



Accessibility Services Handbook

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Welcome & Confidentiality Statement

Welcome Tornado! Your adventure of faith, learning, and life-changing experiences is about to begin! The team in the Office of Accessibility Services will be here to support you and advocate for your needs as a student.

Confidentiality Statement

Concordia University Texas (CTX) and the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) acknowledge that student disability records contain confidential information and are to be treated accordingly. Therefore, documentation of a student's disability is maintained in a confidential file at the Zielke Academic Support Center, in accordance with the guidelines of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Information related to a disability may be disclosed only with the written permission of the student or as permitted by the University's student records policy and federal law.

At the same time, however, students' right to privacy must still be balanced against the university's ability to provide requested and recommended services and accommodations. Therefore, in the interest of serving the student's needs, the provision of services may involve OAS staff disclosing disability information provided by the student to appropriate university personnel on a need-to-know basis. Information may also be disclosed to relevant parties in a health or safety emergency if this knowledge is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. This is limited to a specific situation that presents an imminent danger to a student, other students, or members of the campus community.

Accommodation Letters

With confidentiality in mind, students registered to receive accessibility services with the OAS must grant written permission for their list of approved accommodations, in the form of a letter, to be shared with their professors each semester they are enrolled at CTX. [Students should email](#) their permission at least two (2) weeks before the start of the semester, but letters can be sent out at any point during the semester. If permission is not granted and the letter is not shared before the start of the semester, accommodations cannot be retroactively applied to coursework. Accommodation letters do not include any information related to disabilities.

Roles & Responsibilities

For the advancement of our learning community at CTX, students, faculty, and OAS Staff must understand and be held accountable for their roles and responsibilities in providing services and accommodations for students with disabilities.

Students are responsible for:

- Providing OAS Staff with [a registration form](#) and any supporting documentation necessary for verification of the disability.
- [Requesting the accommodation letter be sent out each semester in writing.](#)
- Requesting accommodations as far in advance as possible. Some accommodations cannot be effectively arranged if they are requested on short notice.
- Discussing the accommodations with faculty and staff members as needed.
- Notifying the OAS immediately if there are any concerns or difficulties in receiving accommodations.

OAS Staff is responsible for:

- Determining the reasonable accommodations and clarifying what documentation is needed to determine eligibility for services, if any.
- Maintaining student files confidentially.
- Writing and sending accommodation letters to faculty upon the student's written request.
- Releasing disability-related information only on a need-to-know basis to other University personnel.
- Assisting in resolving any problems a student or professor expresses about the accommodation process in the classroom.

Faculty/Staff is responsible for:

- Administering the accommodations required by the OAS.
- [Contacting the OAS](#) if there are concerns or questions about accommodations, how they will be provided, or additional support that may be needed.
- Knowing the essential elements of their course or program.

Reduced Course Loads & Substitutions

All students at CTX are required to complete the academic and program requirements necessary for graduation. In addition to courses required for a chosen major, all students must meet the specific requirements under the University's Common Experience. Students with disabilities are not excluded from these requirements; however, supports are in place to help them navigate the university experience.

Reduced Course Loads

Students whose disabilities prevent them from carrying a full-time academic load (at least 12 credit hours during the fall and spring semesters) may be classified as full-time students. This brings many benefits, including financial aid eligibility, opportunities to live in University housing, participation in extracurricular activities, and academic honors (e.g., Dean's List designation). Students wishing to take a reduced course load must have documentation from a licensed professional that supports this accommodation. If you have any questions about documentation or starting this process, please [email the OAS](#), and we would be happy to guide you through the steps.

Course Substitutions or Waivers

Students with disabilities are entitled to protection under federal laws and may submit written requests for course substitutions and/or waivers if their disability substantially limits their ability to complete a required course successfully.

Written requests must be submitted to the OAS as soon as possible to ensure ample time for a decision before the student may need to take a required course or the designated substitute.

Once the written request has been received, the University will convene a committee composed of a staff member from the Office of Accessibility Services, the ADA Compliance Officer, the Dean of the College in which the student is enrolled, the Course Professor, and any other professional deemed appropriate by the committee to review the request and determine the appropriate accommodation within program and licensure standards, if any. Course substitutions or waivers cannot fundamentally alter the program in which a student is enrolled.

Requesting and Utilizing Accessibility Services

While a student at CTX, some key accessibility services may be interacted with frequently. These services include our Testing Center and the partnership between the OAS and the University Bookstore to provide alternative formats to hard copies of textbooks.

Textbook Accommodations

Students may be granted an accommodation for an alternate format of the hard copy of their course text. Within the University's included textbook structure, students need to remember the following items about this accommodation:

- The OAS will reach out about two weeks before the semester begins to gain insight into your preferences about gaining digital or physical access to the course texts.
- Students should respond promptly to enable the OAS, in partnership with the University Bookstore, to provide access to the desired format without any delays or additional steps.
- Only one copy, physical or digital, of the course text will be offered under the included textbook structure. If a student's disability requires access to both physical and digital copies, his or her situation will be considered on an individual, case-by-case basis.
- If a student receives the incorrect text format, they should reach out to the OAS immediately so that alternative arrangements can be made.

Utilizing the Testing Center

Another frequently utilized service is the Testing Center, located on the upper level of Cedar Hall (Building C) in the Zielke Academic Support Center. This space provides students with disabilities a reduced distraction environment for their testing accommodations. Testing accommodations are best met in the Testing Center. Extra time can be difficult to grant in the traditional classroom setting, as other classes typically need to use the space immediately after, or professors may have another class or responsibilities after your class time. It is highly recommended that you utilize the Testing Center to its maximum potential to reach your academic goals.

Testing Center Scheduling

To get exams scheduled in the Testing Center, students should:

- [Email the OAS](#) at the beginning of each semester to request that their accommodation letter be sent to their professors.
- Complete the Student Testing Center Agreement to inform OAS staff of the courses for which they expect to use their testing accommodations. Students also review and agree to follow the Testing Center expectations, listed in the following section.
 - OAS staff will reach out to the necessary professor(s) for all planned testing dates in the course(s), scheduling the exams for the student all at once.
- Respond to the reminder email sent by the OAS to confirm the exam is still happening at the expected time.
- Show up on exam day ready to show their mastery of the content.
- If a make-up exam needs to occur, the student must show proof of communication with the professor.

Testing Center Expectations

When utilizing the Testing Center, students are expected to follow these standards of behavior and academic integrity:

- No personal items are allowed in the testing room.
 - This includes backpacks, books, notes, food, drinks, blankets, and/or hoodies. All belongings are to be left in the designated area. Students will only be allowed to take in the materials that the instructor has allowed for use on the given exam.
 - All electronic devices such as cell phones, smartwatches, tablets, and/or computers (unless approved for the exam) are to be turned off and left in the designated area.
- All students are responsible for knowing and using their agreed-upon accommodations.
- Arriving late (up to 30 minutes) will not extend the scheduled ending time for the exam.
 - If a student arrives more than 30 minutes late for a scheduled exam, the OAS may not administer the exam. It will then be the student's responsibility to go to the classroom to take the exam or speak to the instructor about rescheduling the exam.
- Before beginning the exam, take a moment to breathe, pray, and use the restroom.
- Advise the Accessibility Coordinator or other OAS staff of any personal health needs that may require frequent breaks. Prepare ahead for snacks or medications during these breaks.

Testing Center Expectations (continued)

- Only the extended time agreed upon will be allowed; no additional time will be given.
- Students are to remain in the testing room unless permitted to leave by OAS staff.
 - In case of emergency, the incomplete exam must be returned to the Accessibility Coordinator. If a student leaves the room without informing the Accessibility Coordinator or other OAS staff, the exam will be taken up and returned to the instructor.
- All students are held accountable under the Academic Integrity Policy.
 - If a student is observed engaging in an act of academic dishonesty, the test will be taken up, and the incident will be reported to the instructor.
 - Students are monitored through security cameras in the Testing Center.
- Students will return all exams and any additional materials to the Accessibility Coordinator upon completion. No exam materials are permitted to leave the Testing Center. The Accessibility Coordinator or OAS staff will return the exam to the instructor.

Special Situations

There will be times when a student at CTX requires temporary or other special considerations for their disability management.

Temporary Disabilities

Temporary disabilities are considered mental or physical impairments that last for a short period of time. These conditions, such as a concussion or surgical recovery, are typically resolved within weeks or months.

The process to register for temporary disability services is as follows:

- 1 Contact the [Office of Accessibility Services](#) to discuss needs and, if appropriate, submit documentation from a medical professional. It is helpful to be aware of any adverse side effects caused by medication and to receive recommendations for accommodations from a professional.
- 2 Once approved to receive accommodations, the student and the OAS Staff will develop an accommodation letter for the student to give to professors outlining the agreed-upon accommodations and their duration.

Students who need to use mobility aids, such as electric scooters, wheelchairs, canes, or crutches, are advised to [refer to the ADA-approved Campus Map](#) to navigate their way to and from classes. These mobility aids are considered personal devices and are not provided by the university.

Students requiring the use of accessible parking spaces must have a state-issued parking placard or plates. This placard will allow students to park in any marked handicap space on campus for the duration of their permit.

Have Questions About Your Situation?

We understand that disabilities and their manifestations vary from person to person. If you have any questions or concerns about how your disability will impact your educational journey or residential life at CTX, please [get in touch with the OAS Staff](#).