

Office of Disability Support Services



# Community College

HANDBOOK  
for  
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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## **ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK**

This handbook is written to assist students with receiving accommodations and answering any questions the student may have. If the student has a question or concern that is not discussed in this handbook, please do not hesitate to contact us for additional assistance.

It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the policies and procedures for receiving accommodations at Holmes Community College. The student should read and become familiar with the information presented in this handbook. In addition, the student should keep this handbook in a safe place for future reference.

This handbook is *not* a contract, and nothing herein should be construed as such. Please be aware that the policies and procedures in the handbook are subject to change without notice.

We look forward to working with the student while the student is at Holmes Community College.

Holmes Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, disability, or age in its educational programs and activities, employment, or admissions. The following individuals have been designated to handle inquiries and grievances regarding non-discrimination, compliance policies, and procedures for the College:

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### Resources Consulted in the Preparation of this Handbook:

Student Manual, Office of Student Disability Services University of Mississippi  
Student Manual, The Office of Disability Accommodations, The University of Southern Mississippi  
A Desk Reference Guide for Faculty and Staff, College Students with Disabilities, Hinds Community College

## I. INTRODUCTION

Holmes Community College through the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS) provides reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. DSS verifies eligibility for accommodations and works with eligible students to develop and coordinate plans to provide those accommodations. DSS is committed to ensuring equal access to a quality education for qualified students with disabilities through the provision of reasonable academic accommodations and auxiliary aids which support the College standards and academic integrity.

The Office of Disability Support Services is committed to creating a positive campus environment where students with disabilities are encouraged to pursue careers on the basis of personal interest and ability. DSS is a non-fee generating program designed to meet the unique needs of HCC students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are offered in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

DSS staff is here to assist students with the implementation of academic accommodations and program accessibility. We encourage each student to contact us if the student has any questions about the student's accommodations or if problems occur regarding the student's accommodations. **We cannot assist with or correct a problem or concern if we are unaware that there is a problem or concern.**

### The DSS Staff

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**To obtain an application for services, please go to the Office of Disability Support Services, see an academic or career technical counselor, or visit the website.**

## II. THE LAW

Eligible students include those who are enrolled in degree and non-degree programs offered by Holmes Community College and are considered qualified to meet all college program requirements despite a disability. In addition, eligible students meet the definition of disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA. The definition of a person with a disability includes any person who “. . . has a physical, emotional, or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of life’s major activities; has a record of disability or is regarded as having a disability.” Having a medical condition or disability does not automatically ensure that a student is eligible for protection and services under the ADA. For example, if mitigating circumstances such as eyeglasses or contact lenses offset the limiting effects of a disability, then a student may not be eligible. Documentation of a disability must substantiate significant limitations, with or without mitigating circumstances, in life areas related to learning. **Students with disabilities who choose not to register with DSS are not covered under the ADA.** In determining if a student is qualified to meet all program requirements, the college must base its decision on the skills, interests, and aptitudes of a student and not on presumptions that would arbitrarily exclude a student from participation in a program or activity.

Under the Provisions of Section 504, HCC “. . . may not discriminate in the recruitment, admission, educational process, or treatment of students.” **Students who have self-identified, provided documentation of disability, and requested reasonable accommodations related to their specific disability are entitled to receive the following: information in accessible formats upon request, approved modifications of programs, appropriate academic adjustments, or auxiliary aids that enable them to participate in and benefit from all educational programs and activities in the most integrated and appropriate settings.** Section 504 does not compel educational institutions to disregard the disabilities of individuals or to make substantial modifications in programs to allow individuals with disabilities to participate. Academic requirements which are essential to the program of instruction being pursued by a student or any directly related licensing requirements are not regarded as discriminatory, even if they have an adverse effect on individuals with disabilities. Thus, academic requirements may not serve as barriers to equal opportunity, unless they are deemed essential to a degree program or licensing process.

**According to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA, institutions should make reasonable accommodations so that no student with a disability is denied the benefits of, or excluded from participation in, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any of its educational programs or activities because of an absence of educational auxiliary aids.** Auxiliary aids include, but are not limited to typed texts, lecture notes, film transcriptions, interpreters, readers or taped texts, and adapted classroom equipment. **Institutions are not required, however, to provide services of a personal nature such as personal attendants, individually prescribed devices, transportation, or readers/tutors for personal use or study.**

## III. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

Self-responsibility is important to help students make the transition to post-secondary education and to have a successful college experience. Holmes Community College will make a good-faith effort to provide reasonable accommodations which may be necessary for the student to have equal access to educational opportunities. **It is the student’s responsibility to use the approved accommodations, access other types of College assistance if needed, and work towards academic success.**

If a student’s approved accommodations are not implemented in a satisfactory manner, it is the **student’s responsibility** to inform DSS as soon as possible. Delays in reporting problems with accommodations may result in loss of opportunity to correct the situation.

Students are responsible for their conduct. Inappropriate behavior toward persons providing accommodations, instructors, and/or other students or staff will not be tolerated. **Such behavior may result in the loss of privileges or services.** The college's discipline policy will be adhered to as outlined in the Student Handbook, College Catalog, and the Policy and Procedures Guide.

**Students with disabilities have the responsibility to:**

- Know the disability and how it affects learning
- Self identify disability status to DSS in a timely manner
- Request specific accommodations that are appropriate to the documented disability
- Read and follow the policies and procedures outlined by DSS
- Meet and become familiar with college personnel, including the DSS office
- Provide current documentation of a disability from an appropriately certified or licensed professional
- Meet degree or essential course requirements as established by the College and/or course instructor
- Procure and pay for services related to personal use and study
- Discuss accommodations with instructors
- Notify the DSS office immediately if there are problems or concerns regarding accommodations
- Recognize responsibility toward receiving an education at Holmes Community College
- Maintain contact with DSS
- Use all available campus resources and support services

#### **IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF DSS STAFF, FACULTY, AND THE COLLEGE**

Under the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the ADA, Institutions of Higher Learning must provide reasonable accommodations that afford equal educational opportunities for students with disabilities. Section 504 states that “. . . No otherwise qualified person with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of . . . disability, be denied the benefits of, be excluded from participation in, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

**DSS staff has the responsibility to:**

- Educate personnel and faculty regarding the rights of students with disabilities and the policies of DSS.
- Verify the documentation of the disability and plan for reasonable and appropriate accommodations that meet the mandates of federal legislation.
- Work with the student to develop an individualized accommodation plan.
- Consult with parents, faculty, staff, and relevant professionals, but reserves the right to request the student's presence.
- Encourage the student to self-advocate and to act on their own accord.
- Ask the student to complete an Evaluation of Services at the end of the semester, prior to graduation or leaving the college.

**Faculty has the responsibility to:**

- Provide reasonable accommodations as determined by DSS that will assist the student in accessing college resources and fulfilling degree requirements as established by the college.
- Respect rights to privacy and strive to keep information provided by DSS private and give access only to DSS staff.

- Refer students to DSS when they request accommodations without a Letter of Classroom Accommodations.

**The College has the responsibility to:**

- Not disclose specific information about a student’s disability or the nature of the disability unless the student makes a direct request to DSS and signs the Release of Records Information.
- Disclose student records only when permitted or required by law.
- Have a signed consent form prior to receiving or releasing information, even to parents.

## V. DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES

Students wanting to receive accommodations for a disability must complete a DSS application and provide documentation of the disability. **To ensure timely delivery of accommodations, students are advised to begin the application process at least six weeks prior to registration for classes.** The following gives some guidance as to what is required for proper documentation.

- Documentation of a disability from an appropriate licensed or certified professional with expertise related to a student’s disability must be filed with DSS.
- Documentation must include a statement explaining how the disability, with or without mitigating circumstances, limits a major life area, thus impacting a student’s participation in courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities of the college.
- Evaluations for the purpose of documentation must have been completed within three-five years of application with DSS; however, exceptions may be necessary depending on individual circumstances.
- DSS does not assist students in obtaining appropriate documentation, nor does DSS refer students for eligibility evaluations. **All fees associated with procuring documentation are the responsibility of the student.**

The DSS Coordinator is responsible for reviewing and approving the application and documentation. The college also has other qualified professionals who are available to review questionable documentation to assure that such documentation meets Section 504 and ADA disability criteria. Once the application and documentation are approved, DSS contacts the student to inform him/her that he/she is registered with DSS and offers to schedule an “intake meeting.”

## VI. ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations are provided for the purpose of **ensuring equal access** to an education. They are **not** a guarantee of a certain grade or of success in a particular class; rather, they are intended to **“level the playing field”** for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are expected to fulfill all academic and course requirements and evaluation standards, as is expected of all students.

### A. What accommodations are and what they are not:

- Accommodations are approved on a **case-by-case** basis. They are assigned depending on the documentation that each student submits, the impact of the disability, and conversations between DSS and the student regarding his/her strengths, weaknesses, and needs.
- Accommodations are also provided on a **class-by-class** basis. An accommodation which is reasonable in one class may not be reasonable in another. **No accommodation will be provided if it compromises or alters essential elements or evaluation standards of a course.**

- Accommodations are considered to be **classroom supplements**. They are NOT intended to replace regular classroom attendance or participation.
- Services and reasonable accommodations may include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - Note takers and/or use of tape recorders in class
  - Exam modifications (extended time, minimal distraction environment, test proctors, readers, or scribes)
  - Preferential seating
  - Alternative test formats (short answer, multiple choice, oral, etc.)
  - Liaison services between HCC faculty/staff and student about disability needs
  - Liaison services with rehabilitation agencies
  - Liaison services with departments (campus orientation, technology, admissions, registration, and housing)
  - Sign language interpreters and readers
  - Accessible classroom/location/furniture
  - Document conversion (enlarged font, audiotape, closed captioning, or Braille)
  - Assistance in obtaining materials
  - Faculty/staff orientation and technical assistance to faculty/staff on request

**Accommodations are NOT provided retroactively.** DSS is unable to provide accommodations for academic work completed before the student is verified as eligible for accommodations or before the student requests accommodations **each semester**. Therefore, it is **imperative** that the student request accommodations each semester as early as possible.

**B. Student’s procedures for requesting and acquiring accommodations and DSS services:**

- Self-identify with DSS staff, faculty, or other college staff.
- Complete all admissions requirements and attend orientation.
- Complete all necessary paperwork and provide documentation of the disability to the DSS office.
- Meet with an advisor to determine the desired course schedule. **Please note, DSS does not provide academic advising for students with disabilities.**
- Register for classes by logging into the “My Doghouse” account.
- Make an appointment to meet with a staff member from the Office of Disability Support in order to complete necessary paperwork and receive letters of classroom accommodations. **If all documentation and paperwork have not been turned in and completed, letters will not be issued.**
- **HCC administrators, faculty, and/or staff members will not provide accommodations without a Letter of Classroom Accommodation from the DSS office.**
- Make an appointment to meet with each instructor to deliver and discuss the Letter of Classroom Accommodation. **The student should NOT just hand the letter to the instructor and walk away!** It is extremely important to discuss with instructors the implementation of approved accommodations in each class.

- **Accommodations are NOT automatically assigned each semester.** In order to receive classroom accommodations, the student must complete the previous steps **each semester**.

### C. Application/Accommodation Meetings:

- In the initial intake meeting the student will identify his/her needs and make requests for accommodations. DSS may perform a substantive review of requested accommodations and explore reasonable alternatives to the requested accommodations. In order to be approved, accommodation requests must be appropriate for the disability and supported by the documentation of the specific disability. **Approved accommodations are not retroactive.**
- Accommodation plans are reviewed and updated **each semester at the request of the student.** Prior to the beginning of each semester and after registering for classes, the student must schedule an accommodation meeting with the DSS staff. **The student should bring a copy of their class schedule to this meeting.** A change in the class schedule and/or in the implementation of the approved accommodations must be reported to DSS by the student receiving the accommodation.
- **Requests for accommodations should be made well in advance to allow reasonable time to prepare for implementation. Requests for accommodations made during the last six weeks of a semester may not be granted.**

### D. Letter of Classroom Accommodations:

- If direct classroom accommodations are recommended and the student chooses to use them, the student will be given a Letter of Classroom Accommodation to give to each instructor. **A new Letter of Classroom Accommodation must be completed for each semester.** Letter of Classroom Accommodation verifies for the instructor that the student is registered with DSS and informs the instructor of the student's approved reasonable accommodations.
- **It is the student's responsibility to deliver the Letter of Classroom Accommodation to each instructor.** Because of regulations regarding the confidentiality of disability-related information, DSS does not automatically inform the student's instructors that the student may require accommodations. Students are required to self-disclose the need for accommodations by delivering the Letter of Classroom Accommodation directly to instructors.
- As previously stated, the student **SHOULD NOT** hand the Letter of Classroom Accommodation to the instructor and then walk away. It is in the student's best interest to make an appointment to meet with each instructor to discuss approved accommodations and their implementation.
- Instructors will assist in the provision of classroom accommodations when reasonable and necessary. Instructors are not expected to compromise essential elements of the course or course evaluation standards.

### E. Implementation of Accommodations:

- Once DSS approves accommodation requests, a Letter of Classroom Accommodation is given to the student to deliver to the instructor.
- **Unless approved otherwise, students are responsible for picking up and delivering their accommodation letters.**
- For their own personal record, students are also given a copy of the accommodation letter.
- It is recommended that students deliver accommodation letters to instructors immediately, allowing time for instructors to implement accommodations.
- Students registered with DSS may not send a second party to pick up/deliver letters or make requests on their behalf.

## **F. Adding to or Changing the Student's Approved Accommodations:**

Should a student decide that he/she would benefit from a change in or an addition to the previously approved accommodations the student will need to contact the DSS coordinator. The student should be prepared to give details about the new accommodation and the reasons for requesting it. *Faculty may not change accommodations without a Letter of Change in Classroom Accommodations from the DSS office.*

- Documentation will be reviewed to determine support for the request. In some cases, additional documentation may be needed to support the request.
- The student will be notified of the DSS decision regarding the student's request within 10 working days of the request.

**Students are expected to maintain contact with the DSS. It is the student's responsibility to inform DSS if there is a problem with the approved accommodations.**

## **VII. FREQUENTLY- REQUESTED ACCOMMODATIONS**

Listed below are descriptions of some of the most common accommodations assigned through the DSS office. Also included is the procedure for requesting and receiving each accommodation. *Please remember that accommodations are assigned on a case-by-case basis, and, therefore, inclusion of an accommodation in this handbook does not constitute individual approval!* This is not an all-inclusive list. The student may be approved for an accommodation not listed in this handbook.

**If the student has any questions or concerns about approved accommodations, he/she should contact DSS. As previously stated, when DSS staff is unaware that the student needs assistance, DSS staff cannot assist.**

### **A. Note takers**

Students receiving note taking as an accommodation need to be aware of the policies and procedures for accessing this accommodation. Students will be required to sign a form each semester which states that they understand the policies and procedures as listed below. Failure to follow the policies and procedures listed below may result in the discontinuation of this accommodation. This service is provided by student volunteers or workers enrolled in the same class section as the student requiring a note taker.

- **It is the student's responsibility to request accommodations in a timely manner.** It may take DSS several weeks to recruit note takers. To help assure a note taker, students should request this accommodation as early as possible.
- **The student is encouraged to assist in the recruitment process by referring possible note takers to this office.** If a student knows someone in class who may be a good note taker, the student is encouraged to send that person to the DSS office for an interview. This may prevent possible delays while DSS attempts to recruit note takers.
- **It is the student's responsibility to deliver the note taker request letter to each instructor.** Students will be given the *Letter of Classroom Accommodations* which will request that the instructor make an announcement in class regarding the need for a note taker. Students are responsible for delivering this letter to instructors. Please note that this process is confidential. Instructors will not mention the student by name when they make the announcement regarding the need for a note taker.

- **It is the student's responsibility to be aware that accommodations are not provided retroactively.** Note taking will begin when a note taker is recruited. This means that notes from prior classes will not be provided.
- **It is the student's responsibility to attend class on a regular basis.** The note taker service is provided as a *supplement* to the classroom experience. It is not intended to replace regular classroom attendance or participation.
- **It is the student's responsibility to be aware that there may be times when the College is unable to recruit a note taker or the assigned note taker is unable to attend class.** Since a note taker may miss class, the student is encouraged to take a tape recorder to every class to serve as a back-up.
- **It is the student's responsibility to contact DSS *in writing* with any additions to or deletions from the class schedule submitted to us.** Students who fail to notify DSS of a change in schedule may have their need for this accommodation reviewed and possibly discontinued.
- **It is the student's responsibility to contact DSS promptly if notes are not being delivered or if the quality of the notes is not adequate.** To assist with a problem DSS has to be aware of a problem.
- **It is the student's responsibility to indicate to the instructor his/her preferred method of receiving notes from the note taker.** (a) If the student prefers that his/her identity remain confidential, the student should inform the instructor. In this situation, the instructor will act as intermediary between the student and note taker. It is the responsibility of the student to pick up his/her copy of the notes during the instructor's regular office hours. (b) If the student prefers direct contact with the note taker for exchanging notes, the instructor can introduce the student to the note taker in a setting that will insure the confidentiality of the student. Together, the student and note taker will decide upon a time and place to exchange the notes.

## **B. Exam Modification and Alternate Testing Environment**

Accommodations involving exam modifications include, but are not limited to, extended test-taking time, use of assistive technology, minimal distraction testing environment, oral examinations, use of readers, and the use of scribes. If an instructor is unable to provide exam accommodations, DSS can assist. Students must sign a Student Exam Agreement form before taking exams at DSS.

### **1. As provided by the instructor**

- An alternate testing environment is defined as a quiet room with as little auditory and visual distraction as possible. Holmes Community College does not have a centralized testing site for students who require an alternate environment for test taking. Faculty and instructors are responsible for providing an alternate testing environment.
- The student must work closely with the instructor to arrange accommodations. As with all accommodations, the student should give the instructor timely notice of the need for an alternate testing environment.
- Do not wait until the day of an exam to notify the instructor of the need for this accommodation. Without enough notice, there is no guarantee of an alternate testing site.
- As previously stated, a student should discuss and arrange accommodations well in advance of test time.

## 2. As provided by the DSS Office

- DSS will provide a testing accommodation **ONLY** for those students approved for **a scribe, reader, and/or assistive/adaptive technologies**. If approved for one of these accommodations, it will be necessary for the student to work closely with instructors and this office to make testing arrangements. The student will be required to notify DSS at least five working days prior to the exam date.
- **Please be aware that we have limited space and limited service providers.** Because of this, it is important to make arrangements as early as possible.
- Schedule the exam at the same time (and date) as the class exam if at all possible.
- Remind the instructor to deliver the exam to DSS for each exam taken at DSS.
- If a student misses an exam scheduled with DSS, he/she must provide proof, written documentation from an appropriate professional of extenuating circumstances that prevent the student from taking the exam. DSS reserves the right to contact the professional to verify the extenuating circumstances and make a judgment as to whether the exam may be rescheduled with DSS.
- Exams must be taken by the date written on the Testing Instruction form or the student must provide written approval from the instructor to take the exam after that date.
- If a student is late for an exam (more than 15 minutes), it will be regarded as a missed exam and the student will have to reschedule with instructor approval.
- If DSS suspects academic dishonesty during an exam it will be investigated immediately and dealt with according to college policy.

## 3. Extended/Relaxed Time on Exams

- Holmes Community College does not provide “unlimited” time on exams as an accommodation. Time-and-a-half is the standard amount of time allowed on exams for students who receive this accommodation. For example, if a class is allowed an hour to take an exam, the student will be allowed an hour and a half.
- If a student is approved for this accommodation and believes that additional time (in excess of the time-and-a-half) may be beneficial, the student should discuss this need with the instructor. Instructors cannot give the student *less* than time-and-a-half, but they can give the student more time should they choose.
- If extended time on an exam will cause a time conflict with another class, it is the student’s responsibility to speak with both instructors in an attempt to resolve the conflict. **Instructors are not required to change the date and time of an exam.**

## C. Readers

Readers are generally HCC students who are interviewed and hired by the DSS as student workers. The role of a reader is to read to or for a student, not to tutor the student. Readers are limited to a maximum of 30 hours per month. Readers may be paid from sources other than the college and are typically paid minimum wage.

- A student requiring a reader must provide DSS with **advance notice** of their need for readers.
- DSS conducts interviews for a reader position and selects readers for the student needing this service. When the selection is made, consideration is given to the preferences of the student requiring a reader. If the student locates a reader without the assistance of DSS and it is expected that Vocational Rehabilitation or the college will compensate the reader, the student must inform DSS and follow all procedures outlined.

- DSS will provide readers with time logs to account for time spent reading for the student. It is the responsibility of the reader and student to keep track of the number of hours spent reading.
- Time logs must be completed and turned into DSS at the end of each month. This form must be verified by a DSS official, the student, and the reader.
- If Vocational Rehabilitation is compensating the reader, an authorization form must be completed each month by the reader.
- Please remember: Readers will not be paid until all necessary forms (employment forms, tax forms, Vocational Rehabilitation's authorization forms, and DSS Log) are completed. If the forms are turned in late, the reader's payment will be delayed.
- Since the readers are typically HCC students, they have demands that may conflict with needs of the student needing a reader. For this reason, students who rely heavily upon the service of readers are encouraged to have at least two readers.
- DSS does not guarantee the ability to locate a reader without sufficient advance notice.

#### **D. Interpreters**

Upon request, interpreting services are provided for students with documented hearing loss or deafness. Students qualifying for interpreter services are responsible for keeping a record of interpreter hours.

- A student with a hearing disability makes the request to DSS for an interpreter. When making the request, the student provides DSS with the exact dates, times, and locations for interpreter services.
- DSS will contact an interpreter and arrange the services.
- Interpreters maintain time sheets. Time sheets must be signed by the interpreter, the instructor, and the student requiring the service.
- The interpreter will turn in time sheets to DSS.
- **A student receiving interpreter services is responsible for notifying DSS of class cancellations, changes in schedules, or absences. Assuming there is no emergency, DSS requires 24 hours' notification. Failure to notify DSS of cancellations, changes in schedules, or absences may result in loss of interpreter services. DSS schedules all interpreters. A student may only request services from an individual interpreter if he/she intends to assume personal financial responsibility or payment for requested services. Interpreters are not provided for personal use.**
- Any student using interpreter services must sign an Interpreter Use Agreement form. A copy of this form will be provided by the DSS Coordinator and will be kept on file.
- Both oral and sign language interpreters must have appropriate qualifications. Qualified interpreters:
  - Interpret for classroom/lab and school sponsored activities and events, workshops, meetings, and campus activities when assigned.
  - Provide information to instructors, students, or other staff on how to maximize benefits of interpreter services.
  - Understand and professionally comply with the Code of Ethics of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.
  - Perform all duties pertaining to the program and student as assigned.

#### **E. Alternate Format of Books, Information, and Reading Materials**

- A student requiring alternate format to access books, literature, and information must inform DSS in advance of this need, as the college **requires a reasonable amount of time to obtain or convert the information into a usable form.**

- Many textbooks are available on tape or another format through the Book Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D) or textbook publishers. **Students who use alternate formats of textbooks or reading materials should pre-register for classes and inform DSS of their schedule.**
- Students receiving notes from a note taker that will require conversion into an alternate format should inform DSS of this need.

#### **F. Assistive Computer Technology**

- The DSS office has limited adaptive technologies and software. Therefore, students requiring assistive computer and/or adaptive computer technology should notify DSS in a timely manner to allow the DSS Coordinator to arrange for the needed equipment to be available to assist the student in the completion of his/her academic tasks. Only those students registered with DSS may use the technology resources.

#### **G. Assistance with Registration**

- DSS can provide assistance with course registration for students whose disability prevents them from registering. Students requiring assistance with registration must still meet with their advisor prior to registration assistance through DSS.
- A student should not wait until the day of registration to request assistance. Due to time constraints and workload, assistance may not be possible.
- If a student chooses not to take advantage of registration assistance and classes are closed, the student will need to choose another class.
- The student is encouraged to take advantage of registration assistance each semester. DSS cannot assign accommodations until the student is registered for classes. **It is the student's responsibility to request all accommodations in a timely manner.** Depending on the availability of service providers, it may take several weeks to implement certain accommodations. It is in the student's best interest to register at the earliest opportunity. It will be necessary for the student to meet with an academic advisor before registration. **As previously mentioned, DSS does not provide academic advising for students with disabilities.**
- Students with disabilities are subject to the same process for scheduling advisor appointments as are all other students. If the student waits too long to make appointments, the advisor may not be able to see the student in time for registration assistance. **It is the student's responsibility to make appointments with his/her advisor early enough to benefit from registration assistance.**

#### **H. Assistance in Completing Applications for Nonstandard Testing Conditions**

- DSS can assist students who are registered with DSS in completing applications for nonstandard test conditions for standardized exams. To receive this assistance the student must make the request in a timely manner. Students should call DSS to schedule an appointment with the coordinator to review and complete the application.
- The process of preparing applications can take some time. **DSS cannot help a student if the student fails to meet the application deadline.** Students should not expect to be eligible for an accommodation for standardized exams, if they did not receive the requested accommodation during the time that they were served by DSS.

#### **I. Transportation**

- Transportation is not a college accommodation mandated under 504/ADA unless it is provided to all students. Transportation to, from, and around campus is a personal responsibility. Students are responsible for arranging for personal mobility needs. In the event of an emergency situation, assistance may be provided by the Campus Police.

- Students with mobility needs are encouraged to visit the campus before classes begin to assess their ability to move across campus. In some instances, students may need to explore the option of acquiring a motorized chair or scooter or arranging for a friend or personal care attendant to assist them.
- Students with mobility needs are also encouraged to schedule their back-to-back classes in buildings located in close proximity to each other or to schedule free periods between classes to allow time to travel to the next class. If this is not possible, extended time may be granted.
- DSS is not responsible for transporting students from class to class.

#### **J. Handicap Parking**

- Students requiring the use of handicap parking spaces must register with the Office of Disability Support Services and be approved to receive a Holmes Community College handicap decal. Students' vehicles displaying this decal will be allowed to use any campus handicap parking space or legal parking space, excluding fire lanes, no parking zones, reserved areas, services zones, and areas that would block handicap curb cuts. When students use campus handicap parking spaces without a visible Holmes Community College handicap decal, they are at risk for receiving a parking ticket and having their vehicle towed.

#### **K. Tutoring**

- Tutoring is not a college accommodation mandated under 504/ADA; however, tutoring is available for students who qualify for services from the Student Support Services Program on the Goodman Campus at HCC. Tutoring services are sometimes provided by some of the academic departments.
- **Compensation for a tutor is the responsibility of the student unless the student also receives services from Vocational Rehabilitation.** On occasion, Vocational Rehabilitation has paid for tutoring services. Students are encouraged to consult their VR counselor concerning this issue.

#### **L. Personal Care Attendants**

- The college does not provide personal care attendants (PCAs) for students. Locating and compensating the PCA are the responsibility of the student. If the student receives services from Vocational Rehabilitation, the student is encouraged to contact VR about providing/funding PCA services while attending HCC.

#### **M. Accessible Furniture**

- Accessible furniture, including adjustable tables and desks, should be specifically requested through DSS by the student needing these accommodations. All requests should be made to DSS in advance, with students informing DSS of the classroom location and meeting times.
- Students must make this request each semester and should inform DSS of any changes in their schedules or in the location of their classes.

#### **N. Course Substitutions and Waivers**

- Requests for course waivers are not granted as accommodations for students' disabilities. However, requests for course substitutions will be forwarded to the appropriate Vice-President, Academic Dean, or Director provided that the documentation of the student's disability supports such a request.
- DSS can only support the student's request for a course substitution; such a substitution cannot be mandated. The decision to substitute a course is made by the Vice-President, Academic Dean, or Director, not DSS.
- Substitutions cannot be made for courses in the college's general college core requirements. Holmes Community College considers these courses essential to any college degree.

## **O. Extended Absences**

- At HCC, course attendance policies are stated on the course syllabi in accordance with the college's attendance policy. (See HCC Bulletin). However, extended absences may be granted on a case-by-case basis.
- Even with extended absences, all course requirements must be met.
- Unlimited absences will generally not be granted.

## **P. Delaying Due Dates**

- Requests for delaying due dates for course projects or papers will be evaluated on a case by case basis and only if the disability warrants the accommodation. However, there is no guarantee that due dates can be delayed.
- For consideration of such a request, students may be asked to obtain and submit written information from a qualified health care provider supporting the request. In considering the request for delaying a paper or project due date, the coordinator may seek input from the other parties involved, including, but not limited to the instructor and/or dean or director.
- When flexibility is given, it is done in a reasonable manner with a limit on the time extension granted.

## **Q. Library Services**

- DSS works with library staff to ensure that students with disabilities receive appropriate and reasonable accommodations so that all library resources are accessible. Students requiring extensive assistance may contact DSS to make arrangements for reasonable accommodations.
- In the case of students with special needs, HCC libraries apply the recommendations of the DSS so that adequate accommodation is rendered.
- In order to make the efficient use of library resources, the following actions by the student are recommended.

### **Before the first library assignment occurs:**

- The student makes a request to DSS. Appropriate library accommodations will be determined by DSS, who gives the student an Approval for Library Assistance form describing the approved library accommodations.
- The student is encouraged to contact the head librarian on each campus to discuss DSS approval for library assistance.

### **When library use is needed**

- A student who uses a reader should utilize the reader when working on library assignments. HCC Libraries personnel will assist DSS students, including those with readers, in use of the library. Library personnel are available to answer reference questions and assist with other informational needs.
- The student should make appointments and plan ahead when needing assistance so that someone is available to help. If the accommodation recommends that others make photocopies for the student, the student should provide full information and a reasonable turn-around time.

## **VIII. ADDITIONAL SERVICES AND POLICIES**

### **A. Student Support Services Program (Goodman)**

- The U.S. Department of Education has provided limited funds for Holmes Community College to establish a Student Support Services Program (SSS) on the Goodman Campus. The purpose of the program is to help qualified students succeed at HCC, improve time to

graduation, and gain transfer to a four-year institution. Assistance offered includes the following resources:

- Supplemental Instruction
  - Financial Aid Workshops
  - Cultural Activities
  - Tutorial Services
  - Special Events
  - Advocacy
  - Personal, Peer, and Academic Counseling
- Participation in the program is limited. To apply for participation as a student with a disability, the student with the disability must be registered with the DSS.
  - The phone number for SSS is (662) 472-9002, and it is located in the Student Support Services Offices in the lower level of McDaniel Hall on the Goodman Campus.

#### **B. Medical Emergency Response Procedure for Students with Disabilities**

- It is the student's responsibility to notify DSS of medical conditions that might result in an emergency situation. Medical conditions that would require notification include, but are not limited to, seizure disorders, heart disease, abnormal heart rhythms, diabetes, hypoglycemia, cardiomyopathy, asthma, other breathing disorders, fainting spells, blackouts, chronic fatigue syndrome, severe arthritis, and head injury. Students with any medical condition that may cause an emergency should inform DSS to insure proper care.
- If a medical emergency should occur while a student is on campus, Campus Police will be called. When Campus Police arrive on the scene they will determine if 911 should be called and an ambulance requested. The student may be transported to an emergency room. The student has the right to refuse transport and care. Prior notification to staff at DSS and professors will assist with observance of the student's wishes. Medical emergencies will require relocating students to a safe environment, for example, moving the student out of classrooms, cafeterias, etc.
- The personnel of DSS and Campus Police are not medical personnel. Therefore, 911 will most likely be called for the student to receive appropriate medical attention. DSS should be notified for support of the student, which includes notifying family/friends of an emergency, providing health information if the student were unable to do so, and serving as a liaison with faculty following an emergency.

#### **C. Resident Life (Goodman)**

- Physically accessible housing facilities for students with disabilities are available at Holmes Community College. A student with special needs for housing should identify and request these needs on their housing application.
- Applications for campus housing are processed by date of receipt of the housing application. Submission of a housing application does not guarantee on-campus residence/housing. Room/housing assignments are assigned based on the order in which the applications are received.
- A student requiring the service of a personal care attendant may note this requirement and the attendant's name on their application. A student may request the attendant as a roommate. There will be a residence room charge for attendants.

#### **D. HCC Cafeteria Services (Goodman)**

- DSS will work with contracted provider for food services to coordinate accommodations and special nutrition services for students with disabilities when necessary.

## **E. Intramurals/Fitness Center (Goodman)**

- For students, faculty, and staff who wish to participate in leisure, fitness, or competitive programs, Holmes Community College provides opportunities for participation in a variety of recreational and fitness-related activities.

## **IX. CAMPUS ACCESSIBILITY AND SAFETY**

To ensure physical accessibility, HCC strives to fully comply with the Americans with Disabilities Accessibility Guidelines (ADAG) for buildings and facilities. Students should report ADA accessibility problems to the DSS coordinator. For safety purposes, it is recommended that students with disabilities keep a cellular phone with them at all times.

### **A. Elevators**

- **A student who is dependent on elevators may wish to request that their classes be held on the first floor of a building.** This request should be made to DSS at pre-registration to ensure ample time for alternate room arrangements. Students should not allow themselves to be carried up or down stairs by faculty or other students. If a student cannot get to class because of a non-working elevator, he/she may request that the class be moved until such time the elevator is in working order.
- In the event that an elevator is out of service, students dependent on elevators should never try to walk up the stairs. Any absences due to elevator problems will be excused. Students who miss a class may request alternate means of obtaining class content and materials. This could include tape recording of class lectures, copies of professor's notes and class notes, or individual makeup sessions with the professor. Students should immediately report a faulty elevator to HCC faculty or staff.

### **B. Construction**

- If a student is having difficulty traveling a route or accessing a building because of construction, he/she should call the DSS for assistance. Students should also report accessibility or travel hazards to the DSS coordinator.

### **C. Service Dogs**

- Service dogs are allowed in all campus buildings and in all classrooms. If a class environment poses a threat to the dog (i.e., some science labs, med tech labs, etc.), the student should contact DSS to seek an alternative accommodation. Ongoing use of a service dog should be reported to DSS. **All service dogs must be harnessed and the harness should clearly indicate that the dog is a service dog.** If a student has a seizure dog, he/she should inform DSS, professors, and campus police of the dog's typical responses and reactions to the student and others when a seizure occurs.

### **D. Student Dismissal for Safety Reasons**

- All students, regardless of disability, must conform to HCC's code of conduct. Students who behave in a manner that places others in danger may be dismissed from class and/or the College.

### **E. Fire Safety**

- If a fire alarm goes off and a student is on the first floor of a building, he/she should leave through the closest accessible exit.
- A student on upper floors should not attempt to use the elevator, but should move to the nearest stairwell and call **911**.
- A student should call **911** and tell the dispatcher that a fire alarm sounded and that they cannot exit the building due to a disability. Students should state their name and exact

location. The dispatcher will inform the fire department and/or Campus Police of the student's location. The student should stay on the line with the dispatcher and wait for further instructions.

- If there is a real fire, the fire department will determine the safest exit and inform the student. Since fire fighters are specially trained in evacuation techniques a student will be safer if he/she is familiar with and follow HCC's fire policy guidelines.

## **X. STUDENT COMPLAINT/GRIEVANCE PROCESS** (see the student handbook)

- Once the student has exhausted the College's internal appeals process (see the student handbook), he/she has the right to file a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights (OCR). For additional information, contact Mr. Wayne Watkins (601) 605-3313 or email [compliance@holmescc.edu](mailto:compliance@holmescc.edu)