



## Overview of Academic Accommodations

Center for Academic Success and Achievement  
Disability/Access Services

### Testing

#### Policy

Students whose documented disabilities interfere with their ability to sit for a quiz or exam under traditional course circumstances may elect to take their quizzes or exams at CASA. Test accommodations may include:

- 1.5 times the amount of time the rest of the class is given to complete exams and quizzes
- a reduced distraction environment separate from the class
- special equipment such as a PC or screen magnifier
- calculator
- readers and/or scribes
- alternate formats such as oral exams

Test accommodations are determined on an individual basis, taking into account need and the nature of the disability.

Academic Success administers quizzes and exams Monday through Thursday, 8:30am – 6pm and Friday, 8:30am – 4pm (students must complete their exams by 6pm Monday – Thursday and 4pm on Friday). Whenever possible, students should take their exam at CASA at the same time as the rest of their class.

#### Procedure: Scheduling and taking exams with accommodations

##### ***Step One: Obtaining permission and scheduling a quiz or exam***

Students who wish to sit for a quiz or exam with Disability/Access Services must obtain a Testing Authorization Form, fill out all requested information, and submit the form to their professor 3-5 classes prior to the test. Whenever possible, the student should notify Disability/Access Services that the student is planning on testing with Disability/Access Services to ensure adequate space in the testing rooms. Students must obtain and fill out a Testing Authorization Form for each and every quiz or exam they elect to take with Disability/Access Services.

Note: Whenever possible, students should take their exam with Disability/Access Services concurrent with the rest of their class. However, if it is not possible for the student to use their extended time accommodation, due to conflict in class schedule or Disability/Access Services' testing schedule, the student is responsible for working with the Faculty member to arrange an alternate time to take the quiz or exam. The arranged date and time should be as close to the original date and time of the quiz or exam as possible to ensure exam integrity.

##### ***Step Two: Faculty responsibilities***

After the student submits the Testing Authorization Form to their Faculty member, the Faculty member is responsible for filling out the required fields on the Testing Authorization Form. At this time, Faculty should indicate on the Testing Authorization Form any allowed tools and the preferred method of receiving the completed exam. Faculty is also responsible for delivering the quiz or exam to Disability/Access Services before the scheduled time of the quiz or exam.

- Exams can be e-mailed to both the Associate Dean of Academic Success and the Disability Services/Access Coordinator or delivered to their offices between 8:30am – 6pm.
- In order to ensure integrity of exams, exams cannot be sent via interdepartmental mail or left with the CASA front desk attendant.

If, during the proctoring of a quiz or exam in class, the Faculty member notices or is notified of an error on the quiz or exam, it is their responsibility to notify Disability/Access Services to ensure any student(s) taking the exam in CASA is aware of the error and correction.

### ***Step Three: Sitting for a quiz or exam with Disability/Access Services***

When students arrive to take an exam at with Disability/Access Services, they must check in with Disability/Access Services Staff. To ensure integrity of exam,

- all test materials, including calculators if accommodations allow, will be checked by Disability/Access Services staff prior to the start of the exam
- once a student begins an exam, they will not be permitted to leave the room without permission until the exam is completed
- cell phones, backpacks, hats, bags, etc. are not permitted in the testing room
- the exam room is monitored and may be recorded by CCTV
- students who are more than a half-hour late of the scheduled start time will not be administered the exam without approval of the instructor.

Failure to properly adhere to all aspects of this procedure may lead to unavailability of accommodations the day of the quiz or exam. Students will instead be required to sit for the exam in the classroom with the same time limits as the rest of the class (at Faculty discretion).

### ***Unannounced Quizzes***

Faculty reserves the right to give unannounced quizzes in class. Student with disabilities are still afforded their extended time and reduced distraction accommodations for unannounced quizzes. Faculty should work with the student and Disability/Access Services to accommodate the student's need.

In most cases, Faculty can either send a copy of the quiz to Disability/Access Services ahead of class, or send the student to CASA with a copy of the quiz in a sealed envelope to complete at the time the rest of the class is sitting for the quiz.

Students taking unannounced quizzes may be asked to complete a Permission to Test Form in CASA before they begin the quiz. Students must also honor all other procedures relating to testing accommodations while completing unannounced quizzes (see Procedure above).

## **Recording Class Lectures**

### **Policy**

Students with disabilities who have difficulties taking or reading notes have the right to record class lectures for their personal study only (88.44 of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 P.L. 94-112, amended P.L. 93-516). Lectures recorded for this purpose may not be shared with other people without the consent of the lecturer. Recorded lectures may not be used in any way against the faculty member, other lecturers, or students whose classroom comments are recorded as a part of the class activity.

Information obtained in the recorded lecture is protected under federal copyright laws and may not be published or quoted without the express consent of the lecturer and without giving proper identity and credit to the lecturer.

Students who do not receive accommodations should receive written permission from the professor or lecturer before recording. *All students* who wish to record class lectures must obtain permission from their

Professor/Lecturer and fill out a Permission to Record form (on file with Academic Success). If a faculty member observes a student recording a lecture, the faculty member has the right to request the student fill out and submit a Permission to Record Form.

***Procedure: Requesting permission to record***

- All students who wish to record class lectures or other events must obtain and fill out a Permission to Record Form. The student must present one Form to each Professor they intend on recording.
- Completed forms should be submitted to the Academic Success and Disability/Access Services office to be filed in students' records.

## **Assistance with Note-Taking**

### **Policy**

Note-taking assistance is provided as an accommodation for students whose documented disabilities interfere with their ability to take notes. Note-taking assistance is intended for a student's personal study use only and is not to be shared with other individuals. This service is provided as a necessary academic accommodation and is not considered a substitute for a student's full participation in each class. **Note: if notes are available on-line or from the instructor, note taking assistance may not be offered.**

***Procedure: Requesting a note taker and accessing notes***

- Students with a note-taker accommodation must fill out a Note Taker Request Form at CASA for each class they would like notes.
- The Accessibility Coordinator then contacts the instructor by letter and sends the instructor information about peer note-takers.
- The instructor can recommend a student for the position; the Accessibility Coordinator will contact the student based off the recommendation.
- If the instructor cannot recommend a student, they can make an announcement to the class about the need for a notetaker, and direct students to the Disability/Access Services Office in CASA to fill out an application.
- If a student does not volunteer for the note taker position, the Accessibility Coordinator will work with faculty and approach students with a proven track record of good note taking for consideration. Students may also be loaned a LiveScribe recording pen for the balance of the semester.

The identity of the student requesting a note taker accommodation will remain anonymous; the student note taker will not be told who they are sharing their notes with. The note-taker receives a \$200 stipend per semester, per class for providing notes to Registry students.

Student note takers must have legible handwriting (or typed notes) and should have a GPA of at least 2.5 to be considered. They must supply notes 24-48 hours after each class. Notes are delivered to a confidential file folder within CASA, unless alternative arrangements (for example, e-mailed notes when accommodations allow, uploaded to a secure server) were made at the point the note taker was requested. Students are responsible for requesting a note taker and checking their folder to pick up notes. Students with questions or issues about the quality of their notes should contact the Accessibility Coordinator at CASA.

## **American Sign Language Interpreters/CART Services**

### **Policy**

Interpreters are professionals who facilitate communication between hearing individuals and people who are deaf or hard of hearing. The role of the interpreter is similar to that of a foreign language translator: to bridge the communication gap between two parties.

Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) services are also available to students who prefer them to ASL Interpreters. All students qualified for ASL /CART services are entitled to receive support through Disability/Access Services.

ASL Interpreters and CART Providers are licensed, certified professionals. Assignments of 2 hours or fewer require one Interpreter/Provider; assignments of 2 hours or more require two (or more) interpreters. Students should work with Disability/Access Services to determine duration of Interpreter/Provider need to request appropriately.

Whenever possible, Disability/Access Services will secure one Interpreter or Team (2+) of Interpreters for semester-long assignments to ensure consistency.

Students requiring an ASL interpreter/CART Provider must inform Disability/Access Services as soon as possible, as it can take several weeks to secure interpreters. Students must also supply appropriate documentation related to the disability and the need for an Interpreter.

### ***Procedure: Utilizing Interpreters/Providers***

Deaf students or students who are hard of hearing should request interpreters or CART services from Disability/Access Services when they register for classes. In the unlikely event that a student shows up for the first day of class without an interpreter or CART provider, the student should be referred to Disability/Access Services for assistance.

Once Interpreter(s) or CART Providers are assigned, Interpreter(s)/CART Providers and students will sign an Interpreter/Provider and Consumer agreement, which will be kept with the student's file in Disability/Access Services. (see next page)

Student and Interpreter should work together to establish a notification system if either Student or Interpreter is unable to attend class on a particular date. In the event the Student is unable to attend class on a particular day, they must inform the Interpreter, and Disability/Access Services, as soon as possible. The Interpreter should still enter hours worked or bill the University if given less than two weeks' notice of the Student not attending a class.

In the event that a student drops or withdraws from a course, or if a course is cancelled, Interpreters will be paid for an additional two weeks; after the two week period, the contract would be terminated.

Faculty and Staff requesting an Interpreter/Provider for office hours, meetings, and other Framingham State-related events should contact Kim Dexter, Director of Equal Opportunity, Title IX, and ADA Compliance in Human Resources.

## **Textbooks in an Alternative Format**

### **Policy**

Textbooks in an alternative format are available for students whose disability interferes with their ability to work with a traditional textbook, novel, or other text. Alternative formats include digital textbooks, audiobooks, and converted texts (for example, online PDFs of essays, articles, or excerpts) in conjunction with screen readers.

In order to assure textbook availability, all relevant textbook information must be forwarded to Disability/Access Services as soon as it is available! Students are responsible for obtaining book/syllabi information from their professors as soon as they register for classes. Students are also encouraged to search for e-texts prior to submitting an alternate media request. Typically, six to eight weeks' notice is required to obtain alternate media materials. Late requests will result in a delay in providing materials.

The following formats are available:

- Digital textbooks available through the Framingham State bookstore
- Audio from Learning Ally ([learningally.org](http://learningally.org)), BookShare ([bookshare.org](http://bookshare.org)) or another organization
- E-text (PDF) from the publisher provided to the student from Disability/Access Services.
- Text scanned and edited by Disability/Access Services provided to the student.

Reasonable accommodations depend upon the nature and degree of severity of the documented disability. While the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires that priority consideration be given to the specific methods requested by the student, it does not imply that a particular accommodation must be granted if it is deemed not reasonable and other suitable techniques are available. While the above assistive technologies may be provided by Disability/Access Services, students are encouraged to explore alternate options. It is the student's responsibility to inform Disability/Access Services of any questions, concerns or problems that may arise regarding their alternate media materials.

Please note that all alternate media materials are intended for a student's individual use and should not be shared with others. Any duplication of materials is prohibited.

***Procedure: Requesting alternative textbooks***

All students who have an alternative textbook accommodation should meet with the Disability/Access Services Coordinator as soon as possible to ensure timely delivery of textbooks. Returning students should plan to meet with the Coordinator before the end of the previous semester; new students should schedule a meeting as early in the new semester as possible. At this meeting, a Request Form may be completed based on the students' eligibility and need.

As outlined above, there are several different formats of alternative textbooks. Depending on the nature of their disability, a student may not find all formats accessible or be entitled to all formats of an alternative text. The following is the general order in which the student and by extension Disability/Access Services should look for books in an alternative format:

1. Digital textbooks are available through the Framingham State bookstore and the FSU Bookstore website alongside traditional textbooks. Digital textbooks are compatible with most screen readers, or include screen-reading software.
  - a. If a digital text of a book is available, the Bookstore can assist the student in purchasing it.
2. Organizations like BookShare and Perkins School for the Blind may be able to supply audio or Braille versions of a text.
  - a. It is the student's responsibility to contact these organizations, if applicable to their academic accommodation provisions.
3. LearningAlly has audio files of thousands of textbooks and novels. Students can sign up for an individual membership and order books on their own, or can do so through Disability/Access Services.
  - a. Students can download the LearningAlly app (for Apple iOS and Android devices). Disability/Access Services will create a LearningAlly account for the student and "assign" them the relevant texts.
  - b. Students are required to purchase each book and provide proof of purchase (receipt, invoice, etc.) to Disability/Access Services prior to receiving materials; however students are **NOT** required to purchase their textbooks through the Framingham State bookstore.
4. If a textbook is not available in any of these formats, PDFs of texts can often be obtained directly from the publisher.
  - a. CASA will contact the publisher on the student's behalf.
  - b. Students are required to purchase each book and provide proof of purchase (receipt, invoice, etc.) to Disability/Access Services prior to receiving materials; however students are **NOT** required to purchase their textbooks through the Framingham State bookstore.
5. If a textbook is not available in e-text format from the publisher, the student may purchase a physical copy of the textbook or other material to have it scanned and converted to an accessible format (Adobe PDF or Microsoft Word).

- a. Students are required to purchase each book and provide proof of purchase (receipt, invoice, etc.) to Disability/Access Services prior to receiving materials; however students are **NOT** required to purchase their textbooks through the Framingham State bookstore.
- b. Students releasing their textbooks to Disability/Access Services understand that in most cases, the binding(s) of the book(s) will be broken in order to scan and convert the pages. Before any conversion is performed on the textbook(s), the student must sign a Reading Materials Conversion Form, which gives Disability/Access Services permission to break the binding of a textbook as necessary to convert it into an accessible format. If desired, the student will receive the textbook at the end of the conversion process in loose-leaf format.
- c. Once converted, the student will receive the accessible text on a flash drive or via e-mail attachment. It is the student's responsibility to check the accessibility of the text and contact Disability/Access Services if there are any issues of accessibility.

In order to assure textbook availability, all relevant textbook information must be forwarded to Disability/Access Services as soon as it is available! Students are responsible for obtaining book/syllabi information from their professors as soon as they register for classes. Students are also encouraged to search for e-texts prior to submitting an alternate media request. Typically, six to eight weeks notice is required to obtain alternate media materials. Late requests will result in a delay in providing materials.

## **Academic Adjustment/Course Waiver/Course Substitution**

### **Policy**

Specific learning disabilities may preclude learning in quantitative (General Education Core Requirement 2) or foreign language (General Education Domain 1C) areas even with reasonable accommodations. In these rare circumstances, the University may permit the substitution of a specific course or courses as an accommodation. Each request for course substitution must be considered carefully on an individual basis. Requests for academic adjustment as an accommodation are initiated through Academic Success.

**Please note: The presence of a language/math waiver or course substitution in high school does not guarantee a waiver or substitution at Framingham State.**

### ***Procedure: Securing a Math/Language Waiver***

Students wishing to obtain an Academic Adjustment must be registered with Disability/Access Services as a student with a documented disability. Students must submit appropriate, current documentation that details their disabilities (see "Accessing Academic Accommodations" and the appendices).

Students must also fill out an Academic Adjustment Petition form for each course they petition to have substituted. Forms can be found on the CASA website or in CASA.

After the Academic Adjustment Petition form and appropriate documentation has been submitted, the student must meet with the Associate Dean of Academic Success in order to discuss the reasons for requesting a waiver and options for course substitution.

Students may appeal to the Vice President of Academic Affairs if the request for a Course Substitution is denied.

The Academic Adjustment Petition should be prepared as early as possible in a student's undergraduate career after a plan of study has been selected and certainly no later than the semester prior to the last year so that there will be ample time to complete requirements, whether adjusted or not. Students should submit the completed petition to the Director of Academic Success and Disability/Access Services prior to the end of the third week of the semester. Consideration for an academic adjustment is done on a case-by-case basis. Recommendations will typically be communicated in writing to students and kept on file with the Registrar.

## Other Accommodations

### Occasional/extended absences due to medical condition:

Disability/Access Services does not have a role in determining course attendance policies. Because attendance may be integral to the learning process, these policies are set by faculty at the college, departmental, or individual level.

In some cases, participation is fundamental to course objectives; for example, students may be required to interact with others in the class, to demonstrate the ability to think and argue critically, or to participate in group projects. In other instances, Faculty may determine that students can master course content despite some or many absences. Similarly, Faculty also determine policies regarding make-up work and missed quizzes and exams. **Faculty are not required to lower or make substantial modifications of standards for accommodation purposes.**

In the event that a student's disability may impact his/her attendance in class, the Director of Academic Success and Disability/Access Services will note in the *Academic Accommodation letter* verifying a student's disability and documenting his/her needs for occasional absences from class. **This notification does not override course attendance policies or requirements.** Students are encouraged to meet with their faculty to discuss the implications that absences may have on course requirements. Students are also apprised that a considerable number of absences may require alternate assignments in order to fulfill class objectives. The decision to provide alternate assignments is at the discretion of the faculty member based on course requirements. Faculty are encouraged to include attendance/make-up policies in their syllabi in order for students to make informed choices regarding course selection, and to contact Disability/Access Services with questions.