

Pfeiffer University

Accessibility Services Handbook

2023-2024

“No qualified person with a disability shall, on the basis of the disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity which receives or benefits from federal financial assistance.”

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Federal Register, Vol.45, No. 92, 5/9/80 Rules and Regulations

Purpose of the Handbook

The primary purpose of this handbook is to provide an initial orientation to all students of Pfeiffer University of the philosophy, procedures, and practices of the university regarding reasonable accommodations for disabilities. This handbook is also intended to provide guidance to the students' parents, administrators, faculty, and staff in their various roles of encouraging academic success. Although the manual is intended to address many important issues related to services for students with disabilities, it cannot address every nuance of each individual student's condition and needs. Therefore, the reader is encouraged to use this document as a source of ongoing discussions with the university regarding the circumstances of each individual student.

Contact Information

For Documentation and Academic Accommodations:

Dr. Chip Palmer

Email: chip.palmer@pfeiffer.edu

Phone: 704-463-3367

Director of Student Support and Academic Success

For Scheduling Tests/Quizzes/Exams (after accommodations granted):

Rick Kivior

Email: rick.kivior@pfeiffer.edu

Student Support Coordinator

For Non-Academic Accommodations:

Dr. Chip Palmer (Director of Student Support and Success) and Ryan Reinhart (Associate Dean of Students)

Email: chip.palmer@pfeiffer.edu and ryan.reinhart@pfeiffer.edu

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Rights and Responsibilities for Students

To obtain reasonable academic accommodations, please complete the following steps:

- 1) Pfeiffer University does not offer testing to diagnose a disability. Please gather documentation of disability including a letter from your provider on their letterhead stating the diagnosis, how this impacts academic performance, and any accommodation recommendations from the provider. A psycho-educational evaluation completed within the past 5 years is preferred.
- 2) Contact Dr. Chip Palmer, Director of Student Support and Academic Success, to schedule an appointment (chip.palmer@pfeiffer.edu or 704-463-3367). Documentation will be received, and a release form must be signed before any communication can occur with faculty or staff.
- 3) Use services provided and if testing accommodations are in place, please inform your faculty member you want to take the test/exam in the Student Success Center. Please schedule this test/quiz/exam with Rick Kivior (rick.kivior@pfeiffer.edu) and he will provide the accommodation in the Student Success Center.
- 4) Contact Dr. Chip Palmer as soon as accommodations are not meeting your academic needs. He will follow-up with the student within 48 hours.

Rights and Responsibilities for Faculty

If a student requests for an accommodation and you have not received information about this student's accommodations, please ask them to contact Dr. Chip Palmer. Once documentation is received by the Student Success Center and processed by Dr. Chip Palmer, you will receive an e-mail with approved academic accommodations. These must be followed in accordance with law. All accommodations are extremely confidential and if you need to discuss them with the student, please ensure the conversation is private. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Chip Palmer at chip.palmer@pfeiffer.edu or 704-463-3367. When students schedule any testing accommodations it will be scheduled by Rick Kivior (rick.kivior@pfeiffer.edu). Please respond to his e-mails within 24 hours to ensure the exam/test/quiz can be offered with accommodations.

Syllabus Statement for All Faculty and All Syllabi:

Accommodation Statement:

In accordance with federal law and Pfeiffer University policy, resources are provided for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability, or pregnancy. For assistance in arranging reasonable academic accommodations for undergraduate or graduate

courses, students should contact Accessibility Services (Dr. Chip Palmer at 704-463-3367 or chip.palmer@pfeiffer.edu).

Confidentiality Statement:

If you receive information about academic accommodations, they are extremely confidential. This can only be shared on a “needs to know” basis (example: someone offering your exam in your absence). It is vital to maintain confidentiality and if it needs to be discussed with the student, it must be a private conversation. If you have questions, please reach out to Dr. Chip Palmer (chip.palmer@pfeiffer.edu or 704-463-3367).

Facts of the Law

What is the Law?

“No qualified person with a disability shall, on the basis of the disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity which receives or benefits from federal financial assistance.”

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Federal Register, Vol.45, No. 92, 5/9/80 Rules and Regulations

Who is Protected by the Law?

A "handicapped person" means "any person who

- has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities;
- has a record of such an impairment, or
- is regarded as having such an impairment."

A "qualified handicapped person" is defined as one who meets the requisite academic and technical standards required for admission or participation in the postsecondary institution's programs and activities. Section 504 protects the civil rights of individuals who are qualified to participate and who have disabilities such as, but not limited to, the following:

- blindness or visual impairments

- cerebral palsy
- Chronic illnesses, such as:
 - AIDS
 - arthritis
 - cancer
 - cardiac diseases
 - diabetes
 - multiple sclerosis
 - muscular dystrophy
 - psychiatric disorders
- deafness or hearing impairments
- drug or alcohol addiction (Section 504 covers former users and those in recovery programs and not currently using drugs or alcohol.)
- epilepsy or seizure disorders
- orthopedic handicap
- specific learning disability
- speech disorder
- spinal cord or traumatic brain injury
- etc. (not an exhaustive listing)

**UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 504, UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES
MAY NOT:**

- limit the number of students with disabilities admitted
- make preadmission inquiries as to whether or not an applicant is disabled
- use admissions tests or criteria that inadequately measure the academic qualifications of disabled students because special provisions were not made for them
- exclude a qualified student with a disability from any course of study.
- limit eligibility to a student with a disability for financial assistance or otherwise discriminate in administering scholarships, fellowships, internships, or assistantships on the basis of handicap.

- counsel a student with a disability toward a more restrictive career
- measure student achievement using modes that adversely discriminate against a student with a disability
- establish rules and policies that may adversely affect students with disabilities.

Properly understood and implemented, however, disability laws will lead to none of these feared outcomes. In fact, students with disabilities are required to meet the "essential" "academic" and "technical" standards of the college or university, with or without reasonable accommodation.

The term "essential" serves to ensure that colleges and universities need never "fundamentally alter" their programs of instruction to accommodate students with disabilities. Federal courts have readily upheld insistence that such students meet "academic" standards (for example, a requirement for all students to maintain a certain GPA) and "technical" standards (for example, a requirement that all dental students demonstrate fine motor dexterity). Moreover, persons whose disabilities manifest a "direct threat" to the health and safety of themselves or others may be excluded from an educational program.

Accommodations Provided

Academic Accommodations:

Although Pfeiffer University does not offer a formal learning disabilities program, the university does offer comprehensive support services to provide reasonable accommodations for students with learning disabilities and other handicapping conditions. With appropriate documentation, the following services can be provided:

- Extended time on tests
- Individual test administration
- Oral administration of tests
- Preferential seating within classes
- Note taking assistance
- Assistive technology (text to voice)
- Development of proactive strategies for disabilities management
- Other accommodations as supported by appropriate documentation

Even without documentation, the following services are available to all students of the university:

- Individual and small group face-to-face tutoring (no more than five students per session)
- On-line content-centered tutorial assistance
- Face-to-face and/or on-line writing assistance
- Individualized and/or classroom instruction in study skills, time management, and transition to campus life

Assistance can be arranged by scheduling an appointment with the Director of Student Support and Academic Success (chip.palmer@pfeiffer.edu or 704-463-3367).

Non-Academic Accommodations:

- Service Animals
- Emotional Support Animals
- Housing Accommodations
- Accessibility on Campus
- Dietary Needs
- Other accommodations as required by documentation

Assistance can be arranged by scheduling an appointment with both the Director of Student Support and Academic Success (chip.palmer@pfeiffer.edu) and Dean of Students (ron.laffitte@pfeiffer.edu).

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. How is college different from high school in regards to Accessibility Services?

	Secondary Education	Post-Secondary Education
What is the law?	IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)	Sec. 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990)
What is the intent of the law?	Free appropriate education for all students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment.	Ensure that no otherwise qualified person is discriminated against in federally funded programs.
Who is covered under the law?	All infants, children and youth requiring special education until age 21 or graduation from high school.	All qualified persons who meet entry criteria of the college and can document a disability as defined by ADA.
What is a disability?	IDEA provides a list of disabilities and includes specific learning disability.	Any physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.
Who is responsible for identifying and documenting need?	School districts are responsible for identifying, evaluating students, and planning educational programs.	Students are responsible for self-identifying to the college and providing documentation of their disability.
Who is responsible for initiating service delivery?	School districts are responsible for providing special instruction, individualized instruction plans, and/or accommodations.	Students are responsible for requesting disability services and/or accommodations. These are provided at no cost to the individual or family.
What related services are mandated?	School districts must provide rehabilitation counseling, medical services, personal aides, social work and other services as needed in the school day.	College provide physical, academic, and program access. Related services of a personal nature are the responsibility of the individual or family.
What about self-advocacy?	The parent or guardian is the primary advocate. Students learn about their disability, the accommodations they need, and ways to become a self-advocate.	Students are expected to be their own advocates.
Who is responsible for enforcing the law?	IDEA is basically a funding statute, enforced by the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services in the U.S. Department of Education.	ADA/504 are civil right statutes, enforced by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), the Department of Justice, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

2. What resources are available in North Carolina for students with disabilities?

DRM Regional Resource Directory (good site for resources)

<http://www.disabilityresources.org/NORTH-CAROLINA.html>

North Carolina Association on Higher Education and Disabilities (NCAHEAD)

<http://www.ahead.org>

North Carolina Assistive Technology Project <http://www.ncatp.org/>

NC Department of Health and Human Services

Division of Services for the Blind <http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dsb/>

Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing <http://dsdhh.dhhs.state.nc.us/>

Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services

<http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/mhddsas/>

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dvrs/>

3. Are academic accommodations retroactive?

Students are responsible for reporting any disability needing any accommodation.

Academic and non-academic accommodations will be offered (as directed by documentation) from that point forward. It is not retroactive.

4. Who do I contact regarding a complaint of services?

a. Concerns should be reported to Dr. Chip Palmer, Director of Student Support and Academic Success (chip.palmer@pfeiffer.edu or 704-463-3367)

b. If the concern is in regards to the Director of Student Support and Academic Success, please contact the Provost (daniel.mynatt@pfeiffer.edu).

For any further questions, please reach out to the Director of Student Support and Academic Services, Dr. Chip Palmer (chip.palmer@pfeiffer.edu or 704-463-3367).