

Frequently Asked Questions for New Students

“Are students with disabilities required to disclose their disability?”

If a student does not require any accommodations, they can choose not to disclose this information. If a student does need disability-related accommodations, they must self-disclose the information to the ADA Accommodations Office.

“When should I disclose my disability?”

It is entirely up to the student when to disclose their disability. Students can disclose their disability and request accommodations at any point. It is recommended that students disclose their disability and begin the application for accommodations process 4-6 weeks prior to the start of their first semester of enrollment.

“How do I apply for accommodations?”

Students can submit an application for accommodations through the ADA Accommodations Portal on the website: www.jeffstate.edu/adaportal

Students will login using their student credentials (alabama.edu account)

“I am a dually enrolled student and have an IEP. Do I have to apply for accommodations?”

Yes. All students with disabilities at the college must complete the 3-step process in order to receive accommodations. IEPs and “504 Plans” are not applicable to college classes, and dual enrollment courses are college classes (even if they take place at the high school).

“What are the differences between accommodations in high school and college?”

There are many differences between high school and college – especially as it relates to disability and accommodations. The applicable laws pertaining to the education of individuals with disabilities are different from high school to college:

IDEA: is about student success. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and “504 Plans” are developed with parents, teachers, and other specialists involved. K-12 education is mandatory, free, and schools provide evaluations at no cost to the student.

ADA: is about student access. Accommodation plan developed with the student and the disability services office at the college. College is voluntary and the student is responsible for the cost of evaluations, tuition, and books.

Key points: In college, the student (not a parent, guardian, counselor, etc) is responsible for disclosing and working with the college to coordinate accommodations. In college, the objective is ensuring equal access (not success) in educational programs. This means that there are accommodations students receive in K-12 that are not available in college.

“I am a transfer/transient student from another college and receive accommodations there. Do I have to apply for accommodations?”

Yes. All students with disabilities must complete the 3-step process in order to receive accommodations. Accommodations do not transfer from one college to another.

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“Do I have to provide documentation of my disability to request accommodations?”

It is reasonable and appropriate for a college to request current documentation of a disability to verify eligibility for services.

“What documentation might be necessary?”

Necessary documentation varies depending on the type of disability. Documentation should be completed and signed by an appropriate diagnosing professional and should specify the disability. Documentation should be recent and reflect the current functional impact of the disability. If no current documentation exists, it is the responsibility of the student to have documentation prepared. IEPs and “504 Plans” typically do not have the necessary information for college-level accommodations, but provide valuable information about accommodation history. Documentation guidelines are available on the ADA Accommodations website: www.jeffersonstate.edu/ada

“What accommodations will I get?”

This varies depending on the student and the disability. Accommodations are based on the information provided during the interactive 3-step process for requesting accommodations. Reasonable and appropriate accommodations are determined based on the documented disability, how their disability impacts them in the classroom, and what barriers to accessibility exist. Some examples are relocating classes to an accessible location; note taking assistance or recording of lectures; and extending time of tests or distraction reduced testing. Modifications will always vary based on the individual student’s needs. Modifications of policy and practice are not required when it would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity.

“Are colleges required to make testing accommodations for students with disabilities and if so what is the purpose of testing accommodations?”

Yes. Colleges must establish a process for making their tests accessible to people with disabilities. Schools can do this by providing appropriate accommodations to each individual student based on their needs. Examples of testing accommodations are: allowing a student extended time to complete a test, readers, distraction-reduced testing space, or alternate testing formats. The purpose of providing testing accommodations is to enable individuals with disabilities to demonstrate their mastery of the subject matter being tested. The purpose is not to provide lesser academic or professional standards for people with disabilities. Accommodations may affect how a test is taken, but not what it measures.