



<b>Category:</b> Education	<b>Responsible Owner:</b> Academic Board	<b>Effective Date:</b> November 14, 2024
<b>Policy/Form Number:</b> 2.21	<b>Approval Body:</b> Board of Governors	<b>Policy/Form Name:</b> Academic Accommodation Policy

**A. POLICY:**

**PURPOSE/COMMITMENT:**

Columbia College is committed to fostering an inclusive workplace where all students are treated with respect and dignity. Columbia College will act in a manner consistent with its obligations under the [BC Human Rights Code](#). Columbia College will provide a workplace that ensures equal opportunity free from discrimination based on race, colour, national or ethnic origin, religion, age, sex (includes pregnancy or child-birth), sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, genetic characteristics, temporary and permanent disability or conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted or a record suspended.

This policy governs the College’s Duty to Accommodate to the point of Undue Hardship on the College. The College provides Academic Accommodations to Students with Disabilities to eliminate, reduce, or mitigate the physical, attitudinal, technological, systemic, communication, or other Barrier(s) faced by that student. Academic Accommodation facilitates the student’s opportunity to meet the essential requirements of a course or program. It does not give the student an advantage or guarantee the student’s academic success, nor do Academic Accommodations alter the essential requirements of a course or program.

This policy describes and outlines the rights and responsibilities of Students with Disabilities who request Accommodation. The policy also articulates the shared responsibility of the College and students to collaborate and cooperate to facilitate fair and equitable access to the College’s courses and programs.

**SCOPE:**

This policy applies to Students with Disabilities, the College’s instructors, Student Services, and other employees who have shared responsibility to provide an Academic Accommodation to Students with Disabilities. This applies to those students and employees teaching and studying under programs regulated under the Degree Authorization Act. Students and employees with the high school program follow the accommodation policies regulated under the Ministry of Education. Further, the High School Division will develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for students with identified disabilities/diverse abilities and provide support as required under the Educational Standards Order

If the student will be absent for an extended period of time because of a Temporary or Permanent Disability, the College is not obligated to accommodate in that semester. Refer to Policy 2.7 Withdrawal Under Extenuating Circumstances in this situation.

The College's responsibility to provide Accommodation under this policy applies only to Students with Disabilities, this excludes Temporary Health Issues. For Temporary Health Issues, refer to the Academic Concession Policy.

**RESPONSIBILITY OF STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES:**

1. All students are required to meet Columbia College admission, prerequisite, and academic requirements.
2. It is the responsibility of students to request an Academic Accommodation.
3. It is the responsibility of students to provide Relevant Documentation and comply with instructions and procedures for developing and using Academic Accommodations.
4. Upon admission, students who require Accommodation are strongly advised to request accommodation before enrolling. Admission to the College does not guarantee that all requested Academic Accommodation for a disability will be granted.
5. Current students with a newly diagnosed Disability should request Accommodation as soon after the diagnosis as is reasonably practical.
6. Students with Disabilities may self-identify to Student Services without requesting Academic Accommodation.

**RESPONSIBILITY OF COLUMBIA COLLEGE:**

1. The College will create an accessible, inclusive, and equitable environment by preventing, removing, or mitigating Barriers that Students with Disabilities may experience in accordance with the BC Human Rights Code. This includes actively fostering a supportive atmosphere to reduce stigma and fear, making it easier for students with mental health disabilities or substance dependence to seek the assistance they require.
2. The College will provide reasonable Accommodations for Students with Disabilities, based on Relevant Documentation. In exceptional circumstances, the College may offer a student Provisional Accommodation.
3. The College is responsible for maintaining all records associated with Accommodation requests in the student's file and in accordance with the requirements of the [B.C. Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#); ensuring that this information is only shared with individuals who need it for Accommodation purposes.
4. The College will provide information to students about the BC Human Rights Code and about accessing programs and services.
5. The College will provide information to employees on policies and procedures relating to students with respect to adhering to the BC Human Right Code and in particular Disabilities.

**RESPONSIBILITY OF INSTRUCTOR:**

1. Instructors have the responsibility to accommodate Students with Disabilities who request Academic Accommodation, including Temporary Accommodations, in accordance with the BC Human Rights Code.
2. Instructors have a responsibility to ensure a safe and inclusive learning environment.
3. Instructors have a responsibility to respect the privacy of students by not requesting details about their Disability, questioning the necessity of their Accommodation, or asking for a diagnosis.
4. It is the responsibility of instructors to communicate with Student Services if they determine that any of the Accommodations could potentially compromise the essential learning outcomes of the course, impose an Undue Hardship on the College, or are deemed inappropriate for any other reason.

5. Instructors may not penalize a student for requesting Accommodations or for reporting unmet Accommodations, as such actions constitute retaliation and violate this policy.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY OF STUDENT SERVICES:**

1. Student Services is responsible for ensuring that students are well-informed and supported throughout the Accommodations process.
2. Student Services is responsible for evaluating Accommodation requests and developing Accommodation Plans that address students' individual needs.
3. Student Services will collaborate with faculty and other relevant parties to facilitate the implementation of Accommodations.
4. Student Services will ensure that any information provided by the student will be stored by Student Services upholding the [B.C. Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#),
5. Student Services will keep this information stored should a student request Academic Accommodation at a future time.
6. Student Services is tasked with upholding institutional policies and procedures related to Accommodations, including handling appeals and adjustments.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY OF VPA:**

1. VPA will facilitate appeals in a fair, reasonable, and timely manner.

#### **DEFINITIONS:**

**Academic Accommodation or Accommodation:** steps to adjust rules, policies, practices or situations that have a negative impact on an individual or groups, protected under the BC Human Rights Code. It consists of arrangements that allow a Student with a Disability or ongoing medical condition a fair opportunity to engage in academic activities and fulfill essential course and program requirements. This may include (but not limited to): priority registration, preferential seating, extended testing time, alternative exam format, sign language interpreting, permission to record, alternative format materials, or assistive technology. Academic Accommodation does not include a change in the method of course delivery.

**Accommodation Plan:** a document provided by Student Services that identifies the College's approved Accommodations, and the length of time the Accommodation is approved for. This Plan will not disclose the student's disability, and the student is not required to disclose their disability to their instructor.

**Barriers:** are circumstances that may limit or prevent Students with Disabilities from accessing or participating in the College's courses and programs in an equitable way include physical, attitudinal, technological, systemic, and communications-based Barriers.

**Duty to Accommodate:** academic institutions have a duty to provide accommodations to students when they are based on any of the grounds listed in the BC Human Rights Code.

**Disability:** in this document refers to both a permanent or temporary disability and dependence on alcohol or a drug.

**Permanent Disability:** a significant and persistent mobility, sensory, learning, or other physical or mental health impairment which has some degree of permanence, which causes or creates functional restrictions or limitations on the ability to perform activities, and which may create attitudinal and/or environmental Barriers that hamper a person's full and self-directed participation.

**Provisional Accommodation:** an accommodation that is put in place for a limited period of time pending submission of complete and relevant documentation.

**Relevant Documentation:** documentation from a qualified professional that includes sufficient information to understand the nature of the student's disability, its permanence, its functional impact, and its connection to an educational Barrier for which academic accommodation will provide access.

**Students with Disabilities:** in this document a person who has a diagnosable, significant, and persistent mobility, sensory, learning, or other physical or mental health impairment; experiences functional restrictions or limitations of their ability to perform the range life's activities; and may experience physical, attitudinal, technological, systemic, communication-based, or other Barriers that limit their access to or participation in the College's courses and programs.

**Temporary Disability:** A significant and persistent mobility, sensory, learning, or other physical or mental health impairment which is temporary, which causes or creates functional restrictions or limitations on the ability to perform the range of life's activities or participate in the College's courses and programs.

**Temporary Accommodation:** An accommodation that may be necessary because of a new temporary disability or impairment.

**Temporary Health Issues:** Temporary conditions or injuries which are short-term, not chronic, and have little or no outstanding or lasting effects.

**Undue Hardship:** The legal limit of the duty to accommodate. The following elements may be considered in determining if providing an accommodation would cause Undue Hardship: The cost of providing the Accommodation; the availability of outside sources of funding, if any; and health and safety requirements, if any. Inconvenience, potential negative reaction from faculty, staff or other students, or third-party preferences are not considered in the test of undue hardship.

## **B. PROCEDURES**

### **LINKS TO SUPPORTING FORMS, DOCUMENTS, WEBSITE:**

n/a

### **REFERENCE TO EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT CLAUSES:**

n/a

### **REFERENCE TO BYLAWS:**

n/a

### **RELACTED ACTS AND REGULATIONS:**

n/a

### **RELATED POLICIES:**

2.7 Withdrawal Under Extenuating Circumstances  
Academic Concessions Policy

**C. APPROVALS:**

**WHERE APPLICABLE:**

<b>Chair, Academic Board</b> Jeff Warren, VP Academic	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Chair, Marketing and Recruitment Committee:</b> N/A	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Chair, Finance Committee:</b> N/A	<b>Date:</b>

**APPROVAL FOR ALL POLICIES:**

<b>Responsible Owner:</b> Jeff Warren, VP Academic	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Principal or Designate:</b> Matt Wadsworth	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Chair, Board of Governors:</b> Ana Culibrk	<b>Date:</b>

<b>Proposed Review Date:</b> November 2027	<b>Dates(s) revised:</b>	<b>Replaces Policy/Form Number:</b>
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