



WALTERS STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE (WSCC)

DISABILITY SERVICES GUIDEBOOK

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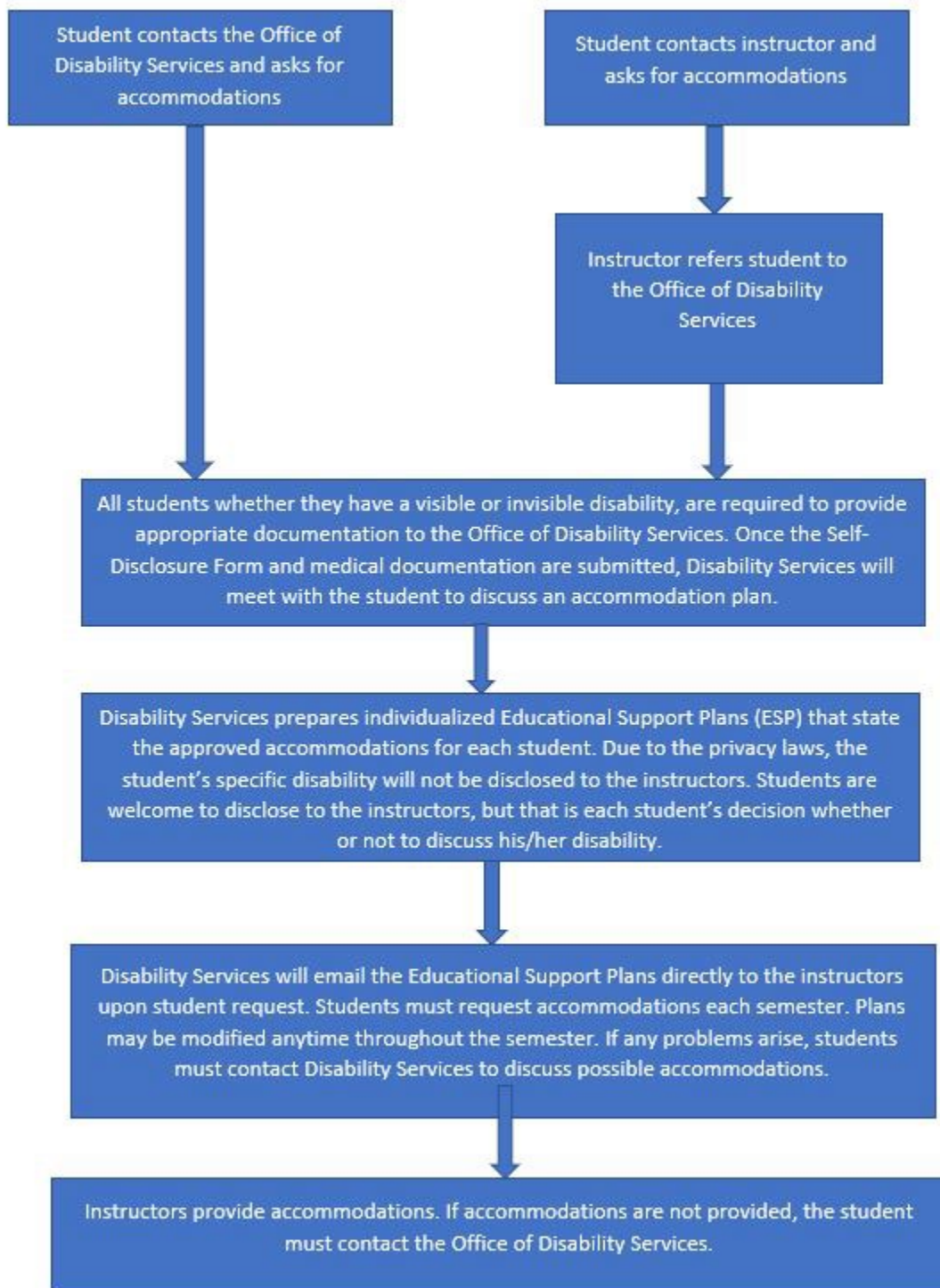
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Student Support Services Staff

<u>Disability Services (all campuses):</u>	Amy Jackson Phone: (423) 585-6860 Fax: (423) 318-2344	Helen Cox Phone: (423) 585-6893 Fax: (423) 318-2344
<u>Counseling & Testing:</u>	Andy Hall Phone: (423) 585-6801 Main Campus	Vicky Marshall (423) 585-6800 Main Campus
	Roxanne Bowen (423) 585-6806 Main Campus	Debbie Johnson (423) 585-6802 Main Campus & Claiborne
	Ray White (423) 798-7962 Niswonger Campus	Jason Newcomb (865) 774-5812 Sevierville Campus
<u>Tutoring:</u>	Mary Brannock (423) 798-7982 Niswonger Campus	Jennifer Baker (865) 286-2787 Sevier Campus
	Benjamin Adams (423) 585-6920 Main & Claiborne Campus	

The Accommodation Process



WSCC Office of Disability Services

Overview:

The Office of Disability Services is responsible for coordinating reasonable accommodations for students in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 (as amended in 2008). It states that “no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of that disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any public entity.” According to ADA guidelines, “disability” is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities, a record of such impairment, or being regarded as having such impairment.

Any student with a disability that would like to request accommodations must complete the request for accommodations to self-identify and provide appropriate and current documentation of the disability from a qualified individual. To request accommodations, the student will need to go to: [Walters State Hayes Accessible Learning \(opens in a new window\)](#) and click on “New Student Application”. After submitting the application/request for accommodations, the student will be prompted to submit documentation of the disclosed disability. Documentation is requested to be no older than 3-5 years old. Older documentation can be submitted, and upon review may be sufficient. Participation in disability services is on a voluntary basis, and accommodations are coordinated on a case-by-case basis by the Office of Disability Services staff.

In general, a reasonable accommodation is a change or alteration in the educational environment or in the way things are customarily done that enables a student with a disability to have equal access. A reasonable accommodation must not fundamentally alter the program, service, activity, or academic requirements. Students receiving accommodations must meet all admissions, academic, attendance, clinical, and program requirements and will be expected to show competency in the course material/skills. Please note that personal assistant services are not considered reasonable and are not provided by the college. Accommodations are not retroactive, and they do not automatically roll from one semester to the next. An Educational Support Plan must be requested every

semester. Accommodations at the college level may differ from the accommodations that are available at the high school level.

Disability Services Role:

1. Make information available to prospective and new students about the services that are offered and make sure the student is aware of how to register for accommodations.
2. Meet with students by appointment who self-identify as having a disability in order to develop an Educational Support Plan.
3. Maintain confidential student files. Disability Services cannot disclose information in any form to parents, spouses, or any third party outside the college without the student's signed permission.
4. Refer students to appropriate campus and community resources.
5. Serve as a liaison between the students with disabilities and WSCC faculty/staff.
6. Provide information and promote awareness of Disability Services to WSCC faculty, staff, and students.
7. Serve as an advocate for students with disabilities for school-related matters.

Faculty Role:

1. All faculty are required to provide reasonable accommodation(s) for students with documented disabilities as outlined in the Educational Support Plan. Faculty should not provide accommodations to students prior to receiving an official Educational Support Plan from the Office of Disability Services.
2. Consult with Disability Services for clarification of a student's Educational Support Plan and/or any issue related to reasonable accommodation(s). Disability Services cannot disclose the nature of a student's disability.
3. Educational Support Plans may be modified anytime throughout the semester; therefore, faculty should check email regularly for any updates.
4. Maintain confidentiality of student Educational Support Plans. No information about the student should be shared with any third-party including parents, spouse, outside agency, etc.
5. Refer students to Disability Services if they disclose having a disability or request accommodations.

6. Treat the student with a disability the same as the other students, and always talk to them privately about their accommodations.

Student Role:

1. Students with a disability may self-identify and voluntarily disclose his/her disability to the Office of Disability Services. Students who request accommodations must complete the accommodations request and submit documentation of their disability to the Office of Disability Services. High school IEPs and 504 plans do not automatically roll over to the college level.
2. It is the student's responsibility to contact the Office of Disability Services each semester to grant permission for the Educational Support Plan to be emailed to the instructors. Without permission, the Office of Disability Services will not send out the student's Educational Support Plan.
3. Student's must notify the Office of Disability Services of any class schedule changes to ensure that the Educational Support Plan goes to the correct faculty members.
4. It is the student's responsibility to privately speak with the instructors to self-identify. Instructors receive several Educational Support Plans each semester, and it is very helpful to talk to each student about their accommodations. In the case of online or hybrid classes, the student should email each of his/her instructors to verify that the instructors received the Educational Support Plan from the Office of Disability Services.
5. If a student receives testing accommodations, the instructors and the Office of Disability Services must have a week's notice of any upcoming test. This allows ample time for Disability Services to coordinate the accommodations. A student should remind the instructor before each test that he/she wants the approved accommodations from the Educational Support Plan. Once a student has started a test, the allotted time limit can't be changed.
6. Notify the Office of Disability Services immediately if there is any question or dispute about any accommodations that have been approved on the Educational Support Plan.
7. Students must comply with all WSCC rules of conduct. If a rule of conduct is broken, disciplinary actions are the same for all students, including those receiving accommodations through Disability Services.

8. Students must promptly notify the Office of Disability Services of any phone, email, or address changes. This information should also be updated with the college by going to the following link: [Walters State Admission Forms \(opens in a new window\)](#) and clicking on “Change of Information”. You will be prompted to sign into Dynamic Forms. Students are also welcome to stop by any campus location to fill out a paper form.

Guidelines of Documentation

1. **Qualifications of the Evaluator:** The professional conducting the assessments, rendering a diagnosis, and making recommendations for appropriate accommodations must be qualified to do so. Strict adherence to one’s professional code of ethics is expected, especially as it relates to qualifications, dual relationships, and conflicts of interest. The evaluator’s name, title, signature, and professional credentials must be included in the letter or report. The documentation submitted must be on the evaluator’s office letterhead paper (not on a prescription pad).
2. **Age of Documentation:** Initial qualifying documentation at the college level should generally be no more than five years old. A new assessment (at the student’s expense) may be necessary to determine the current need for accommodation(s) if the existing documentation is outdated, inadequate, or if the student’s observed performance indicates that significant changes may have occurred since the previous assessment was conducted. If a student chooses to submit his/her high school IEP or 504 plans, the evaluation results also need to be included, or the IEP or 504 plan needs to be signed by a qualified evaluator. For example, the school psychologist may sign off on the plan.
3. **Specific diagnoses and clinical documentation:** All documentation should include a specific diagnosis and clinical documentation required to substantiate a disability. Examples of appropriate documentation may include a learning disability evaluation, a psychological assessment, or documentation of the student’s physical/medical disability from the student’s physician.
4. **Recommendations:** The evaluator should also include specific recommendations supporting the need for possible classroom accommodations. If no recommendations are received, the student and

Disability Services will work together to determine what accommodations may be helpful. The Educational Support Plan can be modified at any time at the student's request.

Formal Grievance Procedure

Students who have a problem or concern pertaining to accommodations and Disability Services should first contact the Disability Services staff. If the problem is not resolved to the student's satisfaction through Disability Services, the student may appeal through the Assistant Vice President of Student Services. If there is still no resolution, the student may appeal to the Vice President of Student Services.

Tips for Approaching an Instructor

- ❖ Approaching an instructor for the first time may seem intimidating for a student. There is no need to feel anxious or worried because most instructors have experienced this before.
- ❖ Be sure to talk to your instructor(s) before or after class or go see him/her during office hours. The instructor's office hours should be listed in the class syllabus. It is not appropriate to interrupt class to talk to the instructor about accommodations.
- ❖ Instructors may have questions regarding your accommodations, especially newer instructors. This should not be taken negatively. It is important for the students, instructors, and Disability Services staff to be on the same page regarding your accommodations in order to provide you with the best educational experience.
- ❖ Please contact each instructor at the beginning of the semester to verify he/she received your Educational Support Plan. You can talk to the instructor(s) before or after class, through email correspondence, or during office hours.
- ❖ Always feel free to talk to your instructors at any time during the course of the semester. It is perfectly acceptable to remind an instructor in a positive

way about your accommodations if you feel they are not being implemented. If there are issues that you and the instructor can't resolve, please immediately contact the Office of Disability Services. The Office of Disability Services will serve as a liaison between the instructor and student to ensure that the student is receiving equal access.

- ❖ Forming a relationship with your instructor builds trust, and it is another way of ensuring your success.

Requesting Assistive Technology

Once the Office of Disability Services approves a student for assistive technology, he/she must check-out the device or software by contacting the library staff on the main campus at (423) 585-6903. Arrangements can be made to check-out equipment at any campus location. All assistive technology must be returned to the library by the end of each semester and can be checked out again the next semester.

WSCC Guidelines for Testing Accommodations

The following guidelines are for students who are determined eligible for testing accommodations by the Office of Disability Services. **Instructors are encouraged to provide testing accommodations.** However, if the instructor is not able to provide appropriate accommodations, the following procedure must be followed to arrange testing with the Office of Disability Services. The student may email, call, or stop by the Office of Disability Services to schedule testing accommodations with our office. The request needs to be made a week in advance, but no later than two days before the test to allow sufficient time for the arrangements to be made.

Interpreting Services

- ❖ sign language interpreters are available to students who are deaf or hearing impaired. Interpreting services are arranged by the Office of Disability Services, not the student.
- ❖ **Important:** Students should request an interpreter at least 4 weeks in advance prior to the beginning of the semester and earlier at times when

the college is closed for holidays such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc. Last minute requests may lead to a delay in interpreting services.

- ❖ It is the student’s responsibility to notify the Interpreter when he/she will be absent from class. The student should contact the Interpreter as soon as he/she realizes they will not be able to attend class. Advance notice is very much appreciated.
- ❖ In the event that the student continually does not show up for class and/or makes last minute cancellations, the school may elect to suspend interpreting services. This is at the discretion of the school staff and after the student has been given a previous written warning.

Comparison of High School Accommodations and College Accommodations

Welcome to Walters State Community College! The transition from high school to college can be extremely difficult if a student does not know what to expect. Below is a table that specifies some of the changes a student will experience with accommodations.

High School...	College...
Can alter tests (length, word banks, fewer choices, etc.)	All students are given the exact same exam
Can allow students to redo assignments and/or tests	Can't allow the students to redo assignments and/or tests
Can offer extra credit opportunities	Extra credit opportunities are at the professor's discretion
Can offer a different grading scale	All students are graded on the same grading scale
Can excuse absences with a doctor's excuse	Attendance (missing work) is coordinated with each individual professor
Provides academic testing to determine eligibility	Documenting a disability is up to the student and is at their own expense

Can provide study guides and test review	Each professor decides whether or not to provide a study guide for tests
Can modify academic requirements, such as curriculum	All students have the same academic requirements
Can discuss academic progress with the student's parents	Can only talk to the parents with the student present or with written permission from the student
Gives the teachers a copy of the IEP that includes the student's medical condition	Gives the professors a copy of the Educational Support Plan (ESP) that lists the accommodations only
IEP is developed each year	ESP is developed each semester
Teachers take responsibility for implementing the IEP	Students are responsible for seeing that an ESP is implemented and must request accommodations each semester

Student Responsibilities in College

Office of Disability Services
Walters State Community College

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- I am aware that I have to request accommodations by completing the online request. I will also provide medical documentation of my diagnosed disability.
- I understand that medical documentation submitted to the Office of Disability Services will NOT be sent to any other office and/or school. All information is protected.
- I will contact the Office of Disability Services EACH SEMESTER to determine what accommodations I need.

- I am responsible for informing my instructors that I want my classroom accommodations. The Office of Disability Services will email my Educational Support Plan to my teachers. Then, my teachers would like for me to identify myself. This will allow me to ensure that my teachers are aware of my accommodations.
- I am responsible for informing my instructors that I want my testing accommodations prior to **each** exam. For example, if I have a test next week, I will notify my instructor at least 2 class days prior to the exam. If my instructor is not able to provide the accommodations, they will ask me to contact the Office of Disability Services to make arrangements to test with them. I will follow the procedure for scheduling a testing room with the Office of Disability Services. I have been given instructions on the procedure. I am aware if I don't make prior arrangements, I may not receive my testing accommodations.
- If I request accommodations, I am responsible to arrive at the scheduled time. For example, if I request a reader, they are available to be there during the scheduled time. If I don't show up at the scheduled time, I understand that I may not receive my accommodations.
- If I am approved for a note taker, my instructor will make an announcement that a note taker is needed. **If** a student volunteers to be a note taker, the Office of Disability Services will make arrangements for me to receive a copy of the notes. It is my responsibility to pick up the notes from the designated location. If I am not receiving my notes, I will contact the Office of Disability Services.
- I am responsible for completing all educational requirements for each of my classes. I am aware that WSCC offers free tutoring on each campus.
- I understand that if I have a concern with my accommodations, it is my responsibility to contact the Office of Disability Services.