability, including DSM-5 or ICD diagnosis and any co-occurring conditions.
- **Evaluation basis:** A comprehensive psychoeducational or neuropsychological evaluation, ideally within the last 3 years and based on **adult testing**.
- **Functional limitations:** How the disability currently affects major life activities and academic functioning.
- **History of accommodations:** What's been used before and why it helped (or didn't).
- **Recommended accommodations:** An explanation of how the requested accommodation will mitigate the student's disability.
- **Signed and dated,** on official letterhead, by a licensed practitioner. The practitioner cannot be related to or have a personal relationship with the student.
- **Must be complete.** Schools generally cannot accept partial paperwork.

- **Step 4: Meet with a Disability Service Coordinator.** Your school will assign someone from the disability services team to review your request and paperwork.

Meet with them to cover how your disability affects you, review your documentation, and discuss which accommodations are reasonable and appropriate for your classes.

- **Step 5: Send Accommodations to Your Professors.** Once approved, you are responsible for forwarding your accommodations letters to each of your professors. In your email, include the course code/name.

★ **Note:** Your accommodation letters are typically available in PDF form through a student portal and can be downloaded at any time.

WHAT TO KNOW

- **Accommodations are your legal right.**
- Once approved, using the **accommodation is entirely optional.**
- **Approval isn't guaranteed**, and what's granted may not exactly match what you asked for.
- **Documentation standards vary** by disability type, provider, and even the state. When in doubt, contact the accommodations office for clarification.
- **You can ask for help!** Accommodations staff exist to guide you through the process.

CONTACT LIST

Use this space to keep track of important contacts who can help you navigate the accommodation request process. Examples of people that are helpful to know are:

- **Academic Advisors:** This is your personal academic counselor who can help you manage your course load and adjust your class schedule to accommodate your needs.
- **Disability Service Coordinators:** These are the staff members who review your medical documentation to determine your eligibility for accommodations.
- **Course Professors:** Your professors are required to provide you the accommodations granted to you, but you will need to notify them and communicate regarding exam schedules and deadlines.
- **Testing Center Coordinators:** If relevant, university testing centers can provide alternative testing environments and assistive technology depending on your accommodations.

NAME	UNIVERSITY ROLE	EMAIL	PHONE
<i>(ex.) John Doe</i>	<i>Academic Advisor</i>	<i>john.doe@school.edu</i>	<i>(123) 456-7890</i>

COMMUNICATION TEMPLATES

The templates below provide a starting point for contacting professors, academic advisors, and disability services coordinators to begin the accommodation process and access the support you need.

Requesting Accommodations from a Disability Services Coordinator

"Hi [Coordinator's Name], I'd like to register for academic accommodations. Could you let me know what steps I need to complete, what documentation is required, and any deadlines I should be aware of for that process?"

Disclosing Accommodations to a Professor

"Hi [Professor's Name], My name is [Name] and I am in your [Class Name] Class. I have an accommodation for [extra time / quiet testing / etc.]. Can we go over how that works in your class?"

Contacting an Academic Advisor Regarding Accommodations

"Hi [Advisor's Name], I'm registered with [School Name]'s disability services office and have an accommodation letter. I would like to discuss how my accommodations may affect my academic plan and course schedule. When would be a good time to meet?"

These resources are offered by The Dorm, a mission-driven mental health treatment program helping young adults build lives of purpose and independence.