



## DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER

5840 26th St., W., Bldg. 1, Rm. 219, Bradenton, FL 34207 • 941-752-5295 phone • 941-727-6381 fax  
8000 S. Tamiami Tr., Bldg. 100, Rm. 162, Venice, FL 34293 • 941-408-1448 phone • 941-480-3419 fax  
email: drc@scf.edu

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## **INSTRUCTOR FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ'S)**

### **Introduction:**

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) is committed to ensuring equal access to college programs, services, and activities for qualified students with disabilities. The DRC assists students with disabilities through the provision of reasonable accommodations, information, resources, services, and skill development. The DRC promotes student self-advocacy through collaboration with faculty, staff, and SCF campus resources. SCF is committed to the spirit and the letter of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the ADA Amendment Act (ADAAA), and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. SCF has instituted various administrative policies, procedures, and practices to provide meaningful access for individuals with disabilities.

The Instructor Frequently Asked Questions is designed to provide instructors with useful information regarding disability accommodations and best practices. In addition to utilizing the information contained in this resource guide, instructors are encouraged to contact the DRC staff for further clarification, information or guidance.

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**Accommodation Memo:**

- **What is an Accommodation Memo?** This is an official memo/letter listing approved classroom and testing accommodations for the term. Students must be registered with the Disability Resource Center in order to qualify for accommodations. The memo contains important contact information should the instructor have any questions or want assistance from the Disability Resource Center staff.
- **Who delivers the Accommodation Memo?** Once registered, the Memorandum of Accommodations containing all approved accommodations, important information, and links to forms and processes will be emailed to instructors. Student must log-on to their DRC portal to initiate electronic delivery.
- **Can the student deliver the Accommodation Memo in the middle or end of the term?** Students are encouraged to deliver the memo during the first week of the term, however; it can be delivered at any time during the term. It is important to note that students can register for DRC services at any time during the semester. The memo is specific to the term printed at the top and effective from the date the memo is delivered until the end of the term.
- **Are accommodations retroactive?** No, accommodations are not retroactive. Accommodations are not effective until delivered.
- **Does the student need to provide an Accommodation Memo to each instructor every term?** Yes, even if the student had the instructor in a prior term, the memo listing the specific semester must be delivered.
- **Do I have to provide accommodations to a student if he/she has not provided an Accommodation Memo?** No. Instructors should inform students that they must register with the Disability Resource Center AND provide an official Accommodation Memo. Instructors should not accept documentation of a disability from a student.
- **There are a lot of accommodations listed on the Memo. Do students have to use all of them?** No, students choose which accommodations are applicable to each course. It is the student's responsibility to communicate with each instructor regarding specific needs/assistance.
- **If I feel that an approved accommodation is not reasonable, may I deny it?** The first step is to address your concerns in a discussion with the DRC Coordinator, not with the student. A discussion regarding reasonable accommodations and your specific concerns will be addressed. . If the discrepancy cannot be resolved, the DRC Coordinator will contact the State College of Florida 504 Coordinator for Disability. The 504 Coordinator, VP Academic Affairs, and Department Chair will determine a final decision.

### Assignment Due Dates:

- **Do I have to provide extensions for homework, assignments, and reports?** No. Extended time applies to timed quizzes, exams, and some timed classroom and lab activities.

### Classroom Behavior:

- **If a student with a disability is disrupting my class by his comments or behavior, what should I do?** Students with disabilities must abide by the same rules and codes of conduct as all other students. Instructors are encouraged to contact the DRC to discuss any concerns. The DRC can serve as a liaison, in providing guidance, suggestions and intervention when appropriate.
- **A student is approved for stretch breaks in class. What does that mean?** For some students with disabilities, sitting for long periods of time and/or remaining in the same position for the duration of a class period can exacerbate symptoms of the disability. Similarly, some students may need to leave class for brief periods to attend to medications or other medical needs. The DRC encourages these students to move around or leave class in the least disruptive manner possible. Students should discuss seating arrangements and the timing of breaks with their instructors.

### Clinical Experiences:

- **How do I provide accommodations for off-campus clinical experiences?** It is suggested you meet with the student to discuss the essential requirements of the clinical experience. Due to the unique setting and structure, decisions are made on a case-by-case basis.

### Confidentiality/Disability Etiquette:

- **Can I ask a student about his/her disability?** Instructors cannot ask about a diagnosis, history of illness/disability, or any other confidential information. The following statement is suggested: "I read the Accommodation Memo you provided and I would like to discuss the accommodations you will be using in my course. How can I best help to insure you are utilizing these accommodations so that you can be successful in this class?"
- **Is it ok for me to discuss a disability if the student volunteers that information?** Generally, the best approach is to focus your conversation and questions on how to best provide the approved accommodations within the context of your course. Instructors are encouraged to initiate a dialog with students to discuss accommodations for the course. Please discuss any issues related to disability and accommodation in a private setting such as an office or conference room.
- **Can I solicit the help of a classmate to work with a DRC student?** The knowledge of a disability should be treated in a confidential manner by the instructor. Identifying a student to peers or making

comments about a student's disability in class violates the student's right to privacy. If a DRC student asks you to make an announcement for a volunteer note taker, do not reveal the identity of the DRC student.

- **There is a DRC student in my course who is doing well academically. Does he/she “really” have a disability?** Many registered DRC students have “hidden disabilities” such as ADHD, learning disabilities, psychological disorders, or medical conditions such as diabetes or arthritis. The DRC requires documentation of a disability from each student. Do not ask questions that require students to reveal confidential information.
- **Can the Disability Resource Center provide me information (verbal and/or written) about the student's disability? I feel I can be more helpful if I have more information.** No, the DRC cannot disclose a student's disability, diagnosis, or specific information provided by the student. The DRC will work with instructors to insure delivery of accommodations, provide input regarding student learning, and collaborate with the instructor and student to develop a plan for success.
- **I really don't know how to work with certain disabilities. How do I teach a deaf or hard of hearing person? How can a blind student be successful?** Instructors are strongly encouraged to work collaboratively with the student and DRC staff. We are here to provide guidance and support to both the student and faculty. Feel free to consult by phone, email, or set-up an appointment to meet in person.
- **A student hasn't provided me a memo, but I think a student may have a disability. What should I do?** If there is a suspicion of a disability you are encouraged to meet with the student in a private setting. Instructors are encouraged to say the following: “I noticed you have been struggling in my course. There are many resources available to SCF students such as tutoring at the Academic Resource Center and disability accommodations. You don't need to share any confidential information with me, but I encourage you to meet with a DRC staff member to see if you qualify for services. Here is the contact information”.
- **I referred a student to the DRC, but he/she never followed through. Can I insist that he/she register for services?** Although you may encourage a student to contact the DRC, the student is not obligated to register for services.
- **What should I do if a student in my course voluntarily shares disability information, but they are not registered with the DRC?** Explain that all disability information and services are handled by the DRC office and provide the student the DRC contact information. Our office staff can help determine if there is an ADA qualifying disability and will refer students to community resources to assist them in getting the documentation necessary to access services.

### Course/program Integrity

- **I believe the requested accommodations may compromise the integrity of my class or academic program?** Institutions of higher education are not required to lower academic standards or compromise the integrity of the school or program. Requirements that are essential to the program or course of instruction, or that are directly related to licensing requirements, need not be compromised.

It is imperative that each program of study develop a list of essential competencies inherent to its successful completion. Please discuss any concerns you may have with the Disability Resource Center.

### **Note taker:**

- **What is my role in helping secure a class room note taker?** Students approved for note taking services have several options for securing a volunteer note taker. Students are often uncomfortable approaching a classmate independently and will often ask for assistance from the instructor. The DRC student will give you a "Note Taker Request Form" which includes a statement to read to the class. It is important **NOT** to reveal the identity of the DRC student. After reading the statement, simply give the volunteer the "form". The volunteer will contact the DRC and will develop a plan for delivery of class notes.
- **What if I made an announcement to the class for a volunteer note taker, but I don't have any success securing a volunteer?** If you have observed a student that pays attention and takes thorough notes, you can email the student and inquire if he/she would consider becoming a volunteer. Often students will respond to a personal request from the instructor.
- **What do I do if I asked a student and still have no luck?** Another suggestion is to randomly assign a "class note taker" each day. The responsibility for notes rotates among participants in the class so that no one student is responsible every day. Notes are posted on CANVAS for all students to use.

### **Online Course Accessibility:**

- **How do I insure that my Online Course is accessible?**  
Various state and federal laws have requirements aimed at making education accessible to as many people as possible. For instance, making sure that classrooms are wheelchair accessible would be an effort to comply with these laws and policies. Online classes need to be accessible as well. Below are some basic guidelines that you need to be aware of but please remember to contact any member of the [Online Learning](#) team to learn more about making your course accessible.

#### **Design:**

- Keep the design simple, clean, and uncluttered.
- Use alternate text tags for images. For example, you can add alternate text when you embed an image from the web or from Flickr creative commons. If you have an image in your course file you want to use, you can add an alt tag by switching to HTML view. Doing this will mean that people who use a screen reader to read aloud the contents of a web page will hear an auditory description of the image.
- Rather than pasting in raw URLs, link to words that describe the link destination. Again, this will help people using a screen reader understand where the link will take them.

- Use other formatting besides color (bold words, different size font) to distinguish between important items in your course. Changing the font size rather than using different colors will benefit those people who cannot differentiate colors.
- Learn to use CTRL+ and CTRL- or CMD+ and CMD- to resize the text in the course for the visually impaired.

#### **Video:**

- Make sure all your videos have closed captioning.
- Use the link icon in the Rich Content Editor to embed a YouTube video. It will auto-embed the video and link to the title of the video.

#### **Microsoft Office Resources:**

- [Creating Accessible MS Word files](#) - how-to basics for MS Word 2000 and above.
- [Creating Accessible MS PowerPoint files](#) - basics for MS PowerPoint 2000 and above.
- [Creating Accessible PDF from MS Office files](#) – basics.
- [Many more articles about accessible content at WebAim](#) - this is an excellent site to learn about this important topic.

#### **Additional Resources:**

- [Section 508 website](#). Law in 1990 to make American Society more accessible to people with disabilities. Prohibits discrimination based on disability.
- [WebAIM web accessibility resources](#)
- [Creating Accessible Electronic Content](#)
- [Enabling Keyboard Navigation in Mac OS X Web Browsers](#)
- [How to Meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#). Excellent information on everything from providing text alternatives (e.g. transcripts or close captioning on audio/video content) to strategies to implement in course navigation and course links. It is a long document with many examples, so focus on 1.1: Text Alternatives, 2.4: Navigable, 3.1: Readable, and 3.2: Predictable sections easily accessed via table of contents on that page.

#### **Recording Class Lectures:**

- **My syllabus states that recording devices are prohibited. If it is listed on the Accommodation Memo do I have to allow the DRC student to record the class lecture?** It is the institution's responsibility to

provide auxiliary aids and services to ensure effective participation for postsecondary students with disabilities. The U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights details obligations under Section 504 and Title II of the ADA: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/auxaids.html>

- **What about intellectual property and confidentiality issues?** Faculty have the right to protect intellectual property and ensure that the use of recordings are for the sole use of the student as an accommodation. DRC students approved for recordings are required to sign an agreement that protects the rights of the instructor and students in the course. Instructors have the right to direct the student to cease recording portions of the class that involve personal reflection, self-disclosure, or confidential discussions. Please contact the department Faculty Chair if you have additional concerns or questions.
- **Should I change my syllabus statement regarding prohibiting electronic recording devices?** Instructors prohibiting recording of class lectures are encouraged to include the following statement in their syllabus: "The use of recording devices is prohibited, except when the use of such devices has been approved as an accommodation through the college Disability Resource Center. In such cases the student must provide a copy of their Memo of Accommodation, provide his/her own recording device, and meet with the instructor to discuss how to best provide the approved accommodation."

### **Syllabus statement:**

#### **What statement should be on my syllabus regarding disability accommodations?**

- Instructors are encouraged to include the following statement: Disability Resource Center: State College of Florida, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, will provide classroom and academic accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Students must submit application and documentation to the Disability Resource Center (DRC). Once registered, the Memorandum of Accommodations containing all approved accommodations, important information, and links to forms and processes will be emailed to instructors. Students and instructors are encouraged to work collaboratively throughout the semester to facilitate appropriate use of accommodations. DRC Contact Information: Email: [drc@scf.edu](mailto:drc@scf.edu) Phone: 941-752-5295 Website: <http://scf.edu/StudentServices/DisabilityResourceCenter>

### **Testing Accommodations:**

- **Who proctors/administers the exams with accommodations for DRC students?** Most students take exams in the Assessment/Testing Center located in Building #1 Bradenton, and Building #100 Venice. Students must register for the exam and provide a Test Referral Form to the instructor 3 days prior to the exam date.
- **Can I administer/proctor the exam for the student?** Instructors have the option of proctoring DRC exams if they can insure that the approved accommodations will be provided (quiet area, extended test time). Such arrangements are made between the student and instructor.

- **The Memo of Accommodations states that the student needs adaptive equipment, scribe, and a reader. Who provides these services?** The DRC staff will assist all students requiring specialized equipment and services.
- **Can I give the DRC student a different exam than the class?** The DRC student should take the same exam as the class (format, number of questions), but it is permissible to give a different test form (Test A, Test B) if the DRC student is taking the exam on a different day/time as the class.
- **Does the DRC student take the exam at the same time/day as the class?** Whenever possible, exams are scheduled on the same day as the class, as close to the class time as possible. Students taking evening classes need to test during open daytime testing hours. At times exams are scheduled for a different time/date due to scheduling conflicts or the need for 1:1 staff assistance or equipment availability. In such cases the student should communicate with the instructor regarding the change in date.
- **Is there such a thing as unlimited time on a test for students with disabilities?** No. The most frequent time extension is time and a half, but double time may be warranted due to a student's slow processing speed, use of adaptive equipment or to the length of time required to administer or scribe the test.
- **How do I send an exam to the Assessment/Testing Center?** The student will provide you a Test Referral Form which includes information regarding delivery and return of exams. Options include email, campus mail, and pick-up during office hours.
- **How much time do I have to deliver the exam?** The exam should be delivered 3 days prior to the scheduled test date. This provides the necessary time to make staffing arrangements, organize exams, and prepare for the exam administration.
- **Will the exam be kept confidential?** Yes, exams are locked in a cabinet to insure test security.
- **My course syllabus has "tentative" exam dates.** If the student is not given a 3 day notice for an exam date he/she may have to test at a later date if the testing calendar is filled and/or staff assistance cannot be provided with such short notice. In such cases the student should discuss this matter with the instructor and the instructor should write the alternate test date on the Test Referral Form.

### Testing for Online Exams:

- **Can I require the DRC student to come to campus to take an online exam?** No. If the class is not required to come to campus to take an exam you cannot require this of a DRC student.

**The exams for my course are all on-line. How do I extend test time in CANVAS?** The instructor can set-up an exam in CANVAS for the DRC student. Unless otherwise indicated on the Memo of Accommodation, extended time is 1.5x (time and ½) or 50% more than the allotted class time. Extending test time for one student does not affect the entire class. Online Learning has developed a CANVAS Guide which can be located at: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-2984> or call Melanie Wallace at 941-752-5237 for further assistance.



### **Tutoring and Additional Instruction:**

- **Am I required to provide additional instruction, outside of the classroom, for a DRC student?** No. However, DRC students should have the opportunity to meet with instructors during office hours, or according to information posted in the course syllabus, just like any other student in the class. Encourage the DRC student to utilize the Academic Resource Center. Registered DRC students have the option of scheduling 30 minute 1:1 tutoring sessions for additional instruction.

**Disability Resource Center staff work collaboratively with students and faculty to ensure students with disabilities are provided approved accommodations and support services in a fair and timely manner. Please feel free to contact the DRC office if you have any questions: [drc@scf.edu](mailto:drc@scf.edu) or 941-752-5295**