



**Wilmington  
College**

# **Disability Services Handbook**

Wilmington College challenges students by providing an educational environment that fosters active learning, passionate engagement in service and leadership, and intentional encounters with the values of peace, social justice, and global citizenship.

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## Introduction

*We know that equality of individual ability has never existed and never will, but we do insist that equality of opportunity still must be taught.*

Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Wilmington College is rooted in historic Quaker values that include integrity, service, simplicity, equality, peace and social justice, and respect for all persons. The College seeks to educate the whole person – intellectual, emotional, physical, and spiritual – in ways that foster critical thinking, reflection, free exchange of ideas, open inquiry, tolerance, and a desire for lifelong learning.

Disability Services works with students and faculty to ensure that a disability will not be a barrier to equal opportunity or access to educational programs and services; however, the student's own engagement in the accommodation process is a key factor to her or his success. This handbook provides information about policies, procedures, and resources available at Wilmington College for students with disabilities.

The Disability Services Handbook, including all policies, procedures, and forms, is available on the intranet under Student Interests – Student Resource Center, Disability Services and on the internet at [www.wilmington.edu](http://www.wilmington.edu) – Academic Resources – Disability Services.

### Policy for Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability

It is the policy of Wilmington College to comply with the *Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADA)*, *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, and other applicable federal and state regulations that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability.

Under *ADA*, all institutions of higher education (either public or private) must comply with government policies, procedures, and employment practices that impact the treatment of students with disabilities.

*Section 504* requires that "no qualified person shall, solely by reason of disability, be denied access to, participation in, or the benefits of any program or activity" operated by any program that receives federal funds. Under *Section 504*, institutions must make appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure accessibility of academic activities (such as courses and examinations) as well as for non-academic activities (such as recruitment and admissions, housing, financial assistance, physical education, athletics, and counseling).

### Definition

A person with disabilities is defined as any person who has a physical or mental condition which substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such a condition, or is regarded as having such a condition (*ADA, 2008*).

Major life activities include caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. Basically, any function that is performed routinely by individuals is considered a major life activity.

### **Admissions Criteria**

The admissions process and criteria are the same for all students applying to Wilmington College. Admissions counselors review all applications without regard to disability status.

### **Disability Verification**

Students who wish to access Disability Services need to meet with the Academic Services Director and provide verification of their disability. To register with Disability Services, students submit an Application for Services. In addition, the student must provide the Disability Verification form accompanied by current disability documentation from a licensed professional.

### **Accommodations**

Disability Services assists students in accessing appropriate accommodations in compliance with the *Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008* and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973*. Individual accommodations are determined for eligible students to enable equal access to and full participation in educational programs and services at Wilmington College.

Every student with a disability, even within the same disability category, has different strengths and needs; the degree of limitation and compensation skills varies widely from one student to another. Severity of the impact of the disability may also vary over time and with the situation. Appropriate accommodations are determined through a process of discussing the student's strengths and needs, reviewing documentation, considering the request of the student, and evaluating the essential components of a course or program. Students with disabilities are held to the same academic standards as their peers.

Accommodations are developed collaboratively with the student. Each student comes to Wilmington College with an educational history and some knowledge about what works (and does not work) for her or him. Though policies, procedures, and guidelines are necessary and helpful, they are more effective when coupled with authentic dialogue about strengths, needs, and effective teaching and learning strategies. Students are encouraged to share their experience with the Academic Services Director so that the most appropriate supports can be provided.

### **Student Evaluation**

Wilmington College complies with *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973* in its course examinations and other procedures for evaluating student academic achievement in its programs:

[A] College shall provide such methods of evaluating the achievement of students who have a [disability] that will best ensure that the results of the evaluation represent the student's achievement in the course, rather than reflecting the student's impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills (except where such skills are the factors that the test purports to measure).

A student who does not do acceptable work is not given credit. If a faculty member becomes aware that a student with a disability is having difficulty, a referral to the Academic Services Director is encouraged.

### **Confidentiality**

All inquiries about Disability Services are handled in a confidential manner. *Students who wish to use accommodations decide whom to inform about their accommodations through the process of self-identification.* With the consent of the student, information from Disability Services about the student's disability is provided in limited circumstances on an as-needed basis. Under the *Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, Buckley Amendment (FERPA)*, faculty, staff, and administrators cannot draw the attention of others to a student's disability. Student disability records are stored in locked cabinets, and documentation is destroyed five years after graduation or withdrawal from Wilmington College.

### **Grievance Procedure**

A student has the right to present concerns about the process of obtaining accommodations, the accommodations plan, the manner in which accommodations are provided, issues of confidentiality, or any other concern related to Disability Services. The student should first discuss concerns with the Academic Services Director who will work to resolve the issues. If the concerns are not resolved, the student may submit a written appeal to the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs (AVPAA). The AVPAA will consult with the Vice President for Academic Affairs for academic issues and the Vice President for Student Affairs for non-academic issues to bring about a resolution. If the student continues to have concerns, she/he may submit a final written appeal to the President of the College.

# Registering with Disability Services and Utilizing Accommodations

Disability Services provides advocacy and consultation to students with disabilities and their faculty. The office also provides appropriate accommodations for students' verified disabilities so that they have an equal opportunity to participate in courses, activities, and programs.

## 1. Pre-admission

Prospective students are encouraged to contact Disability Services in the early stages of the college search. Pre-admission services include information about support services available, possible accommodations, documentation requirements, and discussing strengths and needs with the Academic Services Director.

## 2. Applying to Wilmington College

The application process and requirements are the same for students with and without disabilities. Disclosure of disability during the admissions process is optional and voluntary. Self-identification (a statement explaining your disability) may assist the Admissions Office in understanding how your disability affects your academic performance if a negative impact is reflected in your test scores or other application materials. If you choose to disclose, provide information in essay form and attach it to your application. This may include your use of relevant accommodations in the past and the accommodations you intend to use to compensate for these areas while in college. Disability information disclosed in the admissions process will be shared with Disability Services unless you request otherwise. Please note: *It is appropriate and common to contact Disability Services directly without disclosing your disability to Admissions.*

## 3. Current and Prospective Students: Registering with Disability Services

Eligibility for Disability Services is separate from the admissions process. Students who wish to use accommodations must provide verification of their disability in advance of need. To register with Disability Services:

- a. Contact Disability Services to schedule an appointment to discuss eligibility and your accommodation requests.
- b. Submit the Application for Services and the Disability Verification form, accompanied by current disability documentation from a licensed professional, to Disability Services.

Accommodations are determined on an individual basis as a result of discussing strengths and needs with the student, reviewing the disability documentation provided, and considering the requests of the student and the requirements of the student's program. Be advised that the eligibility requirements for Disability Services at the college level may be different than at your high

school. Documentation guidelines are outlined in "Five Essential Elements of Quality Disability Documentation" and available in the Forms section following the Disability Verification form.

#### **4. Utilizing Accommodations**

- a. Once you are determined eligible for specific accommodations, the Academic Services Director will write your accommodations letter and make a copy for each of your instructors.
- b. Pick up your accommodations letter from the Academic Services Director's office or request that they be mailed to your campus mailbox. Students typically pick up their letters within the first two weeks of the semester. However, you may pick up your letters, and initiate accommodations at any point in the semester. You may also choose to stop using accommodations at any time.
- c. Provide a copy of your accommodations letter to each instructor and explain which accommodations you might use in that course. Most students do this privately in the instructor's office during office hours. Tell the instructor what she/he needs to do for the accommodation(s) you will be using (such as bring the tests to the Student Resource Center or give you reading packets early so they can be converted to electronic text). Instructors often rely on your expertise about your disability and provision of accommodations. Good communication and advocacy on your part is the most important piece of the accommodations process. If you need help with this, talk to the Academic Services Director.
- d. Contact the Academic Services Director if you have any concerns about using an accommodation.

#### **5. Summary of Steps for Using Accommodations**

- 1) Pick up your accommodation letters from the Academic Services Director.
- 2) Meet with each instructor during office hours within the first two weeks of the semester.
- 3) Inform the instructor that you have a disability and provide them with your accommodations letter.
- 4) Identify specific accommodations you will or may use in their course.
- 5) Explain what you need the instructor to do to help you access the accommodations.
- 6) Remember that accommodations ensure equal access to education in that they are modifications to how you receive course content during class or express what you know during testing. Accommodations do not alter course content or requirements.

## Rights and Responsibilities

Wilmington College is committed to insuring equal opportunity for students with disabilities. This process is a collaborative effort among Disability Services, the student, faculty, staff, and administration. Each individual has a role to play in making education accessible. Understanding your rights as well as your responsibilities is essential to the process of ensuring equal access.

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### **Students with disabilities have the right to:**

- Equal access to services, programs, facilities, and employment available at Wilmington College.
- Reasonable and appropriate accommodations determined on an individual basis.
- Confidentiality of information relating to disability issues.
- Pursue accommodation requests that have not been met through a grievance procedure at the Office of Academic Affairs.

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

- Inform Disability Services that you have a disability by contacting the Academic Services Director and providing the required disability documentation.
  - Request necessary accommodations in advance of need.
  - Meet the College's academic and institutional standards.
  - Follow the specific guidelines established for obtaining appropriate accommodations.
- 

### **Disability Services has the right to:**

- Maintain the College's academic standards.
- Request current documentation that meets eligibility guidelines to verify the need for appropriate accommodations.
- Select effective accommodations in consultation with the student on an individual basis.
- Deny a request for accommodations if the documentation fails to verify the need for the requested service or if the documentation is not provided in advance of need.
- Refuse to provide an accommodation that is inappropriate or unreasonable in such a manner as to: pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others, constitute an alteration to an essential element of a course or program, or pose an undue financial or administrative burden on the College.

### **Disability Services has the responsibility to:**

- Provide advocacy and consultation services to students with disabilities and their faculty.
  - Provide appropriate accommodations for a student's known disability so that the student has an equal opportunity to participate in courses, activities, and programs.
  - Provide information regarding policies and procedures to students with disabilities.
  - Provide advice about accommodation options.
  - Maintain confidentiality of disability issues.
-

**Faculty, administration, and staff have the right to:**

- Request in writing from Disability Services notification of a student's need for accommodations. (Faculty, administrators, and staff do not have the right to access disability documentation.)
- Decide if an accommodation request meets the academic requirements of the course (faculty).
- Contact Disability Services to clarify student requests for accommodations.

**Faculty, administration, and staff have the responsibility to:**

- Provide appropriate accommodations in a timely manner.
- Meet with eligible students by request to discuss accommodations and establish the procedure for providing accommodations in the course (faculty).
- Maintain confidentiality regarding disability issues.
- Alter the testing conditions to measure proficiency in course knowledge based on the ability of the student, not the disability. (There may be an exception when the purpose of the test is to measure a particular skill.)
- Refer students who have requested accommodations but have not registered with Disability Services to the Academic Services Office.

## Common Accommodations

Accommodations are modifications to a course, program, service, or employment to ensure equal access and opportunity to education. Disability Services provides the accommodations in cooperation with other programs of the Student Resource Center and with faculty. *Below are common accommodations, but other accommodations are also provided according to student needs.*

Note: Disability Services does not provide services of a personal nature such as attendant care, homework assistance, or typing services.

**Common Accommodations Include:**

- |                                    |                                 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Electronic Text                  | • Extended Time for Test-Taking |
| • Electronic Recording of Lectures | • Test Reader                   |
| • Note-Taking Software             | • Test Scribe                   |

NOTE: Tutoring, although NOT an accommodation, is available to all Wilmington College students who want to improve skills and performance. Individualized tutoring and Supplemental Instruction is designed to integrate learning strategies with course content. As with all services provided by the Student Resource Center, including tutoring, writing assistance, and SI are free to all students.

## Required Paperwork and Forms

After meeting with the Director of Disability Services, an accommodations plan will be devised. The Director of Disability Services will provide all necessary paperwork.

# Frequently Asked Questions about Services for Students with Disabilities

## **Does Wilmington College provide services for students with disabilities?**

Yes. Accommodations are provided to students with documented disabilities to ensure equal access to educational programs and services in compliance with the *Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (2008)* and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973*. Accommodations are determined on an individual basis, using disability documentation and consultation with the student.

## **Is there a separate admissions procedure for students with disabilities?**

No. The admissions process and criteria are the same for all students applying to Wilmington College. Admissions counselors review all applications without regard to disability status.

## **Should I send my disability documentation to the Admissions Office?**

No. Students who want to use Disability Services at Wilmington College should submit documentation directly to Disability Services, 1870 Quaker Way – #1283, Wilmington, Ohio 45177 or [accessibility@wilmington.edu](mailto:accessibility@wilmington.edu).

## **What documentation is required to receive Disability Services?**

The Disability Verification form accompanied by current disability documentation from a licensed professional is required. Please refer to “Five Essential Elements of Quality Disability Documentation” in the Forms section or contact Disability Services at [accessibility@wilmington.edu](mailto:accessibility@wilmington.edu) or (937) 481-2444 for more information about documentation guidelines.

## **When should I give my documentation to Disability Services?**

In order to ensure that accommodation requests can be met, first-year students are encouraged to submit documentation during their senior year of high school or during the summer before college starts. However, *a student may meet with the Academic Services Director and submit documentation at any time in their college career.*

## **What happens after my disability documentation is approved?**

If you haven't already done so, you would meet with the Academic Services Director to make accommodation requests and discuss accommodation procedures. The Academic Services Director then writes and provides to you your accommodation letters and reviews the to access accommodations.

## **Are tutoring services available?**

Yes. Tutoring is free for all Wilmington College students. Writing and math tutors are available for all students through the Student Resource Center. Individual tutors for most other subjects are also available. Wilmington College also provides Supplemental Instruction (SI), which is group tutoring for specific courses. Request a tutor or inquire about SI's at the Student Resource Center.

## **Is there a fee for Disability Services?**

No. The provision of appropriate accommodations is mandatory under the *Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (2008)* and for private institutions that receive federal financial assistance under *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973*.

### **What kind of accommodations will I be eligible for?**

Appropriate accommodations are determined on an individual basis, using disability documentation and consultation with the student. Accommodations for which students frequently qualify include extended time for test taking, testing in a quiet location, electronic recording of lectures, note taker, reader or scribe tests, and print material in electronic format. Other accommodations are designed according to student needs.

### **Is there financial aid or scholarships specifically for students with disabilities?**

The purpose of federal financial aid is to help students and families meet educational expenses that cannot be met through their own resources. The results of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) along with the cost of education will determine whether or not a student has financial need. Costs related to disabling conditions may affect your financial need, but having a disability does not qualify a student automatically for financial aid. All students are eligible to be considered for Wilmington College scholarships. Agencies such as the Bureau for Vocational Rehabilitation do provide financial assistance to students with disabilities who meet their qualification guidelines. Visit <http://www.ood.ohio.gov/Core-Services/BVR> or the comparable agency in your home state for additional information.

### **Does Disability Services Provide Testing to Diagnose Disabilities?**

Disability Services provides advocacy services and ensures appropriate academic adjustments and other accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Disability Services does not conduct or pay for evaluations to document suspected disabilities; however, names of local professionals can be provided.

## Sources

The WC Disability Services Handbook is adapted from:

Disability Services Handbook, Antioch College, 2000

Disability Services Handbook, Cedarville University, 2008

Disability Services Handbook, Disability Services Committee, Greater Cincinnati Consortium of Colleges and Universities (GCCCU), 2008

Disability Services Handbook, Office for Institutional Equity, Ohio University, 2008