

Procedures Associated with the Policy on Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Effective Date: October 5, 2010 (subsequent revisions)

D. Roles and Responsibilities of Instructors

Instructors play a vital role in shaping a student's post-secondary educational experience. Although this relationship is important to all students, it becomes even more critical to students with disabilities whose academic success relies on good communication with their instructors.

To help facilitate a student's academic success and maintain the University's academic standards for the benefit of all students, instructors shall:

- a) Refer to Student Accessibility Services all students who:
 - Self identify with a disability, or
 - Suspect that he/she has a disability
- b) Refer to Student Accessibility Services those students who they suspect may benefit from the services of the Centre (whether through academic support or disability services)
- c) Treat all students with respect and work to ensure that their confidentiality and privacy is maintained.
- d) Make every effort to develop an inclusive learning environment.
- e) Identify, upon request, and with the assistance of their academic Department/School, the essential requirements of a course and provide this information to Student Accessibility Services.
- f) Participate, as appropriate, in structuring a suitable accommodation plan that meets the needs of the students and satisfies the essential requirements of the course/program.
- g) Implement the terms of any agreed accommodation plan.
- h) Confer with Student Accessibility Services if the proposed accommodation plan is not appropriate or effective.
- i) Be aware of, and comply with, the *Policy on Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities* and the procedural document associated with the policy (*Procedures Associated with the Policy on Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities*).
- j) Work cooperatively with Student Accessibility Services in announcing requests when required. (for example request for note-takers).

E. Role and Responsibilities of the Chair/Director

The accommodation of students with disabilities requires a collaborative approach between the student, Student Accessibility Services, the instructor, and Department Chairs/School Directors. Chairs/Directors are in an administrative role to facilitate policy and procedures and assist instructors to informally resolve accommodation issues. As required, a Chair/Director shall

review an instructor's decision not to provide a particular accommodation. The Chair/Director shall:

- a) Provide an opportunity for all instructors to familiarize themselves with the *Policy on Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities* and the procedural document associated with the policy (*Procedures Associated with the Policy on Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities*).
- b) Ensure that instructors receive, as appropriate, the departmental resources (aside from financial resources) and support necessary to implement any accepted accommodation plan.
- c) Consult with students and Student Accessibility Services, as required, when applicants or students first identify their need for accommodations.
- d) Discuss with the student and Student Accessibility Services any Department/School concerns about suggested accommodations and/or how the accommodations relate to the essential requirements of the course/program
- e) Within 3 Working Days, review, upon a student's or instructor's request, concerns with the recommended accommodation plan and assist in developing alternatives.
- f) Within 3 Working Days, review, upon a student's request, an instructor's decision not to provide an accommodation.
- g) Make every effort to ensure that Instructors and/or staff associated with field placements/practica take the accommodation requirements of students with disabilities into account.
- h) Ensure that the provision of accommodations for students with disabilities is outlined in any Department/School or Faculty handbook. Student Accessibility Services, upon request, can provide appropriate wording.

F. Roles and Responsibilities of the Dean

As required, the disciplinary-specific Dean shall:

- a) Work in conjunction with the Department/School to ensure that all instructors are made aware of the *Policy on Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities* and the procedural document associated with the policy (*Procedures Associated with the Policy on Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities*).
- b) Within 3 Working Days, review, upon a student's request, a Chair or Director's decision not to provide an accommodation.
- c) Work with Student Accessibility Services and University Administration to identify and secure appropriate resources to implement necessary accommodation plans.

G. Roles and Responsibilities of Enrolment Services

Enrolment Services shall:

- a) Forward any accommodation requests and accommodation documentation provided by a student, to Student Accessibility Services.

- b) Coordinate, with support from Student Accessibility Services, all aspects of accommodations required for individual students with disabilities scheduled to write formal examinations.
- c) Ensure that security measures for such examinations are equivalent to those provided for all other exams administered by **Enrolment Services**.
- d) Collaborate with Student Accessibility Services in implementing accommodations where the requirements fall within the jurisdiction of **Enrolment Services** (e.g. the provision of special timetabling or classroom use).
- e) Make accommodations for convocation, in conjunction with Student Accessibility Services, with advance notice from the student or other relevant parties.

H. Roles and Responsibilities of Library Services

The Library shall:

- a) Make every reasonable effort to provide students with disabilities equal access to information.
- b) Collaborate with Student Accessibility Services in the provision of information in alternate formats.
- c) Make every reasonable effort to collaborate with Student Accessibility Services to ensure the provision of adaptive technology within the library to improve accessibility.

I. Roles and Responsibilities of Student Financial Aid & Awards

The Student Financial Aid and Awards Office shall:

- a) Collaborate with Student Accessibility Services in the administration of specialized funding according to government guidelines and University practices.
- b) Consider qualifications of all students when determining eligibility for University awards, scholarships or other opportunities.

J. Responsibility of the University

The University shall:

- a) Ensure that appropriate training is made available to all university personnel in the accommodation of students with disabilities, consistent with their roles and responsibilities.
- b) Treat all students with respect; work to ensure that their confidentiality and privacy is maintained.
- c) Make every effort to develop an inclusive learning environment
- d) Be committed to treating all members of its community in a fair and equitable manner. The Senate Policy Regarding Academic Appeals is intended to ensure that students are treated fairly with regard to academic appeals. Students with disabilities may appeal when they believe that an inappropriate decision has been made. See Section III - Procedures for the Resolution of Disagreements.
- e) Promote and support an environment in which the duty to accommodate rests on the University as a whole. As necessary, the

University, via Student Accessibility Services and with the assistance of other University personnel and services, will facilitate the necessary arrangements (including financial obligations to the point of undue hardship) to implement accommodations.

II Specific Procedures for Accommodations

A. Accommodations for Courses

In order to coordinate any necessary arrangements, students and instructors, Chairs of Departments, Directors of Schools and Deans should pay close attention to the following procedures.

The student shall:

- a) Make their request for accommodation to Student Accessibility Services in a timely manner identifying the courses for which accommodations are being sought. If accommodation requests and accommodation documentation have not been submitted at the application stage, new students to Lakehead must submit all required documentation to Student Accessibility Services as soon as possible after they have accepted their offer of admission to the University.
- b) Students returning to the University who have registered with Student Accessibility Services in the past and continue to require accommodations must contact Student Accessibility Services at the beginning of each term to discuss concerns about their courses and to identify required accommodations.
- c) Provide all relevant and recent medical documentation (from an approved regulated health-care professional) to substantiate their disability, the impact of their disability and any resultant restrictions.

(In the absence of appropriate regulated health-care professional documentation, the student must arrange for appropriate assessment of the disability. Student Accessibility Services may assist with these arrangements)

Student Accessibility Services shall:

- a) Send a confidential accommodation form, normally at the beginning of the term, to the instructor (copied to the student) once all documentation has been received and reviewed.
(~~In the case of instructors who are not on-campus, the form will be sent to the Department or to Continuing Education and Distributed Learning for those courses offered through CEDL.~~) The form will include:
 - i. The suggested accommodations based upon a review of the information and relevant and recent medical documentation (from an approved regulated health-care professional) and any documentation related to the essential requirements identified for the course.

The instructor shall:

- a) Review the suggested accommodation.
- b) Keep a copy of the suggested accommodation form if he/she agrees that the accommodation is appropriate.

- c) Confer with Student Accessibility Services if the proposed accommodation plan is neither appropriate nor effective.
- d) Participate, as appropriate, in structuring a suitable accommodation plan that meets the needs of the students and satisfies the essential requirements of the course/program.
- e) Discuss with the Chair/Director of the Department/School any concerns about suggested accommodations and/or how the accommodations relate to the essential requirements of the course/program.
- f) Imply consent with the suggested accommodation if the instructor has not contacted Student Accessibility Services after five Working Days of the accommodation form being sent out.

B. Accommodations for Tests

The student shall:

- a) Contact their instructor **regarding tests** to determine if the instructor will be able to provide the accommodations.
- b) Contact Student Accessibility Services **10-14 days** prior to the test, if the instructor cannot provide the requested accommodations.
- c) Provide at least **24** hours notice to Student Accessibility Services

to cancel a booked test. Student Accessibility Services shall:

- a) Accommodate students who have scheduled the test with Student Accessibility Services following the procedures as outlined.
- b) Contact the instructor prior to the scheduled test date for specific instructions and to request a copy of the test.

The instructor shall:

- a) Provide the approved accommodations, with the help of Student Accessibility Services and the office of Continuing Education and Distributed Learning for distributed learning courses.
- b) Provide a copy of the test to Student Accessibility Services two Working Days prior to the scheduled day of the test.
- c) Drop off and pick up the test at Student Accessibility Services.
- d) Convey to a student with a disability, who is writing the test separate from the class, any information or clarification provided to the rest of the class.
- e) Leave appropriate contact information (e.g. cell phone number) with Student Accessibility Services should Student Accessibility Services need to contact the instructor during the writing of the test.

C. Accommodations for Examinations

The student shall:

- a) Complete an exam accommodation form available through Student Accessibility Services once the exam timetable has been posted and

- no later than November 1st for the fall term and March 1st for the winter term. For the spring/summer term, students must complete an exam accommodation form by the end of the first week of classes.
- b) Be registered with Student Accessibility Services to qualify for accommodations for examinations.
 - c) Register with Student Accessibility Services as early as possible. All attempts will be made to accommodate students at exam time who are newly registered with Student Accessibility Services; however, some flexibility may be necessary depending upon the timing of the request.
 - d) Provide at least 24 hours notice to the Registrar's Office to cancel a booked exam.

Enrolment Service Shall

- a) Schedule all formal examinations at the request of the instructors.
- b) Accommodate students who have completed the exam accommodation form by the deadline for all formal exams that have been officially scheduled by **Enrolment Services**.
- c) Continue to provide accommodations to students at the originally scheduled exam writing time when the instructor changes the scheduled time for that exam.
- d) Schedule deferred examinations when accommodations cannot be made during the formal examination period due to time constraints. These examinations will be scheduled as soon as possible after the formal examination period, but not later than the next Special Examination period.

The instructor shall:

- a) Convey to a student with a disability, who is writing the exam separate from the class, any information or clarification provided to the rest of the class.
- b) Pick up completed exams from **Enrolment Services**.
- c) Understand that accommodations will be provided to students at the originally scheduled exam writing time when the instructor changes the scheduled time for that exam.
- d) Be responsible for all accommodation arrangements in the event that an exam has not been scheduled through the formal examination schedule of **Enrolment Services**. Although the instructor may approach Student Accessibility Services for assistance, it is not guaranteed that the requisite assistance may be available.
- e) Provide a deferred examination when accommodations cannot be made during the formal examination period.

D. Accommodations for Research and Experiential Components of Study

Whether in undergraduate or graduate level studies, accommodations may be required for students with disabilities to complete research or experiential components of their program including the completion of independent research and writing, field work or other kinds of community placements, and theses

defences at the graduate level. These accommodations may need to be significantly different than more general accommodation strategies that may be in place for course work. Paramount in all phases of a program or course of study (course work, research or experiential components), whether at the graduate or undergraduate level, is the ability to meet the essential requirements of the program/course.

E. Accommodations for those with Temporary Disabilities

A temporary disability is typically defined as an impairment common to the general population, such as a virus, broken bone, sprained muscles, lacerations, or surgeries and is expected to be present for 6 weeks or less. Students who experience a temporary, short-term medical impairment unrelated to a documented disability may require or benefit from temporary academic accommodations. .

Students in these situations should discuss their situation with the individual instructor(s) to discuss temporary and reasonable accommodation(s) and whether the instructor is able to provide such accommodations. Instructors may advise the student of the appropriate university policy (i.e. exam deferral, etc) or may make individual academic accommodations for the student. If an instructor is unable to provide the accommodation or if the prognosis for the temporary disability proves to be longer than expected, the student should contact Student Accessibility Services.

Students with a temporary disability will be required to provide appropriate documentation completed by a qualified health professional attesting to the nature of the disability, the anticipated length of time that the disability may have an impact upon the student.

F. Accommodations for Students Admitted to the Northern Ontario School of Medicine

Students admitted to the Northern Ontario School of Medicine who must comply with the academic accommodation policy and procedures as outlined by the Northern Ontario School of Medicine.

III Procedures for the Resolution of Disagreements

A. Review of Accommodation Plans

If agreement between the student, Student Accessibility Services, and the instructor(s) about a recommended accommodation plan cannot be reached, the instructor shall discuss the matter with the Chair/Director of the Department/School (normally within five Working Days of receipt of the accommodation request). The student shall request that the Chair/Director review the proposed accommodation plan and may request the Dean to review the proposed accommodation if the Chair/Director decision does not support the proposed accommodation plan. In all cases, all parties (including Continuing Education and Distributed Learning if applicable) are encouraged to work with one another to informally resolve any accommodation issues.

The Chair/Director shall consult with appropriate offices and individuals affected by the situation and every reasonable effort must be made to accommodate the student with the disability while ensuring that all essential

requirements of a course/program are fulfilled. If the Chair/Director, after consultation, agrees with the proposed accommodation plan or a revised plan, the accommodation shall be granted. The Chair/Director shall so advise Student Accessibility Services, the instructor, and the student in writing.

If the Chair/Director agrees with the instructor that the requested accommodation is not appropriate, the Chair/Director shall forward all relevant documentation (normally within five Working Days of being contacted by the instructor) to the Dean for further review

The Dean shall, in turn, review all relevant documentation and meet with the student, the instructor and the Chair/Director in an effort to mediate and resolve the matter. The Dean shall, within ten Working Days of being contacted by the Chair/Director notify in writing, the student, Student Accessibility Services, the instructor and the Chair/Director the outcome of the review.

If there is no resolution to the matter and no revised accommodation plan can be suggested that would help the student meet the essential requirements of the course or program of study, the Dean shall notify Student Accessibility Services in writing (normally within ten Working Days of being contacted by the Chair/Director, that the requested accommodations will not be approved. A copy of this letter shall be sent to the student, the instructor and the Chair/Director. Alternate accommodations may be suggested but if there are none, then the University, including Student Accessibility Services and other student service personnel, and the student will explore what other options might be available (including what other programs of study might be considered).

B. Accommodation Pending Review

The University recognizes that decisions involving accommodations must be made in a timely fashion to assist students in their on-going courses. In the event that a request for accommodation is under review, the instructor and Student Accessibility Services shall review the suggested accommodation plan to determine what portion of the plan, if any, is feasible to implement immediately.

If the final result of a review is that the requested accommodation cannot be granted and if no revised accommodation plan is possible or can be granted, the Chair/Director or Dean may recommend that a student be retroactively withdrawn from a course or a program without academic penalty. A limited tuition refund may be possible in some circumstances.

IV Review of Procedures Associated with the Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Responsibility for the annual review of and maintenance of the **Procedures Associated with the Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities** lies with the Vice-Provost (Student Affairs).

V Human Rights Code

A complete copy of the Ontario Human Rights Code can be viewed at:

http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90h19_e.htm

Appendix II

Determining Essential Requirements

Taken from Determining Essential Criteria: Guidelines for Accommodating Students with Disabilities in the University Sector, Inter-University Disability Issues Association (IDIA) 2003

“Essential” is defined by two factors; 1) the skill must be demonstrated to meet the objectives of the course; 2) the skill must be demonstrated in a prescribed manner.

“Terms that have been used [to describe essential] include indispensable, vital, and very important”. Thus, a requirement should not lightly be considered to be essential, but should be carefully scrutinized.

This includes course requirements and standards. For example, it may likely be an essential requirement that a student master core aspects of a course curriculum. It is much less likely that it will be an essential requirement to demonstrate the mastery in a particular format, unless mastery of that format (e.g. oral communication) is also a vital requirement of the program. In contrast, non-essential duties would not detract from the main purpose of the [course or program] if they were not done or [done in a different manner]”.

“It is important that instructors identify the essential requirements (or components) in their course and/or program. If an instructor is very clear about what is being taught, and why it must be done a certain way, it is much easier to find creative solutions to the needs of students with disabilities”. Where an instructor has not determined the objectives prior to the design of the course, Student Accessibility Services may need to consult with the instructor in making informed decisions about determining appropriate accommodations without compromising the essential component

