

Disability and Modification FAQs—for teachers

What is a modification?

Any modification or adjustment to policies, practices, procedures, tasks, or the environment that allows a person with a disability equal access.

How do I ask a student about their disability?

You shouldn't ask students if they have a disability or what their diagnosis is, but you can make inquiries about the nature of their difficulties. Instructors should allow the student to take the lead on the issue of disclosing personal information. Instead of asking, "Do you have a disability?" or "What is your disability?", ask questions such as "Is there any more I can know about your situation to help you?" or "What can you tell me about your learning style?"

How will I know that a student has modifications?

Students will receive a modification letter to give to you. If a student tells you about a modification that is not on their letter (or they haven't given you a letter) please ask the student to request it through disability services.

What do I do when a student gives me a modification form?

Read the form and consider how those modifications will work in your class. Talk with student about implementing the modifications, and if there are concerns, contact disability services. Then keep a copy for your records.

If a student requests a modification that I am willing to provide, do I still need them to go to disability services and receive a modification letter?

If the student is asking for something you would do for any student, then you do not need to coordinate with disability services, though the student should be made aware of the services offered. If you would only do the modification because of a student's disability, then you should refer the student to the disability services office.

Why do students give me modification forms throughout the semester instead of just at the beginning?

Students are able to request disability-related modifications at any time and modifications begin when the student is determined eligible for services. However, faculty are not required to grant modifications retroactively

Is the information regarding a student's disability and their needs for academic modifications confidential?

Yes. Instructors who receive modification letters or other disability-related information from students should keep that information confidential from other class members and should refrain from revealing personally-identifiable information to other instructors.

How can I encourage students that may have disabilities to visit with disability services?

In addition to the syllabus statement, we recommend you make an announcement in class. You may also want to mention other support services on campus offered through the Student Development Center, such as tutoring, advising, counseling, and mentoring.

May I fail a student with a disability?

Yes. Receiving academic modifications doesn't guarantee that a student will pass a class. Once a student receives their granted modifications, they should be held to the same standards as any other student.

How should I handle exam modifications?

Students are required to notify you at least 24 hours before an exam if they would like to use exam modifications, so you can provide the test/quiz and test request form to TestingServices@ldsbc.edu. The student must also schedule their appointments with Testing Services at least 24 hours in advance.

What if I do not agree with a recommended modification?

Modifications should be reasonable and should not alter the essential functions of a course or program. Contact disability services to discuss your concerns.

What if I have concerns that a student is not using his/her modifications appropriately?

Please contact disability services to discuss your concerns.

What if I have a disability and need accommodations myself?

Please contact Human Resources.