

Cerritos College

STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES (SAS)

Guidance Memorandum Regarding Disability Accommodation

To: Cerritos College Faculty

From: Office of Student Accessibility Services (SAS)

CC:

Cerritos College is committed to fostering an academic and work environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and harassment (See BP 3410 and AP 3410 for additional information). In compliance with, but not limited to, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended in 2008 (ADAAA); and Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), this communication is to remind all faculty about our collective commitment and obligation to accommodate students with disabilities.

The Cerritos College Student Accessibility Services (SAS, formerly DSPS) program is predicated upon equity and the belief that any student can reach their full potential and achieve their educational and career goals. SAS faculty and staff assist students with disabilities so they have equal access to all educational programs and activities including classroom, clinical, laboratory and internship settings.

Who qualifies as a disabled individual under the law?

The ADA and Section 504 define an individual with a disability as a person who:

1. has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of that person,
2. has a record of such an impairment, or
3. is regarded as having such an impairment.

Major life activities include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, lifting, bending, learning, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and the operation of major bodily functions, including but not limited to, functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.

The determination of whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity shall be made without regard to the ameliorative effects of mitigating measures such as medication, equipment, auxiliary aids and services, or other such measures.

Obvious and Non-obvious Disabilities

The faculty and staff in SAS provide support services to students with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, psychological disabilities, developmental delay, brain injury, visual impairments, health problems, and hearing impairments. Many of our students have “invisible” disabilities including, but not limited to, cognitive, learning, neurological, and developmental diagnoses. Some examples of “invisible” disabilities include anxiety, depression, and asthma. Students with disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodations to ensure equal educational access in classroom, clinical, laboratory, and internship settings.

Accommodation Process

The determination and issuance of reasonable accommodations is a methodical and interactive process between the student and SAS Instructional Specialists. The Instructional Specialists in SAS have the necessary expertise to determine reasonable accommodations based on the student’s medical and other records. As such, if a student in your course requests an accommodation, including but not limited to, auxiliary aids or academic adjustments as a result of a disability, please refer them to SAS.

Faculty Procedure

Once the SAS Specialist determines the necessary accommodations, students will generate a letter through the SAS Student Portal. The procedure is as follows:

1. Faculty will receive an automated email with instructions to view the student’s accommodation letter.
2. Faculty are to log into the SAS Faculty Portal located on the [SAS website](#) or via the campus single sign-on PortalGuard.
3. Select “Accommodation Letters” on the SAS Faculty Portal landing page. You will use your Cerritos logon and password to view the accommodation letter.
4. Finally, you will be prompted to select the checkbox indicating you have received and reviewed the accommodation letter for your course and then select “submit” for final confirmation.

Faculty members are expected to immediately implement the accommodations as specified in the letter. Please access the comprehensive [Instructional Guide](#) for step-by-step instructions. You may also view instructional videos on [Student Accommodations](#) or how to [Upload a Test](#).

Examples of accommodations may include, but are not limited to, special classroom seating, note taking assistance, extended time for tests or assignments, removing physical barriers to provide access to buildings, providing auxiliary aids and services, use of audio recorders, assignment restructuring, modified schedule, providing modifying equipment, changing tests or training materials or policies, and taking exams in a quiet, distraction reduced environment. Reasonable accommodations also need to be provided in an internship, externship, and/or clinical setting.

Reasonable Accommodations

A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to an academic course, technical program, policy, procedure, service, activity, or facility that enables a student with a disability to have an equal opportunity to enjoy the benefits, opportunities, and privileges that are available to all students. Cerritos College has an obligation to provide auxiliary aids and services for persons with disabilities, unless to do so would fundamentally alter the nature of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, and accommodations offered, or would result in an undue financial or administrative burden to the program, division, or district.

Syllabus Statement

As a recommended best practice designed to promote an inclusive classroom environment, faculty should include a syllabus statement directing students to SAS for disability-related academic accommodations. Consider including the following statement on your course syllabus:

If you are already registered with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) please request your Letter of Accommodation in the Student Portal. If you are seeking registration, please apply for services via the [SAS online application](#). For more information, please visit the [SAS website](#), visit us in the LA/SAS Building or contact us by phone at (562) 806-2451 ext. 2335.

Privacy Laws and Confidentiality

SAS is committed to ensuring that all disability-related information including documentation, accommodation letters, correspondence, and consultations are considered confidential and need-to-know in accordance with The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations. Only authorized personnel within SAS can access a student's disability-related information. Information in student files will not be released except in compliance with federal and state law.

Faculty Rights and Responsibilities

Faculty Members Have a *Right* to:

- Maintain the fundamental nature of course content;
- Require students to demonstrate knowledge of essential course material;
- Ask a student who requests an accommodation to make their SAS Accommodation Letter available through the SAS Portal;

Faculty Members Have a *Responsibility* To:

- Follow the procedures to view a SAS-registered student accommodation letter by logging into the SAS Faculty Portal using your Cerritos logon and password.
- Implement the individualized academic accommodations provided in SAS accommodation letters for a SAS- registered student in your course.
- To comply with laws and regulations, it is important that approved accommodations be provided without interruption.
- Not inquire about the nature of a student's medical condition or disability.

Determining Essential Components and Fundamental Alterations

It is significant to note, that a reasonable accommodation does not require faculty to fundamentally change the requirements of the program or constitute an undue burden to the program, division, or District. A faculty member may not make the final determination that a recommended accommodation by SAS constitutes a fundamental alteration or undue burden without consulting with the Dean of Student Accessibility and Wellness Services. Please contact the Office of Student Accessibility at (562) 860-2451 x 2335 or sasappointment@cerritos.edu

Disability-based Discrimination Concerns

Any student, employee, or District affiliate who believes they have been subjected to discrimination and/or harassment on the basis of a physical or mental disability may file a complaint with the ADA/504 Coordinator in the Office of Diversity, Compliance, and Title IX at (562) 860-2451 x 3968 or DCTIX@cerritos.edu. Information regarding the District's policy and procedures relating to the ADA/504 Complaint process can be found in AP 3412. All Cerritos College community members are encouraged to utilize all reporting agencies available to them. As such, individuals can also file a complaint directly to the Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. OCR: Discrimination Complaint Form at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html>

By keeping equity at the center of our work, we are motivated to provide our students with the highest caliber service possible through a lens of inclusion and compassion. We embrace working alongside our faculty in ensuring that our students receive the accommodations to which they are entitled to ascertain an equitable experience at Cerritos College.

Sincerely,

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