

# **Disability Support Services (DSS)**

## **Student Frequently Asked Questions**

1. What are the procedures for obtaining accommodations?
  - Contact Katie Dyke, DSS Advisor at 240-500-2628 or Jaime Bachtell, DSS Coordinator at 240-500-2273 to make an appointment.
  - If you have current documentation, you will need to bring it to your appointment.
  - At your appointment, you will complete an intake and all initial paperwork.
  - Stop by the DSS Office during the first week of your classes to pick up your accommodation forms.
  - Students must take their accommodation forms to each of their professors, discuss the necessary accommodations, and have their professors sign the form.
  - Students must sign the form and return it to the DSS Office.
  
2. Do I need to do anything to get accommodations next semester?
  - You will not need to turn in any more documentation once we have you on file. You will need to come to the office to pick up new accommodations forms each semester though.
  
3. Where can I go to be tested for a disability?
  - You may stop by the DSS office for a list of resources or click the professional resource link for a professional near you.
  
4. What is the difference between HS special education and college disability services?
  - All students must meet the same standards in college
  - In college students are responsible for identifying themselves, and to ask for assistance when needed
  - In college you are not labeled and all disability related information is confidential
  - Staff/Faculty will not speak with anyone including parents without a signed release form from the student
  
5. What is documentation of a disability?
  - Documentation may come in the form of an IEP or a 504 plan as well as a psychological evaluation from a licensed professional. Appropriate documentation should include the nature of the disability, functional limitations, and recommended accommodations for the student. If you are unsure of whether your documentation is acceptable, please contact the DSS office.
  
6. What are reasonable accommodations?
  - Modifications that enable a student to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of their educational experience and accomplish tasks to the best of their abilities.

Examples include: note taking assistance, extra time on tests/assignments, testing in a quiet area, permission to tape record, use of a scribe or test reader, interpreting services, audio books etc.

7. What is not a reasonable accommodation?

- Any accommodation that alters the academic standards of the college, causes undue hardship (costs too much or exceeds resources of the organization), or is a personal service (utilized regardless of attendance at HCC).

Examples include: personal aides, glasses/contacts, providing a wheel chair etc.

8. When should I request services?

- The sooner the better. You may register with DSS anytime, but it is recommended you meet with a member of the DSS staff prior to registering for classes. Services are not retroactive and cannot be put in place to redo any unsatisfactory work prior to utilizing services.

9. What do I do if my professor is not granting my accommodations?

- If you feel as though your accommodations are not being granted speak with DSS staff as soon as possible. DSS staff members exist to ensure you are receiving equitable treatment and will advocate on your behalf with professors if need be.

10. How do I schedule interpreting services?

- Contact the DSS staff at least 48 hours in advance and they will arrange an interpreter.

11. Who is responsible for notifying my professors that I need accommodations?

- You will be responsible for informing your professors of your accommodations. This is generally done through the use of a student accommodation form which you can pick up the first week of classes from the DSS offices.

12. Who all will know that I receive accommodations?

- Only the DSS office staff and whichever faculty/staff are necessary to ensure you receive your accommodations. If you would like anyone else to have access to your information you will need to give written consent

13. Am I obligated to disclose that I have a disability?

- You are not obligated to disclose that you have a disability to anyone; however, if you would like to receive services through DSS you must disclose to the office. Further, you do not need to disclose your accommodations to all professors, only the professors of classes in which you would like accommodations.

14. Is there a fee for accommodations?

- There is no fee for any student who registers with the DSS office

15. What are my responsibilities as a student?

- If you'd like to receive accommodations you are required to disclose your disability to a staff member of the DSS office. You are responsible for providing appropriate documentation and also for informing your professors of your requested accommodations. If you feel as though you are not being treated fairly it is your responsibility to inform a member of the DSS staff so they may act accordingly.

16. Can I modify my accommodations after I have submitted the paperwork?
- You may add/change your accommodation at any time as long as you have supporting documentation.
17. Will HCC pay for my disability evaluation?
- HCC does not have a program in place to pay for evaluations but the DSS staff can provide a list of resources in the area, some of which charge using a sliding scale dependent upon your income.
18. What role can my parents play in the process?
- Your parents can be as involved or uninvolved as you would like. If you would like your parents to be involved, according to FERPA, you will need to sign a release granting this permission, if you would like them to be able to speak with staff/faculty. They may attend any and all meetings with the DSS staff, if this is your preference. At the college level it is advised that parents act more as coaches/supporters and allow their children to be more active participants and advocate for themselves.
19. Will receiving accommodations appear on my transcripts?
- Accommodations and registration with the DSS office will not appear on any college document, transcripts included, other than the accommodation form.
20. Will my high school IEP or 504 plan be acceptable for documentation?
- At HCC a detailed IEP or 504 plan is generally sufficient for documentation if it has been completed in recent years. However, this may be dependent upon the accommodations that are being requested and the detail that is included in the IEP.
21. What should I do if I suspect I have a disability and want to receive accommodations?
- If you suspect you may have a disability please speak with a member of the DSS office staff; they can give you a list of resources and discuss in further detail support available for students with disabilities.
22. What is the policy regarding confidentiality?
- Students' confidentiality is of the utmost importance to staff and faculty at HCC. Without a signed release form, information regarding a student registered with the DSS office will remain only with DSS staff.
23. What if I only need temporary accommodations?
- You are not obligated to use your accommodations at all. If you'd only like/need to use them for one semester that is up to you. Each semester accommodation forms will be generated for you, but it is your decision to use them or not. In specific cases, where you have a temporary injury which will require temporary accommodations, please contact the DSS office. We will require documentation of the temporary condition and can help you to receive accommodations until your condition improves.