Office of Disability Services

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Academic accommodations are provided in specific academic areas when an individual has a diagnosed disability that causes current and significant functional difficulty in some aspect of the academic experience. A student uses accommodations in order to have the same opportunity for academic success as other students. The goal of the accommodation is to minimize the impact of the disability so that the student can be given the opportunity to demonstrate course knowledge (tests, papers, projects, etc.) and be evaluated (graded) in a non-discriminatory way.

Instructors play an important role in the academic accommodation process, as students have far more contact with instructors than with the Academic Accommodations Coordinator. Providing accommodations often requires allowing students extra time for class activities or making special arrangements for testing. Instructors may request support from Academic Advising or Library staff, but if an eligible student requests an academic accommodation, the instructor is responsible to ensure that every effort within reason has been made to provide the accommodation.

To be eligible for accommodations, a student must present documentation to the Academic Accommodations Coordinator; these records are confidential and kept on file in the SLU Madrid Counseling Center. The coordinator will, in turn, contact the student’s instructors by e-mail, stating that student’s eligibility for accommodation and outlining the type of accommodations to be provided and procedures to follow.

Guidelines for Faculty

1. Instructors must include on all course syllabi the Madrid Campus statement on academic accommodation; this statement directs students to Disability Services if they wish to request an academic accommodation.
2. Instructors will receive e-mail notification from the Academic Accommodations Coordinator if there is a student eligible for accommodation in their class.
3. As stated in the e-mail notification, instructors are not required to approach the student about his/her academic accommodation or provide it automatically. Students who meet with the Academic Accommodations Coordinator are informed that they are responsible for contacting their instructors at least one
week in advance to arrange for the accommodations for which they eligible.

4. If an instructor is approached by a student requesting an academic accommodation, but has not been received notification of eligibility, the instructor must refer the student to the Academic Accommodations Coordinator.

5. Instructors are required to use discretion when speaking to a student about his/her academic accommodation to ensure privacy and confidentiality. Instructors may not ask the student about the reason for the accommodation or the nature of the student’s disability. The notification from the Academic Accommodations Coordinator confirms the student’s eligibility. If the student feels that he/she is not receiving reasonable accommodation for his/her disability, the instructor should refer him/her to the Academic Accommodations Coordinator.

6. Based on course format, instructors should be aware that a student eligible for accommodations may not request them for the course; similarly, the student may request only one or two accommodations for which he/she is eligible.

7. Instructors must make arrangements two days in advance with the Academic Advising Office and/or the Library Director to request a special room for testing or assistance in providing academic accommodation.

8. For instructors who oversee a course with a lab component, the testing accommodation may not necessarily carry over to lab exams and activities.

9. Instructors may be asked to adjust their attendance policy for students eligible for the attendance accommodation.

10. Instructors are encouraged to contact the Academic Accommodation Coordinator if they have questions (disabilityservices-madrid@slu.edu and ext. 230).