



DARTMOUTH COLLEGE

HANOVER, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03755-3526

To: Members of the Faculty
From: Carol Folt, Dean of the Faculty
Sylvia Spears, Acting Dean of the College
Date: September, 2009
Subj: Accommodating Students with Disabilities

Each year, we provide guidance to faculty for working with students with documented disabilities. More than 200 current Dartmouth students are registered with the Student Accessibility Services Office (SAS). This number continues to grow and includes students with: limited mobility, hearing loss, learning disabilities, and psychiatric disabilities, among others.

Last spring, a group of students initiated a meeting with senior administrators to explore ways to improve communication among students and faculty on this important topic. Following these discussions, the Office of the Dean of the College developed a series of frequently asked questions for faculty as a way to heighten awareness, in response to concerns students had voiced. To improve transparency, students suggested that Dartmouth provide more information on the SAS website: (<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~accessibility>).

In the coming year, the Offices of the Dean of the Faculty and Dean of the College will work collaboratively with the College's 504/ADA Committee and interested students to doing everything possible to support our students with disabilities.

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FAQ'S

1. *What qualifies as a disability according to the law?*

As defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and *Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act* (Section 504), an individual with a "disability" is defined as any person:

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

In terms of *accessibility* needs, Dartmouth is required by *Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act* and the *1990 Americans with Disabilities Act* to ensure that every student has meaningful programmatic and physical access to all activities of the College.

Additionally, the SAS works with students who have *temporary* impairments - such as broken limbs - that may affect them for limited periods of time. The SAS will make sure that temporary arrangements for these students are put in place.

2. What must a student do in order to qualify for accommodations in a course?

In most circumstances, students must provide specific documentation regarding their disability to the SAS office. Appropriate documentation may include: psychoeducational evaluations, medical verification, audiograms, as well as records of previous accommodations given in an educational setting or on a standardized test.

SAS reviews the documentation, meets with the student, then determines the appropriate accommodations on an individualized basis. SAS consults with the professionals who provided the documentation, as needed.

3. How do faculty respond when a student requests a disability-related accommodation?

When a student presents the SAS *Accommodations/Consent Form* (or a letter on SAS letterhead) that notes specific authorized accommodation(s), the faculty member must comply with the authorized accommodations in order to keep Dartmouth in compliance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act. If the faculty member has questions or concerns regarding the authorized accommodation(s), then he/she may consult with SAS Director Ward Newmeyer. SAS may reconsider accommodations, as long as the student's needs and legitimate objectives of the course are protected.

4. What can faculty do to address the general issue of accommodations in their courses?

Include language in course syllabi such as:

*Students requiring disability-related accommodations must register with the Student Accessibility Service office. Once SAS has authorized accommodations, students must show the originally signed SAS **Accommodations/Consent Form and/or a letter on SAS letterhead** to their professor. As a first step, if students have questions about whether they qualify to receive accommodations, they should contact the SAS office. All inquiries and discussions about accommodations will remain confidential.*

5. What kinds of accommodations are requested and/or authorized?

Accommodations include *extended time for in-class exams, small-group testing, note taking support, and document conversion*. Others include *real-time captioning, sign language interpreters, and adaptive technology*. Authorized accommodations may vary from course to course.

6. If faculty have concerns about a student in their class, where should they go?

Please contact either the staff in the Undergraduate Deans Office (646-2243) or Ward Newmeyer, Director, SAS (646-9900)

7. Where should faculty go to learn more about disability issues at Dartmouth?

- Ward Newmeyer, Director of Student Accessibility Services, 646-9900
- Evelyn Ellis, Director of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 646-3146
- Bill Hankel, Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Coordinator, 646-3197
- Ellen Arnold, Associate General Counsel, 646-2444