Accommodations and Access at UT

Services for Students with Disabilities at the University of Texas at Austin
Access is a Right

Federal law protects the rights of people with disabilities to ensure full participation and equal opportunity for people with disabilities

- Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Students Have a Right to Access

- Housing
- Academics
- Employment
- Extracurriculars
- Campus Life
What Does Accessible Mean?

'Accessible’ means a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity

– to acquire the same information
– engage in the same interactions
– enjoy the same services as a person without a disability.

• in an equally effective and equally integrated manner,
• with substantially equivalent ease of use
• as fully, equally and independently as a person without a disability

• Dept. of Justice, July 2013, Louisiana Tech University Settlement
What is a Disability?

- An individual with a disability is defined by the ADA as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- Autism
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- Learning disabilities
- Medical Disabilities
- Mobility Disabilities
- Psychological Disabilities
- Visual Disabilities
- Temporary Disabilities
- Traumatic Brain Injuries
Grad Students with Disabilities at UT in 2017-2018

• 237 graduate students using academic acc.
  – 128 Masters
  – 109 Doctoral

• Mental health, ADHD, medical and learning disabilities were most common diagnoses

• 40% were diagnosed as college students

• 34% were using accommodations for the first time at UT
Who We Are

- 14 staff members
- ~2,800 students using services
- Office located on the 4th floor of Student Services Building
- Assistive Technology Equipment Center (ATEC)
- 15 testing spaces
- Walk In hours
  - M-F 10am-3pm

What We Do

- Determine student eligibility for academic accommodations
- Approve classroom and testing accommodations
- Consult with faculty and staff
- Provide resources and referrals
- Coordinate outreach education and awareness across campus
- Testing Fund/Scholarships
The Accommodation Process

- Initiated by the Student
- Interactive process between student, instructor and SSD
- Diagnosis stays confidential within SSD
Student Process to Set Up Accommodations at SSD

Student must provide documentation of disability verifying diagnosis and current impact

Complete Intake Appointment at SSD to discuss how disability affects academics and to determine accommodations

Provide instructor with Accommodation Letter and discuss how to implement accommodations in the classroom
Documentation of Disability

Documentation must be current and include:

• Diagnosis
• Current Impact or Functional Limitations
• Prognosis

Verification forms available on SSD website

• Completed by a licensed healthcare provider
• Typically IEPs/504 plans are not sufficient documentation
Intake Appointment

• Review student academic/disability history

• Determine reasonable accommodations

• Review student rights and responsibilities

• Discuss implementation of accommodations at UT
Accommodation Examples

- Extended Time for exams
- Reduced Distraction Environment for tests
- Copy of Class Notes
- Permission to Audio Tape Lectures
- Consideration for flexibility with attendance or deadlines
- Course Load Reduction/Full Time Status
Ongoing Support/Follow Up

• Each student is assigned a Disabilities Services Coordinator within SSD
• Students are responsible for asking questions or reaching out for support
• Walk In hours
  – 10am-3pm, M-F
Self-Advocacy

• Students are in charge of their education and accommodations
• They must ask for what they need; accommodations, clarification, assistance
Instructor Process to Provide Accommodations

Receive Accommodation Letter from student listing approved accommodations

Discuss privately with student how accommodations apply to class (attendance, deadlines, testing accommodations, etc)

Implement approved accommodations in a timely manner after discussing accommodations with student
Disability does not mean Inability

• A disability may change how something is done but it shouldn’t change expectations about what can be done

• People with disabilities are students, faculty and staff at UT
Accessibility is Everyone’s Responsibility

- Housing and Food Services
- Information Technology Services
- Facilities Services
- Parking and Transportation Services
- ADA Coordinator
- Services for Students with Disabilities
- Departments, Advisors, Professors
Disability=Diversity

People with disabilities have a right to fully experience all UT has to offer!

• Disability is a valued part of campus diversity!
Stay Connected!

UT-Austin’s Services for Students with Disabilities

@UT_SSDisability

http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability
We look forward to making you experience at UT accessible, welcoming and inclusive!

For more information about SSD’s services please call 512-471-6259 or visit us at

http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/