



Office of Disability Services



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Welcome to the Office of Disability Services



As a division of the Learning Center under the Academic Affairs umbrella, the Office of Disability Services works with Keystone's administrators, faculty, and staff to provide reasonable accommodations and support services for students with documented disabilities. Our team is committed to the confidentiality of the student. We are able to provide services to our students through various means including but not limited to:

- Establishing and disseminating criteria for Disability Services
- Meeting with students to discuss access needs
- Promoting disability equality and inclusion on campus

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Who is a qualified individual with a disability in college?

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act, as Amended, a person with a disability is defined as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

If a student with a disability qualifies for accommodations in high school, will they receive the same accommodations in college?

Not necessarily. A student's history of accommodations is discussed during the intake process and is considered when applying accommodations to the academic environment. Colleges are not required to provide accommodations that fundamentally alter the nature of a class or that will pose an undue administrative or financial burden on the institution. In addition, accommodations provided may not be the same as at different post-secondary institutions.

What is the purpose of accommodations in a college setting?

The purpose of accommodations is to provide access and equal opportunity. Keystone College provides students with disabilities academic, housing and/or other accommodations in order to ensure that students have an equal opportunity to participate in all Keystone College programs, services, and activities.

How will the instructors know that a student needs accommodations?

Students must present his/her instructors with an accommodation plan. An accommodation plan will be issued to the student once the required documentation has been reviewed and reasonable accommodations are determined. The accommodations will be in place as soon as the student presents the plan to the instructor and has a conversation explaining how best to implement the authorized accommodation in a particular course. The plan will not be considered in place until the student presents it to the professor.

Can students change their minds about using or not using accommodations?

Yes, but students are urged to get their accommodations in place and communicate with their instructors that they are registered with the Office of Disability Services and may need their accommodations during the semester. Accommodations are never retroactive. For example, a student cannot set up accommodations at midterm and expect to be able to retake tests with accommodations that were taken prior to midterm.

Will the Accommodation Plan be automatically given to students every semester?

No. Students must arrange for accommodations before or at the beginning of each semester. The Office of Disability Services (ODS) will not automatically assume the student will want the same accommodations for each class the following semester. Each semester, students must make an appointment with ODS to request accommodations. It is recommended that students make an appointment using the online appointment system through the Library & Learning Center's page



Who is responsible for making sure that accommodations are put into practice?

The student is responsible for carrying out their part in implementing the accommodations. This could include the following:

- Setting up meetings with professors in order to discuss the specific needs regarding accommodations.
- Completing the test accommodation request form and following up to ensure alternative testing arrangements are in place.
- Recording lectures or discussions
- Using the Adaptive Technology Lab for assistive technology software/hardware
- Managing the note taking process
- Communicating with Office of Disability Services staff

Does Keystone College permit service or emotional support animals?

Yes. It is important to first make the distinction as to if the animal qualifies as being a service or emotional support animal, because this will determine the policies that need to be followed. These policies are very comprehensive and are available on the Keystone College website at www.keystone.edu/disabilityservices. Disability Services personnel can answer any specific questions students may have.

Overview of Laws

The Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, (ADAA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504) prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities. These laws require the College to provide reasonable accommodations for otherwise qualified students with disabilities. Generally, the term “disability” means that an individual has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

This federal statute guarantees the rights of disabled people so that they may be given equal opportunity in all programs and activities that receive federal assistance, as well as prohibits discrimination of an individual based solely on the disability. This regulation is applied to all state education agencies, elementary and secondary school systems, libraries, vocational schools, and state vocational rehabilitation agencies and colleges and universities.

Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended (ADAA)

The Americans with Disability Act, as amended, extends the civil rights of disabled people provided under the Rehabilitation Act. It defines a person with a disability as being someone who:

- Has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities
- Has history of such impairment
- Is regarded as having such an impairment

Under this act, no person can be denied access to, participation in or benefits from any program operated by the college because of their disability.

Differences between High School and College

High School	College
Applicable Laws	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Subpart D • I.D.E.A. (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) • I.D.E.A. is about SUCCESS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Subpart E • A.D.A. (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990) • A.D.A. is about ACCESS
Required Documentation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I.E.P. (Individualized Education Plan and/or 504 Plan) • School provides evaluation at no cost to the student • Documentation focuses on determining whether student is eligible for services based on specific disability categories in I.D.E.A. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High school I.E.P. and 504 plans are generally insufficient. Documentation guidelines specify information needed for each category of disability. • Student must get evaluation at his/her own expense • Current documentation must provide information on specific nature of condition or disability, functional limitations, and demonstrate the need for specific accommodations

High School	College
Parental Role	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent has access to student records and can participate in the accommodation process • Parent advocates for student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent does not have access to student records without student's written consent • Student advocates for self, strong self-advocacy skills are important
Self-Advocacy	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student is identified by the school and is supported by parents and teachers • Primary responsibility for arranging accommodations belongs to the school • Teachers approach you if they believe you need assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student must self-identify to the Office of Disability Services • Primary responsibility for self-advocacy and arranging accommodations belongs to the student • Professors are usually open and helpful, but most expect students to initiate contact if assistance is needed
Instruction	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers may modify curriculum and/or alter pace of assignments • Students are expected to read short assignments that are then discussed, and often re-taught in class • Students seldom need to read anything more than once and sometimes listening in class is enough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professors are not required to modify curriculum design or alter assignment deadlines • Students are assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing which may not be directly addressed in class • Students need to review class notes and text material regularly

High School	College
Study Responsibilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutoring and study support may be a service provided as part of an I.E.P. or 504 plan • Student's time and assignments are structured by others • Students may study outside of class as little as 0 to 2 hours a week, and this may be mostly last-minute test preparation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutoring DOES NOT fall under Disability Services and is not considered an academic adjustment or accommodation. Students with disabilities must seek out tutoring resources as they are available to all students • Students manage their own time and complete assignments independently • Students need to study at least 2 to 3 hours outside of class for each hour of class
Grades and Tests	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I.E.P. or 504 Plan may include modifications to test format and/or grading • Testing is frequent and covers small amounts of material • Makeup tests are often available • Teachers often take time to remind you of assignments and due dates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grading and test format changes (i.e. multiple choice vs. essay) are generally not available. How tests are given (extended time, test proctors) are appropriate academic adjustments when supported by disability documentation • Testing is usually infrequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material • Make up tests are rarely an option, without permission from professor • Professors expect students to read, save, and consult the course syllabus (outline), the syllabus spells out exactly what is expected of students, when assignments are due, and how students will be graded

Examples of Offered Accommodations

The Office of Disability Services has an interactive process in which we work with students to design an accommodation plan that most effectively removes barriers to equal access. Below is not a complete list of services and accommodations we provide to the students, but rather a sample of the most commonly utilized accommodations.

Recording of Class Lectures

Students may be allowed to record class lectures using a digital recorder, pen, or software such as Livescribe, EverNote, etc.

Proctored Exams in a Reduced Distraction Environment

Disability Services can help arrange an acceptable alternative for test taking through the Test Proctoring Center. These alternatives, stated within the student's accommodation plan, may include:

- Marking answer selection directly on the exams instead of using a scantron
- Using a laptop instead of handwriting an essay
- Extra time to complete an exam or in-class project
- Orally record answers
- Using a scribe/reader

The student must stop by the Library or fill out the student proctoring request online to inform the Proctoring Center of available days and times. The instructor must also submit the online proctoring request form. These requests must be completed for each individual test. All proctored exams are by appointment only and must be requested at least two business days in advance.

Notetakers

While students are more than welcome to ask a fellow classmate to photocopy/scan their notes, Disability Services can arrange a notetaker for a student in need of such accommodations. The notetaker will make copies of their notes and give them to Disability Services to distribute to the student unless another option is decided upon. An alternative accommodation we often recommend is for the student to have access professor's handouts, PowerPoint slides and/or lecture notes.

Academic Support Services

The primary focus of the Office of Disability Service (ODS) is removing barriers to equal access to assist students in achieving their academic goals. However, ODS may recommend the following services to the student that will help bring them success during their time at Keystone. These services may be outside of the Office of Disability Services and are not typically included in a student's accommodation plan.

Tutoring and Writing Center

The Library offers free tutoring to all students currently enrolled at Keystone. Tutoring sessions are conducted by peer tutors who have excelled in that course or subject area, or by professional tutors who have at least a bachelor's degree but more commonly a master's degree in the subject. Some of the subjects in which tutoring is offered include but is not limited to:

- Biology
- Business
- Chemistry
- Math
- History
- Psychology



Students also use the Writing Center to help in their academic pursuits. Here students can meet with a consultant, to help develop their papers through narrowing the topic, focusing on a thesis, understanding citation styles, and much more. Appointments for the Tutoring and Writing Center can be made on the Miller Library's website.

Disability Services Freshman Coaching Program

Transitioning from high school to college can be difficult for freshmen, especially as they may need to develop new skills and strategies to maintain and achieve their academic goals. The Office of Disability Services offers a voluntary academic coaching program to assist students with disabilities in making a successful transition to the college environment. Students need to apply to this program and be accepted. By working with an academic coach, students will learn how to:

- Advocate for themselves
- Manage their time efficiently
- Become better organized
- Develop their study and test preparation skills

Registering for Academic Accommodations

A common misconception is that an IEP and/or 504 plan is automatically transferred over to college but that is not the case. In order to register with the Office of Disability Services and receive academic accommodations, students must complete the following steps:

Step 1: Intake Request Form

In order for the Office of Disability Services to better evaluate specific needs, students seeking accommodations are required to fill out an intake request form, which is provided on the Disability Services webpage. This form gives the student an opportunity to describe their disability and the accommodation they are looking to receive.

Optionally, students may also provide an additional letter that further elaborates their experiences related to their disability, their strengths, functional limitations, barriers they have encountered, and/or effective/ineffective accommodations they received in the past.

Step 2: Submit Documentation

Documentation of a student's disability provides the Office of Disability Services the information necessary to determine a disability and/or appropriate accommodations. This information should be current and provide evidence of the functional limitations of the disability and the impact it has on the student's life.

In order to ensure an objective assessment, the professional completing the evaluation must be an impartial individual who is not related to the student. Criteria for the source, scope, and content of the documentation can differ depending upon the disability type. Documentation that may be submitted for review may include:

- Assessments, reports, and/or letters from qualified health care providers, psychologists, or diagnosticians
- Information from a previous school such as 504 plan, I.E.P., or A.R.D. documents

Some suggested documentation elements include:

- A letter, typed on letterhead, dated and signed by a qualified professional
- A diagnostic statement with any related diagnostic methodology
- Examples such as diagnostic criteria, procedures, assessment instruments, and/or test scores
- Functional limitations or symptoms to help identify which accommodations are appropriate
- Severity and/or expected progression
- Current medication(s) and any related side-effects
- Any other relevant information and/or additional information regarding the condition
- Current and/or past accommodations
- Any recommended accommodations(s)



Step 3: Make an Appointment

Once the intake request form and documentation have been submitted, students seeking accommodations will be asked to schedule an intake appointment with Disability Services to discuss accommodations, procedures, and services. Disability Services requires five business days to review the accommodations file prior to the intake appointment.

Disability Services also offers general information sessions for both prospective and current students, as well as parents. These 20-30 minute sessions provide information regarding documentation requirements, academic support, and additional services, as well as answers to general questions.

Step 4: Receive Notification

Once the student is approved for accommodations, they will receive their accommodation letter via their Keystone email address. This letter will list the accommodations and services the student is authorized to receive and should be kept by the student for their records.

It is the responsibility of the student to provide and discuss their accommodations plan with each professor in order for them to receive the appropriate accommodations. Instructors are not required to provide accommodations to students if they have not been informed of their needs in a timely manner. Accommodations cannot be implemented retroactively.

Accommodations are only valid for the semester listed in the accommodation plan and must be renewed each semester by meeting with the Director of the Learning Center.

Housing Accommodations

General Housing Accommodations

The opportunity to participate in a learning/living environment is an important part of the Keystone experience. Requests for housing accommodations are carefully evaluated on a case by case basis to ensure equal access to campus for students with disabilities.

When reviewing housing requests, due to a disability, the following concerns will be given greatest priority:

- Equipment needs such as wheelchairs, lifts, and/or adaptive technology.
- Medical needs of a personal nature requiring privacy and/or an assistant.

The College does not provide personal care services for students with disabilities, but does recognize the need for some students to arrange for such service while on campus.

Note on Single Room Accommodation: In general, diagnoses such as ADD/ADHD or Specific Learning Disability do not lend themselves to single room accommodations. A single room cannot guarantee a quiet environment. Students who need to study in a quiet environment can have their study needs met in areas such as the library or other designated quiet study areas on campus. However, we will always review any formal requests made within the context of the situation.

Emotional Support Animals

Emotional Support Animals (ESA) are a category of animals that provide necessary emotional support to an individual with a mental or psychiatric disability that alleviates one or more identified symptoms of an individual's disability, but which are not considered Service Animals under the ADA. Keystone College maintains a "no pets" policy in the residence halls but recognizes the difference between pets and ESAs.

The documentation provided for an ESA must come from a licensed medical/mental health practitioner in the state of Pennsylvania, or in the student's home state. Documentation of the significant mental health impairment and the associated need for an ESA should come from a medical/mental health provider who knows and understands your difficulties and can explain how the presence of the animal may help to alleviate your symptomatology. Letters purchased from the internet for a set price rarely provide the information necessary to support an ESA request.

ESAs are not permitted on campus until the accommodation request has been made and approved. Students found with unauthorized animals in the residence hall will be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct.

Other Accommodations

The Office of Disability Services recognize that a student may need accommodations not listed in this booklet. In that case, we will work with the student to determine what documentation is required to put the accommodation in place. Examples of such accommodations include but not limited to:

- Parking Pass
- Service Animals
- Meal Plan Accommodations
- Temporary Medical Conditions

Location and Hours

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Location: Miller Library – Floor 3 - Offices 309 and 310

Office Hours: Monday–Friday 8 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.*

*Hours are subject to change and may be adjusted during peak times, holiday breaks, and the summer months.

Make an appointment easily and conveniently online at:

<https://keystone.libcal.com/appointments>

For more information, please visit:

www.keystone.edu/disabilityservices