



Office of Disability Services

Frequently Asked Questions for Students

What is the Disability Services Office?

The Disability Services Office coordinates accommodations and support services for students with disabilities to help ensure equal access to courses, programs, services, activities, and campus resources at NWCC. Students may request accommodations at any time; but, most students begin the process during the Spring and Summer months in preparation for the Fall semester.

Many incoming students previously received support through an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan in high school. While high school accommodations do not automatically transfer to college, elements of those plans may help support the interactive process and determination of reasonable accommodations at NWCC.

Disability Services reviews documentation provided by qualified professionals and works collaboratively with students to determine reasonable accommodations based on documented barriers, functional limitations, and the essential requirements of courses and programs.

What are accommodations?

Accommodations are designed to remove barriers and provide students with an equal opportunity to participate fully in the college experience. Accommodations do not guarantee success, lower academic standards, or require instructors to reduce course expectations. Instead, accommodations ensure that approved adjustments and supported and implemented appropriately within the learning environment.

Why are students approved for accommodations?

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 requires all public institutions of higher education that receive federal funding to provide reasonable accommodations and ensure equal access for qualified students with disabilities.

"The ADA is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in many areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and many public and private places that are open to the what is the general public. The purpose of the law is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else." [ADA National Network](#)

How do I request accommodations for the first time?

There are several steps to requesting accommodations for the first time. Students will first need to complete an online application with the Disability Services Office through our online system, [NWCC Accommodate](#) and upload [disability documentation](#). In most cases, students only need to complete the initial application process once during their enrollment, unless accommodation needs change.

After the application and documentation have been reviewed, a Disability Services Coordinator will contact the student to discuss reasonable accommodations, support services, and available campus resources.

Following the interactive process, accommodation letters will be issued to the student and shared with faculty for the applicable semester or mini-term. Students should communicate with their instructors regarding the implementation of approved accommodations and to self-advocate as needed throughout the semester.

Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and become effective only after the accommodation process has been completed and faculty notification has been sent.

What are my responsibilities as a student with approved accommodations?

At Northwest Mississippi Community College, students with disabilities are valued members of our learning community. To ensure equal access to programs and services, students receiving accommodations are expected to actively participate in the accommodation process.

As a student receiving accommodations, you are expected to:

- self-identify with the Disability Services Office and submit all required documentation;
- submit all forms and documentation in a timely manner to allow for appropriate review and processing;
- communicate promptly with your Disability Services Coordinator if there are any changes to your schedule or accommodation needs;
- communicate with instructors regarding the implementation of approved accommodations;
- follow classroom and campus conduct policies and maintain academic standards; and
- report any accommodation-related concerns or difficulties to Disability Services as soon as possible.

Accommodations are a collaborative process between the student, Disability Services, and instructors. Open communication, timely follow-up, and self-advocacy are important components of student success.

How can I communicate with my instructors about my accommodations?

Students are encouraged to communicate with instructors regarding approved accommodations as early as possible each semester. Speaking with instructors in person is recommended when possible; however, email communication is also appropriate if the student receives a confirmed response and communicates in a timely manner.

Disability-related information is confidential, and students are not required to disclose their diagnosis to instructors. Instructors are expected to maintain confidentiality and discuss accommodations privately and appropriately. If a student feels uncomfortable discussing accommodations with an instructor or believes disability-related information has been discussed publicly or inappropriately, the student should contact Disability Services as soon as possible for assistance.

How do I use the Disability Services Testing Center?

Students with an approved reduced-distraction testing accommodation are welcome to use the Disability Services Testing Center for all quizzes, tests, mid-term exams, and final exams.

All testing appointments must be scheduled through [NWCC Accommodate](#) at least two business days in advance. Students are responsible for initiating the scheduling process and communicating with their instructor regarding their intent to test through the Disability Testing Services Testing Center. Students are strongly encouraged to schedule exams as soon as testing dates become available.

Repeated late scheduling requests, cancellations, missed appointments, or same-day changes may result in testing being deferred to the instructor or rescheduled based on availability. Disability Services reserves the right to deny or reschedule appointments that do not meet required scheduling timelines or exceed testing center capacity limitations.

What do I do if I feel like I have been discriminated against due to my disability?

If you feel comfortable, you are encouraged to begin by speaking with your instructor or the individual involved regarding your concern.

If concerns continue after the conversation, or if you do not feel comfortable addressing the situation directly, please contact Disability Services as soon as possible.

What do I do if my accommodation request is denied?

Students have the right to receive an explanation regarding accommodation decisions and may appeal accommodation determinations through the College's established grievance procedures.

Students with questions regarding denied accommodation requests or the appeal process should contact the Director of Disability Services for additional information and guidance.

Why do some accommodations require me to sign a class recording agreement?

Some approved accommodations allow students to audio record lectures or use assistive technology that records classroom instruction. These accommodations are intended to help provide equal access to course content while maintaining academic integrity and student privacy.

Because classroom discussions may include the voices and participation of instructors and other students, recorded lectures and class materials may be protected under federal or state law and should only be used for personal educational purposes related to the approved accommodation.

Students approved for lecture recording accommodations may be required to sign a recording agreement acknowledging their responsibility to maintain confidentiality and use recordings appropriately.

How do I contact DSO?

Dr. Angelica Woods-Smith, Director of Student Counseling, Disability, & Testing Services:

Email: awoods-smith@northwestms.edu

Phone: (662)562-3204

Location: Tate Hall, Senatobia Campus

Missy Kelsay, Disability Services Coordinator

Email: mkelsay@northwestms.edu

Phone: (662)562-3309

Location: Tate Hall, Senatobia Campus

Terri Reeves, Disability Services Coordinator

Email: treeves@northwestms.edu

Phone: (662)280-6193

Location: Desoto Campus

Betsy Grubbs, Disability Services Coordinator

Email: bgrubbs@northwestms.edu

Phone: (662)238-7951

Location: Oxford Campus