

THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

Policies and Procedures:

A Working Document Describing Academic and Administrative Accommodation Policies for Students with Disabilities at the University of Rhode Island

**Prepared by Disability Services for Students
Office of Student Life, University of Rhode Island
330 Memorial Union, Kingston, RI 02881 401-874-2098
*Attention: Pamela Rohland, Director***

**Reviewed and approved by: the URI General Counsel, AAUP Executive Committee,
Faculty Senate Executive Committee, University Deans and Directors**

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MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

Disability Services for Students works with students and all units of URI to foster an inclusive, welcoming, and accessible environment. We work with you, our students, to support academic success and self-advocacy.

DSS VISION:

The URI community encourages contributions to the learning environment from members of all its cultures, including students with disabilities.

DSS MISSION:

Disability Services for Students recognizes disability as cultural diversity and fosters an inclusive environment for all in the university community through education, awareness, and accessibility. We accomplish this mission by:

- Recommending and coordinating reasonable accommodations in a variety of domains (exam, course, program, housing, transportation, technology)
- Encouraging student development through self-advocacy and personal decision making
- Supporting a commitment to academic success and student retention
- Providing training and information to faculty and administration that uphold inclusion of persons with disabilities
- Being active on the URI Equity Council, and various committees that support diversity and inclusion in strategic planning and curriculum development.

Persons with disabilities are assured reasonable access to programs, opportunities, and activities at the University of Rhode Island (URI) that is equal to the access afforded non-disabled persons. Inclusion of persons with disability in all aspects of life at the University will benefit the community and improve the quality of life within the University community. Therefore, we will work to provide reasonable accessibility according to the spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act 2008/Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, (see Appendix F for a summary of these laws and their impact). In addition we will work to increase disability awareness and contribute to a more inclusive climate for students with disabilities in all academic and programmatic areas of URI. Disability is an issue of cultural diversity/equal opportunity; therefore accessibility is a community concern. Achieving full participation and integration of people with disabilities requires the cooperative efforts and responsibility of all the University's departments, offices, and personnel. Colleagues from diverse areas of expertise collaborate to create an accessible environment. To this end, the University will continue to strive to achieve excellence in its services and to assure that its services are delivered equitably, reasonably, and efficiently to all of its members.

Note: Temporary conditions are not considered disabling for purposes of ADA, but Disability Services for Students may, as space and resources allow, be able to facilitate non-ADA environmental adjustments to facilitate the student's inclusion in the community.

DOCUMENTATION

The University of Rhode Island will provide reasonable accommodations for eligible students with disabilities. Students who are eligible for accommodations will present recent documents that demonstrate evidence of a currently disabling condition that interferes with one or more major life functions as defined by ADA. This evidence could include treatment, medication, history, etc. All documentation must be presented in advance of the requested accommodation.

The documentation should establish the formal diagnosis, nature and severity of the disability, and the functional limitations, caused by the condition, in the academic environment. The documentation may include *suggested* accommodations that would be helpful in the university environment, but these recommended accommodations shall not be binding on the institution; rather accommodations shall be determined by URI administration and the student on a case-by-case basis for each course or activity, as needed.

(Students with temporary conditions should follow the same procedures as for all other students; adjustments will be determined on a case by case basis.)

Students wanting to request disability-related services must identify themselves to Disability Services for Students (DSS), 330 Memorial Union, 401-874-2098, or by e-mail at dss@etal.uri.edu; additional information is available at www.uri.edu/disability. DSS must receive complete documentation of disability (see Documentation section), which substantiates the need for each accommodation requested. Eligibility for reasonable and appropriate accommodations will be determined on an individual basis by Disability Services for Students. DSS will, based on documentation and with the student's participation, coordinate and/or recommend necessary accommodations with the appropriate University department or University member.

In most cases, the date of evaluation described in the documentation must be within three years from the initial presentation to the University of Rhode Island. The student, in most cases, will not be asked for a re-evaluation during matriculation. However, in the case of some variable forms of disability (i.e. some psychiatric disabilities, some health conditions), a more recent date of evaluation or periodic re-evaluations may be required to verify the need for accommodation. THE FINAL DETERMINATION FOR CURRENT STATUS OF THE DOCUMENTATION RESTS WITH THE INSTITUTION.

The Office of Disability Services for Students assumes responsibility to maintain confidentiality of the evaluation and will not release any part of the documentation without the student's informed and written consent.

If accommodations are not clearly identified and/or justified in a diagnostic report or letter, the disability service provider will work with the student and/or provider to seek clarification and, if necessary, more information. The appropriate accommodations will be designated by the disability service provider, in collaboration with the requesting student, and will be based on the student's documentation.

Although the provider's *recommendations* for accommodations are often helpful, these recommendations are not binding. THE FINAL DETERMINATION FOR THE NATURE OF APPROPRIATE AND REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS RESTS WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND.

Seven Essential Elements of Quality Documentation

The University of Rhode Island best practices of documentation guidelines that are outlined by [AHEAD](#), the Association of Higher Education and Disability. In brief, the seven essential elements are:

1. **Licensed or credentialed evaluator**, with specific training or expertise related to the condition being diagnosed, and who is not related to the individual. (ex. hearing disability diagnosed by certified Audiologist (CCC-A) or by an Ear, Nose, & Throat M.D.)
2. **Clear diagnostic statement, including diagnostic sub-types where relevant**, that describes how the condition was diagnosed and provides information on the functional impact of the condition. A full clinical description will convey this information, as will diagnostic codes from the DSM (Diagnostic Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association) or the ICF (International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health of the World Health Organization.)
3. **Description of the diagnostic methodology used** including diagnostic criteria, evaluation methods, tests and dates of administration, clinical narrative, observations, and results. Diagnostic methods must be congruent with the particular disability and with current professional practices in the field.
4. **Description of the current functional limitations** of the disabling condition helps establish the possible disability and identify possible accommodations. A combination of the individual's self report, results of formal evaluation procedures, and clinical narrative are recommended. Quality documentation will demonstrate how a major life activity is *significantly, amply, or substantially limited* by providing evidence of frequency and pervasiveness of the conditions(s).
5. **Description of the progression or stability of the disability** over time and in context.
6. **Description of current and past accommodations, services or medications.**
7. **Recommendations** for accommodations, assistive devices, assistive services, compensatory strategies, and/or collateral support services.

For more detailed information please see the AHEAD website [“Elements”](#)

Note: the Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act of 2008 broadened the definition of disability in the number and types of conditions that could be considered. The new law, however, strengthened the importance of quality, detailed documentation in determining who is eligible for accommodations. Many conditions may now be considered a disability, but in order to qualify for accommodations, a major life function must be significantly, amply or substantially limited in the University Environment.

(for example: Two persons may be considered “disabled” with diagnoses of ADHD one at mild level, one at severe level. The person with a diagnosis and documentation that substantiate mild-moderate limitations to a major life function, may not be eligible for accommodations. However, the person whose documentation

demonstrates substantial, significant or severe impact to a major life function **WOULD** be eligible for accommodations.)

Developmental Disabilities (such as Autism Spectrum Disorders)

- a. *Qualifications of the Evaluator:* Evaluators should have experience or training in the assessment of Autism Spectrum or the specific developmental disability being identified. Neuropsychologists in particular will also be viewed as particularly qualified to substantiate the extent of the disability and its impact on academic performance. The name, title and professional credentials of the evaluator, including information about license or certification, as well as the area of specialization, employer and state/province in which the individual practices should be clearly stated. All reports should be on letterhead, typed, dated, signed and otherwise legible.
- b. *Substantiation of the Disability:* The required document will be a comprehensive diagnostic neuro-developmental evaluation report or a neuropsychological report. An IEP or 504 plan is NOT sufficient as documentation, but may be attached to the comprehensive diagnostic report. The complete diagnostic report should include a diagnostic interview, assessment of aptitude, academic achievement, and information processing, a specific diagnosis, test scores, and clinical summary with *suggested* accommodations. A complete report will indicate the nature and severity of the disability and will identify functional limitations in the college environment. (See Appendix B for a specific list of test instruments that are considered acceptable as documentation).
- c. *Recommendations for Accommodations:* The recommendations should indicate why specific accommodations are needed and how the effects of the specific disability are accommodated. The specific test results or clinical observations should support the recommendations.

Disabilities of Hearing

- a. *Qualifications of the Evaluator:* A licensed audiologist, certified by the American Speech Language Hearing Association, or a licensed medical doctor with certification in otology, or otolaryngology, will be viewed as qualified to substantiate disabilities of hearing. The name, title and professional credentials of the evaluator, including information about license or certification, as well as the area of specialization, employment and state/province in which the individual practices, should be clearly stated. All reports/letters should be on letterhead, typed, dated, signed and otherwise legible.
- b. *Substantiation of the Disability:* The requisite document will be an audiogram, which has been completed within the last year. The audiogram should include verification (for both ears) of hearing sensitivity by pure-tone frequency, speech thresholds, and discrimination. A report or letter describing the nature and severity of the disability, functional limitations in the college environment and justification for each of the requested accommodations should accompany the audiogram.

c. *Recommendations for Accommodations:* The report or letter should include specific recommendations for accommodations and an explanation as to why each accommodation is recommended.

Disabilities of Vision

a. *Qualifications of the Evaluator:* A licensed Doctor of Optometry or a licensed medical doctor with certification in Ophthalmology will be viewed as qualified to substantiate disabilities of vision. The name, title and professional credentials of the evaluator, including information about license or certification, as well as the area of specialization, employment and state/province in which the individual practices should be clearly stated. All reports/letters should be on letterhead, typed, dated, signed and otherwise legible.

b. *Substantiation of the Disability:* The required document will be a report or letter of diagnostic assessment from the Optometrist or Ophthalmologist describing visual acuity and field of vision, the nature and severity of the disability, functional limitations in the college environment and justification for each of the requested accommodations.

c. *Recommendations for Accommodations:* The report or letter should include specific recommendations for accommodations and an explanation as to why each accommodation is recommended.

Physical Disabilities

a. *Qualifications of the Evaluator:* A licensed physical therapist or a licensed medical doctor will be viewed as qualified to substantiate physical disabilities. The name, title and professional credentials of the evaluator, including information about license or certification, as well as the area of specialization, employment and state/province in which the individual practices should be clearly stated. All reports/letters should be on letterhead, typed, dated, signed and otherwise legible.

b. *Substantiation of the Disability:* The required document will be a report or letter of diagnostic assessment from the physical therapist or physician describing the nature and severity of the disability, functional limitations in the college environment and justification for each of the requested accommodations.

c. *Recommendations for Accommodations:* The report or letter should include specific recommendations for accommodations and an explanation as to why each accommodation is recommended.

Mental Health Disabilities

a. *Qualifications of the Evaluator:* A licensed psychologist, licensed social work professional, or licensed psychiatrist will be viewed as qualified to substantiate psychiatric disabilities. The name, title and professional credentials of the evaluator, including information about license or certification, as well as the area of specialization, employment and state/province in which the individual practices should be clearly stated. All reports/letters should be on letterhead, typed, dated, signed and otherwise legible.

b. *Substantiation of the Disability:* The required document will be a report or letter of diagnostic assessment from the Psychologist, Licensed Social Worker, Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner, or Psychiatrist describing the nature and severity of the disability, functional limitations in the college environment and justification for each of the requested accommodations.

c. *Recommendations for Accommodations:* The report or letter should include specific recommendations for accommodations and an explanation as to why each accommodation is recommended.

Disabilities resulting from Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

a. *Qualifications of the Evaluator:* Evaluators should have experience or training in the assessment of Traumatic Brain Injury whether resulting from head trauma, or other medical condition. Medical doctors specializing in this area are generally neurologists, but other specialists may also be appropriate. Neuro-psychologists will also be viewed as qualified to substantiate the extent of the disability and its impact on academic performance. The name, title and professional credentials of the evaluator, including information about license or certification, as well as the area of specialization, employer and state/province in which the individual practices should be clearly stated. All reports should be on letterhead, typed, dated, signed and otherwise legible.

b. *Substantiation of the Disability:* The required document will be a comprehensive diagnostic evaluation report or a neuropsychological report. An IEP or 504 plan is NOT sufficient as documentation, but may be attached to the comprehensive diagnostic report. The complete diagnostic report should include a diagnostic interview, assessment of aptitude, academic achievement, and information processing, a specific diagnosis, test scores, and clinical summary with *suggested* accommodations. A complete report will describe the nature and severity of the disability, functional limitations in the college environment and justification for each of the requested accommodations.

(See Appendix B for a specific list of test instruments that are considered acceptable as documentation).

c. *Recommendations for Accommodations:* The recommendations should indicate why specific accommodations are needed and how the effects of the specific disability are accommodated. The specific test results or clinical observations should support the recommendations.

Learning Disabilities

a. *Qualifications of the Evaluator:* Evaluators should have experience or training in the assessment of learning problems in adolescents and adults: clinical or educational psychologists, school psychologists, neuropsychologists, learning disabilities specialists, and some medical doctors will be viewed as qualified to substantiate learning disabilities. The name, title and professional credentials of the evaluator, including information about license or certification, as well as the area of specialization, employment and state/province in which the individual practices should be clearly stated. All reports should be on letterhead, typed, dated, signed and otherwise legible.

b. *Substantiation of the Disability:* The required document will be a comprehensive diagnostic evaluation report. An IEP or 504 plan is NOT sufficient as documentation, but may be attached to the comprehensive diagnostic report. The complete diagnostic report should include a diagnostic interview, assessment of aptitude, academic achievement, and information processing, a specific diagnosis, test scores, and clinical summary with *suggested* accommodations. Documentation will consist of a complete report describing the nature and severity of the disability, functional limitations in the college environment and justification for each of the requested accommodations.

(See Appendix B for a specific list of test instruments that are considered acceptable as documentation).

c. *Recommendations for Accommodations:* The recommendations should indicate why specific accommodations are needed and how the effects of the specific disability are accommodated. The specific test results or clinical observations should support the recommendations.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

a. *Qualifications of the Evaluator:* Professionals conducting assessments and rendering diagnoses of ADHD must have training in differential diagnosis and the full range of psychiatric disorders. Clinical psychologists, neuro-psychologists, psychiatrists or neurologists will be viewed as qualified to substantiate ADHD. The name, title and professional credentials of the evaluator, including information about license or certification, as well as the area of specialization, employment and state/province in which the individual practices should be clearly stated. All reports/letters should be on letterhead, typed, dated, signed and otherwise legible.

b. *Substantiation of the Disability:* Documentation of ADHD must be current (within 3 years) and must be comprehensive. An IEP or 504 plan is NOT sufficient as documentation. A complete diagnostic report should include evidence of early impairment and evidence of current impairment with a statement of presenting problem and diagnostic interview. The diagnostic report must rule out alternative diagnoses/explanations, must report relevant testing (such as neuropsychological testing), identify DSM-IV criteria, include a specific diagnosis and include an interpretive summary describing the nature and severity of the disability, functional limitations in the college environment and justification for each of the requested accommodations. The

preferred documentation of ADHD will be a complete neuropsychological report with psychometric data; this report may be required for certain types of accommodations requested.

c. *Recommendations for Accommodations:* The recommendations should indicate why specific accommodations are needed and how the effects of the specific disability are accommodated. Specific test results or clinical observations described in the letter should support the recommendations.

Disabilities of Health

a. *Qualifications of the Evaluator:* A medical practitioner, who is expert in the medical condition of the student, will be viewed as qualified to substantiate a health disability. (for example, a Gastroenterologist should provide documentation about Crohn's Disease or related conditions) The name, title and professional credentials of the evaluator, including information about license or certification, as well as the area of specialization, employment and state/province in which the individual practices should be clearly stated. All reports/letters should be on letterhead, typed, dated, signed and otherwise legible.

b. *Substantiation of the Disability:* The required document will be a report or letter of diagnostic assessment from the specialist physician describing the nature and severity of the disability, functional limitations in the college environment and justification for each of the requested accommodations.

c. *Recommendations for Accommodations:* The recommendations should indicate why specific accommodations are needed and how the effects of the specific disability are accommodated. The specific test results or clinical observations should support the recommendations.

Temporary Conditions

Temporary conditions are not considered a disability under the ADA (except when the conditions last beyond 6 months). However, Disability Services for Students may, in good faith, as space and resources allow, be able to facilitate non-ADA environmental adjustments to facilitate the student's inclusion in the community on a temporary basis.

Students with temporary needs, who request adjustments and assistance, follow the same procedures as students with disabilities who request accommodations. Please see sections on Documentation and Accommodation Policies.

Students are asked to make an initial appointment with a Disability Services Counselor to discuss their concerns or needs. Please call 401-874-2098, come to 330 Memorial Union, or e-mail dss@etal.uri.edu, to set up your initial appointment.

ACCOMMODATION POLICIES

A student with a documented disability may be eligible for accommodations, coordinated through the Office of Student Life, Disability Services for Students. The purpose of any accommodation is to reduce or eliminate disadvantages that may exist because of an individual's disability. When documentation clearly verifies a need for the requested accommodations, the University will make modifications on a case-by-case basis. The institution will not, however, waive specific courses or academic requirements that are considered essential and central to a particular program or degree. The most appropriate accommodations will be determined collaboratively between the student, DSS staff, and related faculty or administrators. **THE FINAL DETERMINATION FOR THE NATURE OF APPROPRIATE AND REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS RESTS WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND.**

The policies and procedures for the most common accommodations will be discussed in the following five categories:

PROGRAM ACCOMMODATIONS
COURSE ACCOMMODATIONS
TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS
HOUSING ACCOMMODATIONS
TRANSPORTATION ACCOMMODATIONS

For Course Accommodations and Testing Accommodations, appropriate accommodations are discussed between a DSS counselor and the student; letters are then prepared for the student to deliver to faculty. These letters recommend the appropriate accommodations, and briefly outline procedures. The student's documentation must justify the need for all requested accommodations. Both student and professor are asked discuss the accommodations and their appropriate implementation; then they are asked to sign and date the request letter. The student should return the original letter to Disability Services for Students, 330 Memorial Union, for the student's file.

Students and faculty are encouraged to maintain on-going conversations regarding the accommodations. If problems arise which cannot be resolved between the student and the faculty member, both the faculty and the student are encouraged to contact the staff of Disability Services for Students (DSS) for assistance.

So that students with disabilities will be empowered to approach faculty early in the semester, professors are encouraged to include the following statement on their syllabi: "If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss accommodations, please contact me as soon as possible."

Program Accommodations:

Program accommodations are modifications or aids to a program of study that are not specifically related to a particular course, or exam, such as course substitutions, priority registration,

extended degree, or reduced course load without loss of full time status. The final determination for the nature of appropriate and reasonable accommodations rests with the University Of Rhode Island.

Foreign Language Substitutions

Recognizing that the nature and severity of the documented specific learning disability may preclude learning a foreign language even with reasonable accommodations, the University has a process by which substitution can be made. It is noted that the Colleges at the University of Rhode Island requiring a foreign language are the College of Arts and Sciences, Bachelor of Arts; College of Business-all degrees; and Education (college of Human Science and Services reflecting the BA of Arts and Sciences). Therefore, petitions for substitutions are relevant only to those Colleges and programs.

The following procedures must be followed if a student with a documented learning disability is seeking a substitution for the Foreign Language requirement:

1. The petition process should begin as soon as there is strong objective evidence (e.g., previous documented difficulties) that the student will be unable to fulfill the requirement.
2. The student should contact Disability Services for Students with comprehensive diagnostic data before completing an accommodation request form. (See *Documentation Section - Learning Disability* for a description of required documentation). This documentation must substantiate the disability and its specific impact upon the student's ability in the area of foreign language learning. The DSS counselor will discuss the student's concerns and difficulties.
3. A complete case history is required to document the student's history of problems in language learning from high school to the date of the petition. This case history should include: a) a personal statement by the student indicating the reasons for the request including prior experiences with the subject matter; and b) the names of courses attempted and grades received attesting to the student's efforts and diligence in attempting to master the subject matter.

The supporting evidence will be reviewed by the Director of Disability Services for Students (Assistant Director, Office of Student Life). The Director will make a decision based on the documentation as to whether there is sufficient evidence substantiating that the student will be unable to fulfill the requirement due to his/her learning disability. If the Assistant Director finds sufficient evidence, a petition will be forwarded to the Academic Standing Committee of the College of Arts & Sciences for decision and recommendation. The College of A&S will forward their decision directly to the student with a copy to Disability Services.

Any student who receives approval for substitution is expected to fulfill the University's Foreign Language requirements according to the guidelines for selecting alternative courses. In

this case, two courses must be selected from one of the foreign culture clusters. Students who select this option should take the two courses in consecutive semesters, if possible. Courses in the culture clusters may appear as approved courses in other areas as well, but they may be used in only one General Education area. Students are urged to seek academic advisement and refer to the General Education requirements outlined in the Undergraduate Bulletin for the year in which they matriculated at the University. Students returning after an absence of more than eight years must follow the current General Education requirements.

Math Substitution

Only on rare occasions and with clearly substantiated need, will the University may make a substitution for the General Education Math requirement and ONLY IN PROGRAMS WHERE MATHEMATICS IS NOT CENTRAL TO PROGRAM, TRAINING AND/OR ACCREDITATION. The URI Admission requirement includes a minimum of two units of Algebra and one unit of Geometry. Therefore, because matriculated students have demonstrated math skill, it is very difficult to substantiate a need for a substitution of graduation math requirement.

The Dean and Academic Standing Committee of the involved College will make final determination on all requests for Math Substitutions. Math related specific learning disabilities are very rare and difficult to document; recommendations for substitution will be made only when the documentation clearly demonstrates math-specific disability severe enough to preclude learning in the quantitative area even with reasonable accommodations. Math specific learning disabilities are distinct from language-based learning disabilities; language-based learning disabilities may interfere with math learning, but do not warrant a substitution of the math requirement.

The following procedures must be followed if a student with a documented learning disability is seeking a modification for Math requirement:

1. The petition process should begin as soon as there is strong objective evidence (e.g., previous documented difficulties) that the student will be unable to fulfill the requirement.
2. The student should contact Disability Services for Students with comprehensive diagnostic data before completing an accommodation request form. (*See Documentation Section - Learning Disability* for a description of required documentation). This documentation must substantiate the disability and its specific impact upon the student's ability in the area of mathematics. The DSS Counselor will discuss the student's concerns and difficulties.
3. A complete case history is required to document the student's history of problems in mathematics learning from high school to the date of the petition. This case history should include: a) a personal statement by the student indicating the reasons for the request including prior experiences with the subject matter; and b) the names of courses

attempted and grades received attesting to the student's efforts and diligence in attempting to master the subject matter.

Upon the completion of these steps, the Assistant Director of Student Life responsible for Disability Services for Students will review the documentation and the supporting evidence. The Assistant Director will make a decision based on the documentation as to whether there is sufficient evidence that the student will be unable to fulfill the requirement due to his/her learning disability. If the Assistant Director finds sufficient evidence, the student will be advised to petition for a waiver/substitution. Petition forms are obtained from the student's college. The petition will be forwarded to the Academic Standing Committee of the appropriate college for decision and recommendation. The response will then be forwarded in a timely manner to the student.

Any student who receives an exemption is expected to fulfill the substitution requirements according to the guidelines established by the granting college.

Priority Registration

Students with proper documentation on file will be eligible for priority registration. Disability Services for Students works closely with the Office of Enrollment Services to provide this accommodation. Procedures governing priority registration are as follows:

- Students are required to meet with Disability Services for Students during the semester preceding that for which priority registration is sought (i.e. registration for Fall courses occurs the previous Spring).
- Valid documentation of disability must be on file in the DSS office.
- Students with 30 or less must meet with their academic advisor or other department representative regarding course selection, prior to registration.
- DSS personnel will identify eligible students with a special code on the e-campus system, so that Enrollment Services will be able to assign the correct enrollment appointment date.
- Eligible students will be able to access the computerized registration system starting on the designated date, generally one day before the first publicized registration time.

Accessible Classroom/Room Change

In certain cases, a course may be scheduled in a building, which is not fully accessible. When a student with a documented disability is in such a course, Disability Services for Students will work with the Office of the Registrar to relocate the course to an acceptable and accessible space. In this way, each program remains accessible, even when a building is not fully accessible. In addition, Disability Services for Students will prepare for the registrar a regularly updated list of students who require accessible classroom space. The registrar will be able to work in advance of each semester to ensure reasonable access to classroom space within each student's schedule

Extended Degree

Under certain circumstances, students with disabilities pursuing advanced degrees may be eligible for a time extension(s) related to the completion of the program. On a case-by-case basis, Disability Services for Students will make recommendations to the Graduate School, when the documentation clearly justifies a need for extended time. However, the final decision rests with the Graduate School and/or program of study, which will make determination about the essential nature of time to the validity of the degree.

Reduced Course Load with Full-Time Status:

Students may have documentation that warrants a reduced course load while maintaining full-time status. The DSS office will authorize such reduction by review of the documentation and discussion with the student. Students are encouraged to discuss full-time course load requirements with an academic advisor for their respective program. DSS will communicate the appropriate information to the Office of the Registrar and/or the Financial Aid Office as required.

Federal law requires that Pell Grant funds be prorated based on the number of credits taken, and that the student financial aid budget also be reduced accordingly. A financial aid counselor can determine how student aid under the Federal Stafford Loan Program will be affected by a reduction. To have a previous loan deferred, the student must take at least six credits. Students whose disabilities warrant the adjustment of carrying less than a full-time load per semester, however, can be determined eligible for student financial aid status. In such a case, these procedures must be followed:

1. Student must provide appropriate documentation regarding his/her disability to the Disability Services for Students Office.
2. If a student is registered at the beginning of a semester for less than a full-time credit load as an accommodation for a disability, this must be verified by the Disability Services for Students Office for this verification **NO LATER THAN** the last day of the University's ADD/DROP period.
3. If a student registers at the beginning of a semester for full-time course load but drops to a reduced course load by properly withdrawing from a course, he/she must discuss this situation with the Disability Services for Students staff **NO LATER THAN** the last day of the drop period for classes.
4. The Disability Services for Students staff will notify the Registrar **each semester** regarding students with disabilities carrying fewer than a full-time course load who are eligible for Financial Aid consideration under these procedures. Undergraduate students whose disabilities warrant the adjustment of carrying fewer than a full-time course load per semester can be determined eligible for Dean's List status. In such a case, the procedures for **Eligibility for Financial Aid** must be followed **each semester**.

Course Accommodations:

Course accommodations refer to accommodations that assist in course participation, but are specifically *not* program accommodations or exam accommodations: use of adaptive

equipment, permission to tape lectures, notetaker requests, use of sign language interpreters, use of Computer Assisted Real Time (CART) Reporters, use of C-Print captionists, use of assistive listening devices, extended time on assignments, paper copies of overhead transparencies, flexible attendance policies, room change, regular meetings with professor, or other accommodations to be arranged on a case-by-case basis. The final determination for the nature of appropriate and reasonable accommodations rests with the University Of Rhode Island.

Adaptive Equipment and Software

Adaptive equipment includes, but is not limited to, use of the following items:

- Specialized computer hardware and software
- Kurzweil Text Scanning Software
- Closed circuit T.V. (e.g., V-Tek)
- Dragon Naturally Speaking – dictation software
- JAWS Screen reading Systems

It is understood that Disability Services for Students has documentation of disability on file for all users of adaptive equipment and software, whether consumers are registered students or public citizens using the URI Library.

First time equipment users:

All first-time users of adaptive equipment must participate in training to ensure proper use of the software and hardware. These students should notify the Disability Services for Students Office no less than two weeks before the equipment is needed. The two-week time period is necessary in order to schedule training, allow the student time to become proficient in equipment use and to ensure staff availability for guidance and support during the training period. Adaptive equipment will only be available for use when the student has completed the necessary training and demonstrated competency in using the equipment.

Previous equipment users:

Students who have completed the equipment training and who have demonstrated responsibility and competency in its use, must notify Disability Services for Students Office one week in advance of the need for the equipment. The request must identify the specific equipment being requested and the anticipated time, frequency and place of use. This requirement does not include the use of adaptive computer equipment, which is housed in the University Library. After training on this equipment, students may access equipment through the procedures arranged with the University Library (i.e. users check out the room key at the circulation desk with their library ID) or through the procedures established by the Memorial Union Computer Center.

Public citizens' use of adaptive equipment/software in the URI library:

Consumers as public citizens are eligible to use the URI Library, which is considered a public library. Consumers who require use of the accessible computers in the library for on-line catalogue systems must demonstrate competence in the use of the adaptive software and

equipment, (including JAWS for Windows, Dragon Dictate, and Kurzweil's OMNI 1000, CCTV, etc.) or participate in training for first time users as outlined above.

Assistive Listening Devices

Disability Services for Students will provide Personal Assistive Listening Systems for classroom use to eligible students; most users will be hard of hearing or deaf students, however, students with auditory processing learning disabilities, and attention disabilities may also benefit from these systems. Students should complete the accommodation request at Disability Services for Students in the Office of Student Life. Students who wish to borrow Personal Assistive Listening Systems will be asked to read and sign a loan contract form. Equipment will be loaned to the student upon formal request and will be returned by the designated date at the end of the semester. Students may borrow equipment on a semester basis.

The student will be responsible for discussing the use of personal listening systems with the instructor; and as a support to student discussion, the procedure is briefly described, as follows, in the Accommodation letter presented to the professor:

The professor is asked to wear a small clip-on lapel microphone with a radio transmitter (belt or pocket) during each lecture. When questions or comments occur from the class that are not picked up by the lapel mic, the professor is asked to repeat the question or comment for the students' benefit. Small seminars may use a pass-around mic or table mic. This equipment allows the student full access to the lecture.

Personal Assistive Listening Systems are primarily for campus use. If a student needs to use portable equipment for an off-campus college event, special permission must be obtained from Disability Services for Students.

If the equipment is not returned as specified in the contract, the University may regard this as misconduct and violation of community standards. Such misconduct may be subject to disciplinary action and would be handled through Student Discipline in the Office of Student Life.

Permission to Tape Lectures

Disability Services for Students will provide hand held tape recorders for classroom use to eligible students. All tape recorders are primarily for campus use. The student is responsible for discussing the accommodation with the professor, however the accommodation letter also describes the accommodation:

The student should sit in a position that is convenient to the professor and appropriate for adequate recording. The professor may stop recording of confidential discourse and of comments not directly related to course material.

Students who wish to borrow tape recorders will be asked to sign for the use of this equipment. Equipment will be loaned to the student upon request and will be returned at the end of the semester. If the equipment is not returned as specified, the University may turn the matter over to Student Discipline, in the Office of Student Life.

Notetaker Requests

Students requesting notes assume the following responsibilities:

- ◆ Current documentation which substantiates the need for a notetaker must be on file in the Disability Services for Students office
- ◆ Students sign a note-needer agreement form, which outlines the requirement for regular notes retrieval and the need to notify DSS when notes are not needed; the form also provides instructions on how to retrieve notes using SAKAI.
- ◆ Professors are notified by the accommodation letter (delivered by the student) that a notetaker is needed. Instructions are suggested about making an appropriate confidential announcement to the class requesting students to provide their name if they wish to be considered for employment by Disability Services for Students.
- ◆ Students must attend all classes for which notes are needed. Peer notes are intended to be a supplement to the student's own notes, and are not to be a substitute for class attendance. Students who do not attend class will be counseled about the need for class attendance. Further non-compliance with the class attendance policy will risk loss of peer notes as an accommodation. However, in such cases, a tape recorder will be provided to ensure that the student has access to course material.
- ◆ Students must be faithful in retrieving notes on a regular basis, generally defined as at least weekly, or otherwise risk termination of the service. If after two (2) weeks, a student does not retrieve notes, DSS will counsel the student in order to encourage cooperation with the policy of weekly retrieval. A third week of failure to retrieve notes will result in termination of notetaker services for that class.
- ◆ DSS should be notified immediately if the class is dropped or if the nature of the class does not require significant notetaking.
- ◆ If notetaker services are terminated due to student non-compliance, alternative measures (tape-recording) will continue to ensure accessibility to the course material.

Notetaker Personnel: Students hired to take notes are subject to the following Notetaking policies and procedures:

- ◆ Notetakers must take clear, detailed, complete and legible notes for every class session (*Notetaking quality may be monitored with assistance of the instructor*). Each set of notes must show the course name, instructor and date as follows:
RSD 100, Jones, Monday, September 14, 1998
- ◆ Notetakers will be required to attend a one-hour notetaking workshop at times posted early in the semester.
- ◆ If the notetaker cannot or does not attend class, it remains the notetaker's responsibility to provide notes for missed sessions through another student in the class or by another means such as transcription of a tape-recording of the lecture. If these or other methods fail, the notetaker must contact Disability Services for Students as soon as possible (x 2098). Additionally, if notetaker intends to drop the course, notification of DSS should be immediate.

- ◆ Disability Services for Students uses an electronic classroom shell (SAKAI) to receive notes from notetakers and to transfer them to students who have requested notes.
- ◆ For students who do not have access to a scanner (available at the URI Library Computer labs), DSS will provide access to a copy machine for notetaker to make one set of notes. All copies will be made in the Memorial Union.
- ◆ Notes will be purchased according to the following rates:
 - For 3 and 4 credit courses: first course - approximately \$103/full semester; additional courses – approximately \$60 per semester.
 - Payment will be made during the last pay-period of the semester
- ◆ If it is necessary for DSS to nullify the Agreement at the outset of classes or before any submission of notes is made, DSS holds no financial obligation to the notetaker.
- ◆ If at any point within the semester the Agreement is canceled by **DSS**, notetaker will be reimbursed for the notes already provided and will be provided a minimum of two (2) hours **or** will receive the stipend for the half semester, at the discretion of DSS. If the **notetaker** withdraws services at any time during the semester, payment will be on a pro-rated basis for notes actually provided.
- ◆ Notetakers will be notified immediately of any change or addition to these policies and procedures.
- ◆ Proof of Community Service is available in lieu of payment if the notetaker is amenable to volunteering his/her time. A formal letter verifying 45 hours of community services will be provided.

Sign Language Interpreters

Deaf and hard of hearing students may qualify for the services of a sign language interpreter by virtue of:

- a) Enrollment in a University course or
- b) Participation in an academically related activity, or
- c) Participation in a college-related student event.

Hiring and Payment: Disability Services for Students is responsible for hiring and payment for interpreters in all University courses or course-related activities. When other college related activities are scheduled (student entertainment, administrative interviews/appointments, theater productions, invited lectures, etc.), the coordinating department or organization will be the responsible party for hiring and payment of interpreters.

Documentation: Students may be asked to demonstrate with documentation (including but not limited to, an audiogram including air/bone pure tone thresholds, speech thresholds, speech discrimination scores, and hearing aid testing, educational & behavioral evidence) that personal assistive listening systems, in combination with classroom notes, are not adequate to provide full or equal participation in the classroom environment or activity. The final

determination for the nature of appropriate and reasonable accommodations rests with the University Of Rhode Island.

For semester-long course requests, students will be asked to verify client status with the Office of Rehabilitative Service (Rhode Island) or the Vocational Rehabilitation Office of the home state for the purpose of obtaining reimbursement to the University of Rhode Island.

Advance requests: Requests for interpreter services must be made in advance by completing a request form with the appropriate office. A minimum of two weeks notice is required for a University course and 72-hour notice is required for all other activities. University personnel will make a good faith effort to fill interpreter requests while working within the constraints of available personnel.

Cancellation: Except in cases of sudden illness or accident, students **must give 36 hours advance** notice to Disability Services for Students (or to the responsible organization) when they are unable to attend a class or activity for which interpreter services have been requested. This will allow services (and payment for services) to be canceled in a timely manner.

At the student's second unexcused (non-medical) absence from class during a semester, the University will counsel the student in order to encourage cooperation with the above policy.

A third unexcused absence will result in termination of interpreter services for that class. However, if interpreter services are terminated due to student non-compliance, alternative measures (peer notetakers) will continue to ensure accessibility to the course material.

Interpreter Personnel: The University reserves the right to hire qualified sign language interpreters. A qualified interpreter will be able to produce **a valid Rhode Island license from the Department of Health, Professional Regulation.**

The University establishes interpreter fees according to guidelines set by Office of Rehabilitation Services and/or the Governor's Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. All interpreters will be paid a fee based on a minimum of two (2) hours pay.

The interpreter will be paid for any cancellation of less than twenty-four (24) hours notice. In the event of a class cancellation or class absence by a student the interpreter is asked to notify Disability Services for Students.

If an interpreter has been contracted to provide services for a semester-long course and the institution, the department or the student permanently cancels that contract, the interpreter will be provided a minimum of two (2) weeks of pay, starting at the point of notification.

In situations where classes are canceled without notice or a professor is not present for a class, interpreters will be paid for the class.

If an interpreter is unable to fulfill a contracted commitment for interpreting services, he or she must attempt to find a qualified substitute (see above for definition of qualified). The responsible office at the University of Rhode Island must be notified of the absence and informed of the identity of the substitute. (No payment will be made unless a substitute can be found.)

C-PRINT Real Time Captioning System - this real time captioning and note-taking system was developed by the National Technical Institute for the Deaf, Rochester Institute of Technology specifically as an efficient usable system to translate course lectures for college students who are deaf or hard of hearing. C-PRINT will be the translation method of choice, when the service is available in the Rhode Island region. If C-PRINT translation is not available, an alternative service will be provided to ensure equal opportunity in the classroom.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing students may qualify for the services of a C-PRINT captionist by virtue of:

- a) Enrollment in University course or
- b) Participation in an academically related activity, or
- c) Participation in a college-related student event.

Hiring and Payment: Disability Services for Students is responsible for hiring and payment for CART reporters in all University courses or course-related activities. When other college related activities are scheduled (student entertainment, administrative interviews/appointments, theater productions, invited lectures, etc.), the coordinating department or organization will be the responsible party for hiring and payment of C-PRINT captionists. Only licensed and/or professionally trained technicians will be hired, generally through a reputable agency.

Documentation: In order to substantiate the need for C-PRINT captioning services, students may be asked to demonstrate with documentation (including but not limited to, an audiogram including air/bone pure tone thresholds, speech thresholds, speech discrimination scores, hearing aid testing, educational & behavioral evidence) that personal assistive listening systems, in combination with classroom notes, are not adequate to provide full or equal participation in the classroom environment or activity. The final determination for the nature of appropriate and reasonable accommodations rests with the University Of Rhode Island.

For semester-long course requests, students will be asked to verify client status with the Office of Rehabilitative Services (Rhode Island) or the Vocational Rehabilitation Office of the home state for the purpose of obtaining reimbursement to the University of Rhode Island.

Advance requests: Requests for C-PRINT captioning services must be made in advance by completing a request form with the appropriate office. A minimum of two weeks notice is required for a University course and 72 hours notice is required for all other activities. University personnel will make a good faith effort to fill C-PRINT captioning requests while working within the constraints of available personnel.

Cancellation: Except in cases of sudden illness or accident, students **must give 36 hours advance** notice to Disability Services for Students (or to the responsible organization) when they are unable to attend a class or activity for which C-PRINT captioning services have been requested. This will allow services (and payment for services) to be canceled in a timely manner.

In case of student absence, the C-PRINT captionist will contact Disability Services for Students for directions. In most cases the captionist will be asked to leave; and the student will be responsible to retrieve course material (as for any other student missing class) from peers or the professor. However, URI will honor payment for services that are not cancelled 24 hours in advance.

At the student's second unexcused (non-medical) absence from class during a semester, the University will counsel the student in order to encourage cooperation with the above policy.

A third unexcused absence will result in termination of C-PRINT captioning services for that class. However, if C-PRINT captioning services are terminated due to student non-compliance, alternative measures (peer notetakers) will continue to ensure accessibility to the course material.

CART (Computer Assisted Real-Time) Reporters

Deaf and Hard of Hearing students may qualify for the services of a CART reporter by virtue of:

- a) Enrollment in University course or
- b) Participation in an academically related activity, or
- c) Participation in a college-related student event.

Hiring and Payment: Disability Services for Students is responsible for hiring and payment for CART reporters in all University courses or course-related activities. When other college related activities are scheduled (student entertainment, administrative interviews or appointments, theater productions, invited lectures, etc.), the coordinating department or organization will be the responsible party for hiring and payment of CART reporters. Only licensed and/or professionally trained technicians will be hired, generally through a reputable local agency.

Documentation: Students may be asked to demonstrate with documentation (including but not limited to, an audiogram including air/bone pure tone thresholds, speech thresholds, speech discrimination scores, and hearing aid testing, educational & behavioral evidence) that personal assistive listening systems, in combination with classroom notes, are not adequate to provide full or equal participation in the classroom environment or activity. In addition, students who request CART reporters may be asked to provide evidence (as above) that no other system of accommodation will be adequate to ensure equal opportunity. The final determination for the nature of appropriate and reasonable accommodations rests with the University Of Rhode Island.

For semester-long course requests, students will be asked to verify client status with the Office of Rehabilitative Services (Rhode Island) or the Vocational Rehabilitation Office of the home state for the purpose of obtaining reimbursement to the University of Rhode Island.

Advance requests: Requests for CART reporter services must be made in advance by completing a request form with the appropriate office. A minimum of two weeks notice is required for a University course and 72 hours notice is required for all other activities. University personnel will make a good faith effort to fill CART reporter requests while working within the constraints of available personnel.

Cancellation: Except in cases of sudden illness or accident, students **must give 36 hours advance** notice to Disability Services for Students (or to the responsible organization) when they are unable to attend a class or activity for which CART reporter services have been requested. This will allow services (and payment for services) to be canceled in a timely manner.

In case of student absence, the CART reporter will contact Disability Services for Students for directions. In most cases the technician will be asked to leave; and the student will be responsible to retrieve course material (as for any other student missing class) from peers or the professor. However, URI will honor payment for services that are not cancelled 24 hours in advance.

At the student's second unexcused (non-medical) absence from class during a semester, the University will counsel the student in order to encourage cooperation with the above policy.

A third unexcused absence will result in termination of CART reporter services for that class. However, if CART reporter services are terminated due to student non-compliance, alternative measures (peer notetakers) will continue to ensure accessibility to the course material.

Reader/Audio Taping Services

Reasonable accommodations in taped texts are available to eligible students whose documented disability requires auditory presentation of text material. These services are provided as a supplement to existing adaptive equipment such as the Omni 1000 Scanner Software, Kurzweil Personal Reader and/or external resources such as Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic. Students requesting books on tape will also be trained on this adaptive equipment so as to be as autonomous as possible during their studies (see section on Adaptive Equipment)

Disability Services for Students asks that students requesting taped texts first be registered with Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic(RFB&D) so that RFB&D's extensive library of taped texts can be utilized. Although there is a fee for becoming a member, students receive significant personal benefit from their membership. Since the membership also assists the University in providing academic accommodations, Disability Services for Students, in cases of demonstrated financial need, will pay for the student's registration fee. Any student for whom the cost of registration is a concern should contact Disability Services for Students to discuss the situation. DSS can also assist students with the RFB&D application process.

For perusing class handouts students are asked to use adaptive equipment in the Library or Memorial Union.

Extended Time on Assignments

In rare cases, a student's documentation may warrant extended time to complete course assignments. The professor and the student are asked to agree on a mutually acceptable arrangement. Generally a 50% extension of time is recommended, although for assignments that are largely independent and completed out of class, such an extension may be harder to determine. It is also understood that essential or central elements of the assignment will not be affected by the time extension. The student and professor may agree on a grade of Incomplete where appropriate.

Paper Copies of Overhead Transparencies

When, due to disability, a student will not have equal access to slides, transparencies, or other information projected on large-screen during the lecture, the professor is asked to provide paper copies of these materials at the beginning of each lecture.

Flexible Attendance

Attendance requirements are considered within the purview of the faculty member in determining his/her course policies. In rare cases, because of a student's disability, he/she may not be able to attend all classes, or he/she may need to leave class from time to time. University policy handles medical absences and in most cases students with disabilities are covered by these policies. Professors are asked to be reasonably flexible with students' needs when considering attendance related grades. The student remains responsible for all material presented during his/her absence, and the student must comply with all course requirements. The student must not disrupt the class activity if it becomes necessary to leave. Flexible Attendance does not imply "non-attendance"; and in cases where the student misses an excessive number of classes, the professor and the student may need to agree on an alternate arrangement, such as course drop,

course incomplete, etc. The final decision will rest with the professor and the student's Dean, with information provided by Disability Services for Students.

Regular Meetings with Professor

In rare cases, a student's documentation will demonstrate his/her need to regularly review progress with the professor. The student and professor are asked to arrange a mutually acceptable meeting schedule; weekly or biweekly meetings during professor's scheduled office hours are recommended. The student is responsible for attending all previously scheduled meetings and for notifying the professor in advance when a conflict arises.

Other Accommodations to be Arranged on a Case-by-Case basis

Disability Services for Students will make recommendations for accommodations on a case-by-case basis. No recommendation for accommodation will be made unless it can be fully substantiated by the student's documentation. No accommodation will be recommended that is known to interfere with the central function of the course or college curriculum.

Testing Accommodations:

Testing or exam accommodations refer to accommodations to enhance equal access to examinations, but are specifically *not* program accommodations or course accommodations. Assessment of student performance, including course examinations and other measures of student performance will be provided with appropriate accommodations to ensure that the assessment accurately measures the student's performance in the course, rather than reflecting the impact of the student's disability.

Students and faculty are encouraged to maintain on-going conversations regarding the accommodations. If problems arise which cannot be resolved between the student and the faculty member, both the faculty and the student are encouraged to contact the staff of Disability Services for Students (DSS) for assistance.

The requesting student must contact/re-contact the professor (see accommodation pg. 8) not less than one week before each exam to request test modifications. Due to the exclusive or technical nature of exams, the professor and the department are asked to arrange requests for modified exams. Please discuss with the student any of his/her specific needs in relation to elements of the curriculum. Please contact 874-2098 for further information. Specific modifications appropriate for students may be:

Extended time on Exams:

The generally accepted standard is a 50% extension, that is, an extension *to* time and one-half. On occasion the student's documentation may warrant longer extensions and it would be so noted. The professor and student are asked to arrange a mutually acceptable starting time and length of time for the exam.

Private Test Space

Private test space means testing in a quiet location to *reduce* distractions (it is rarely, if ever, possible to *eliminate* distractions totally). So that the student experiences the same or similar test conditions as other students during the exam, it is suggested that the student have reasonable contact with the professor or designated proctor. If support in proctoring an exam is needed, professors are encouraged to work with the department chair or dean for the temporary proctoring assistance.

Alternate exam format

(i.e. essay format instead of multiple choice; or vice versa). This accommodation is very rarely utilized and its need is difficult to substantiate at the college level. Student needs are generally met with other forms of accommodation. In the event that an alternate exam format is recommended by Disability Services for Students, the professor and student are asked to determine the most appropriate format taking into consideration the content of the course and the student's specific learning needs.

Exam presented in large print

A specific font size will be recommended from the student's documentation. Professors are asked to make a special printing of the exam in the requested font size (this assumes use of word-processing capability). It is also appropriate to use the print enlargers, and/or adaptive computer equipment available in the library. Please call 874-2098 for more information.

Avoid use of scantron forms

In certain cases, use of scantron forms is not appropriate because of the nature of the student's disability. The student should be allowed to respond directly on the test instrument, and that student's test should be scored separately from the larger group.

Exam presented on tape.

The professor and/or department are asked to record and present the exam. Recording equipment is available in the Office of Student Life (874-2098). If the exam is to be recorded by Disability Services for Students, the office must be provided a copy of the exam **NO LESS THAN 10 DAYS IN ADVANCE**, with any special instructions. The tape recording and exam will be returned by the exam date.

Use of visual cues during performance exams or quizzes.

(Examples: a. Basic formulas only on note cards, b. Use of music during performance.) In certain cases, a student's documentation may warrant use of visual cues, such as formulas, which are specifically NOT answers, during an exam. The professor retains the right to review any cues used by the student and to direct how these cues should be used. Cases of academic dishonesty will be treated as a disciplinary matter (please refer to the student handbook).

Well-lighted room for exam.

Word-processor access during essay exams/quizzes.

Procedure: The academic department is asked to arrange for a computer either within the department or through Information and Instruction Technology Services; professors/departments may either reserve a lab or check out laptop computers from this office.

Reader to present exam questions orally and verbally.

The professor retains the right to provide clarifications or interpretations of exam questions if necessary. The professor may directly assist the student or may appoint another qualified individual to do so.

Use of calculator during exams.

For certain documented disabilities, calculators may be considered an appropriate accommodation. However, for some basic math courses designed to teach and test knowledge of mathematical operations (i.e. percent, division, addition) a calculator would be in conflict with the central/essential function of the course and would not be appropriate.

Oral Testing.

In most cases, oral testing is not equivalent to the standard test methodology. Only in rare cases will this be requested, but rather the exam should be provided in electronic format so that text – voice software can be utilized, and so the student will respond either in print, with dictation software or by tape recording answers.

Housing Accommodations:

The University of Rhode Island provides accommodations to ensure accessibility of on-campus housing for undergraduate and graduate students. Disability Services for Students staff work in close conjunction with personnel from the Office of Housing and Residential Life to ensure that students in need of special housing accommodations will receive them.

Documentation of disability is maintained in the Office of Student Life, Disability Services for Students; recommendations for disability-related housing adjustments are made to the Assistant Director of Housing for Assignments.

As with all disability-related accommodations, special housing requests must be consistent with the documentation of disability and substantiation of need that is presented by the student.

The deadline to request housing accommodations for disability will be consistent with the deadline to submit housing deposits, generally six weeks in advance of the assignment date. Students should notify the office of Disability Services for Students about their need for accommodations **at the time of submitting the housing deposit** (401-874-2098; dss@etal.uri.edu). Disability Services will then work with the student to discuss the necessary forms of documentation required (see Documentation section). No recommendations will be made to Housing & Residential Life until full documentation of disability/substantiation of need has been established. Once housing has been assigned, requests for accommodation may be handled on a space-available basis, or during the standard room change procedures established by Housing and Residential Life.

Housing accommodations may include but are not limited to:

Wheelchair Accessible housing

This type of room is available for students whose physical disabilities warrant living space that is designed to allow for maximum personal mobility and for use of wheelchairs, crutches and other medical apparatus. These units include accessible bathrooms. Laundry assistance may also be available.

Single room housing or single occupancy double space

This type of housing is available for students who present valid, current documentation that clearly delineates and justifies the need for a single room as an accommodation. Situations in which a single room may be warranted include but are not limited to severe health and mental health considerations. Because of numerous sites on campus that provide reduced-distraction study space, single rooms are generally not considered as accommodation for Learning or Attention Disorders, except on a case-by-case basis.

Adaptive technology

All rooms are equipped with in-room strobe fire alarms. However, additional portable alert systems may be made available upon request, when substantiated by medical/audiological documentation of need.

Transportation and Parking Accommodations

The Ram Van

The Ram Van is an accessible vehicle for transportation of URI students who have a permanent disability. The Ram Van provides transportation only on the Kingston Campus, and it is assigned as any other accommodation. The Ram Van is generally available only **as a supplement** to the extensive accessible transportation provided to all URI students faculty and staff by the Kingston Connection (<http://www.uri.edu/parking/kingcon.html>). As space and schedule allows, the Ram Van service may be extended to faculty, staff, and students with temporary injuries. The Ram Van rider schedule will not duplicate routes or rides already provided by the Kingston Connection, except on a case-by-case basis for persons with permanent conditions.

Eligibility: A URI student with a condition that requires accessible transportation may be eligible to ride the Ram Van. All riders must provide documentation of current disability to the Office of Disability Services for Students. The diagnostic statement must be from a licensed physician or other appropriately qualified specialist. Disability Services for Students staff will discuss special circumstances and make referrals where necessary.

Temporary conditions: At certain times of the year and **ONLY** as space is available, we may be able to accommodate certain students with temporary injuries, depending on medical severity of the injury. However, for students with temporary needs, the Ram Van will not duplicate routes already covered by the RIPTA Kingston Connection.

Availability: The Ram Van is available weekdays from 7:45 a.m. - 5 p.m., while classes are in session. After 5 p.m., the Pedestrian Assistance program through Parking Services is available

(<http://www.uri.edu/parking/callmapa.html>).

Arranging Rides: Application procedure for the Ram Van is the same for both permanent and temporary riders:

1. Make an appointment with a DSS Advisor by calling 401-874-2098.
2. Verify that your documentation of disability is current and complete each semester; or provide the DSS Advisor with complete medical documentation outlined in the URI [Documentation Guidelines](#)
3. Complete the ride request form, which will determine time and place of pick up and drop off for each ride of the day.
4. If your application is approved, sign the Ram Van agreement form which describes specific Ram Van policies and procedures.
5. Allow at least **two business days** from the time of application to the first scheduled ride. Additions or changes to the ride schedule **require 24-hour advance notice**.
6. The Ram Van will provide rides to on-campus classroom locations and on-campus student employment (as space allows). The Ram Van is NOT available for personal appointments or activities.
7. All riders must be ready to enter the van at or before their designated pick up time and place. The Ram Van cannot accommodate late riders, as this affects other students' ability to get to class on time.
8. Riders agree to call in cancellations as far in advance as possible (preferably 24 hours). Riders who do not call to cancel are considered "no-shows."
9. Consistent in-attention to or misuse of Ram Van schedules and policies may result in forfeiture of the service.

(<http://www.uri.edu/parking/kingcon.html>).

Pickup Rides: The Ram Van picks up passengers at designated accessible parking spaces, accessible areas of University buildings and in front of residence halls. When arranging a ride, riders are asked to confirm the exact location for pick up. Riders are asked to be at the designated pickup five minutes before the designated time to allow for pickup of multiple passengers.

Safety: RIDERS AND DRIVERS MUST WEAR SAFETY BELTS AT ALL TIMES DURING TRANSPORTATION. All seats in the Ram Van are equipped with safety belts. Wheelchairs must be locked in place and passengers using the wheelchairs must use the designated safety belt.

Parking Policy

Permanent State Issued Accessible Parking Permits: Any person who possesses an official Accessible Parking Placard from Rhode Island Department of Motor Vehicles or any other state, may park in any designated Accessible Parking space (indicated by the universal wheelchair symbol) on campus. Persons with a permanent Rhode Island (or other state) State Placard, who need access to designated spaces inside the restricted Quad Area will be issued electronic gate Key Card Passes by Parking Services (874-9281). All patrons must park in LEGALLY marked

parking areas.

Temporary 30- day Parking Passes:

Disability Services for Students works with [URI Parking Services](#) to provide 30-day temporary medical parking permits for students who have

- A valid [URI Parking Permit](#), and
 - A documented temporary injury or medical condition that requires parking closer than resident or commuter parking lots.
1. Please have a doctor complete the medical documentation form including nature and severity of the medical condition, and including the length of time the permit is needed.
 2. If the recovery period will last longer than 30 days, please simultaneously apply for the [RI State Temporary Parking Permit](#) at the RI Department of Motor Vehicles. Temporary state placards are generally available within the 30 days and are granted up to one year.
 3. Come to Disability Services for Students, 330 Memorial Union Building, Kingston Campus, 401-874-2098, (by walk-in or by appointment).
 4. Please bring your completed medical documentation form, evidence of URI parking permit (permit number), vehicle registration information, and your URI student ID card.
 5. The DSS Receptionist will verify your information, provide the 30-day permit with accompanying guidelines, and will notify parking services to allow gated lot access if necessary.
 6. Any exceptions are handled on a case-by-case-basis, by-appointment-only with a DSS Advisor, and are dependent on medical documentation of need. Please call 401-874-2098 to arrange an appointment.
 7. Where necessary Parking Services will allow time-limited student access to gated faculty lots via the student ID card.

(<http://www.uri.edu/parking/kingcon.html>).

GENERAL POLICIES

Appeal Procedures

- I. A University member or a student may request a review of an accommodation decision.
- II. The request for review is to be submitted to the Assistant Director of Student Life, Disability Services for Students.
- III. The DSS staff will attempt to facilitate a mutually acceptable accommodation agreement.
- IV. If no acceptable agreement can be reached, the request for reconsideration will be forwarded to the Vice-Provost for Academic Affairs.
- V. The Vice Provost will review the information received, request additional information if necessary, and make a final decision. The Vice Provost will transmit a decision to the student, the University member and the Assistant Director of Student Life, Disability Services for Students.

Rights and Responsibilities

Every student with a documented disability has the following rights:

- 1) Reasonable access to courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities available through the University.
- 2) Reasonable and appropriate accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids determined on a case-by-case basis.
- 3) Appropriate confidentiality pertaining to his/her disability.

Every student with a disability has the responsibility to:

- 1) Meet the University's qualifications and essential technical, academic, and institutional standards.
- 2) Identify in advance the need for accommodation.
- 3) Provide complete and appropriate documentation as described in the DOCUMENTATION section, page 3.
- 4) Follow specific procedures for obtaining reasonable and appropriate accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids.

Emergencies and Crisis Management: Non-Traditional Circumstances

Disabilities Services for Students relies heavily on the concept of thorough and adequate documentation that is prepared by a qualified, appropriate, and licensed professional. In addition, the recent date of the documentation and the rationale to support the need for accommodations is key components in establishing adequacy of the documentation. However, in emergency and crisis management situations and in non-traditional circumstances the professional staff of Disability Services for Students will use their discretion in allowing flexibility in the standard protocol described in this working document. All such decisions made under these conditions are reviewed as soon as possible after the emergency situation subsides.

Employment of Consumer Students

The University of Rhode Island Office of Student Life, Disability Services for Students supports the initiatives of federal and state governments, and the private sector in providing employment opportunities to students with disabilities. We encourage our consumer base of students to seek employment within our own office and we will provide for them the reasonable accommodations that may be necessary to provide equal access. Additionally, we make serious efforts to inform and encourage students with disabilities in their pre-graduation job searches. This is done by promoting the professional assistance that is available through URI Office of Career Services and by developing our own listings of appropriate networking channels.

Inconsistencies with other Institutions of Higher Education

The Americans with Disabilities Act provides the premise upon which equal access to education is based. The document does not attempt to provide specific guidance for equal access. It is the policy of the University of Rhode Island, in discussion with students regarding accommodations, to take into consideration the accommodations provided by the student's previous institution. However, the professional staff in Disability Services for Students is under no obligation to provide the same or similar accommodations. Accommodations are made in accordance with official documentation, taking into consideration both reasonableness and

appropriateness. When accommodations previously provided by another institution conflict with those provided by the University of Rhode Island, the latter will take precedence.

Appendix A. References and Resources

The policies and procedures described in this document are based on the following resources:

U.S. Department of Justice, Americans with Disabilities Act Home Page. <http://www.ada.gov/>

ADA Compliance Guide, Thompson Publishing Group, Washington, DC, 1995

Changing Perceptions: An Information Guide for Faculty and Staff about Students with Disabilities, Disability Services for Students, University of Rhode Island, September 1997.

Emerging Scholars: Student with Disabilities. A Handbook for Faculty and Administrators in Rhode Island Public Institutions of Higher Education. 2004

Guidelines for Documentation of a Learning Disability in Adolescents and Adults, AHEAD Association on Higher Education And Disability, July 1997.

Guidelines for Documentation of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder in Adolescents and Adults, Consortium on ADHD Documentation, 1998.

Report on Procedures for Policy on Accommodation of Qualified Students with Disabilities, The University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate Constitution, By-Laws and University Manual, March 1993.

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-IV, Fourth Edition, American Psychiatric Association, Washington, DC, 1994.

University of Rhode Island Student Handbook, Office of Student Life, The University of Rhode Island.

Appendix B. This is a suggested list; please use most current version of test instruments

Tests for Assessing Learning Disabilities (LD) in Adolescents and Adults
From AHEAD Website- Guidelines for Documenting LD - 2009, Appendix B

When selecting a battery of tests, it is critical to consider the technical adequacy of instruments including their reliability, validity and standardization on an appropriate norm group. The professional judgment of an evaluator in choosing tests is important. The following list is provided as a helpful resource, but it is not intended to be definitive or exhaustive.

Aptitude

Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale - Revised (WAIS-IV)
Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery - Revised: Tests of Cognitive Ability
Kaufman Adolescent and Adult Intelligence Test
Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale

The Slosson Intelligence Test and the Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test are primarily screening devices, which are not comprehensive enough to provide the kinds of information necessary to make accommodation decisions.

Academic Achievement

Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults (SATA)
Stanford Test of Academic Skills
Woodcock-Johnson Psycho educational Battery - Revised: Tests of Achievement
Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT)

Or specific achievements tests such as:

Nelson-Denny Reading Skills Test
Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test
Test of Written Language - 4 (TOWL-4)
Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests - Revised

Specific achievement tests are useful instruments when administered under standardized conditions and interpreted within the context of other diagnostic information. The Wide Range Achievement Test - 3 (WRAT-3) is not a comprehensive measure of achievement and therefore is not useful if used as the sole measure of achievement.

Information Processing

Acceptable instruments include the Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude - 3 (DTLA-3), the Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude - Adult (DTLA-4), information from subtests on WAIS-IV, Woodcock-Johnson Psycho educational Battery - Revised: Tests of Cognitive Ability, as well as other relevant instruments.

Appendix C

Relevant Sections of the UNIVERSITY MANUAL

6.40.10 Accommodations for Qualified Students with Disabilities. All programs, activities and facilities of the University, when viewed in their entirety, must be accessible to qualified students. The Disability Services for Students in the Office of Student Life is responsible for determining students' eligibility for physical accommodations and, in cooperation with the appropriate academic deans, department chairpersons and faculty members, the selection of reasonable alternative means to satisfy the academic requirements of courses and programs of study. Student requests for accommodations are made via the director of Disabled Student Services to the University member responsible for the program or activity. The student, a parent, legal guardian or other representative shall make such requests. (For Policy on Accommodation of Qualified Students with Disabilities see Appendix G.)

6.40.11 Faculty shall make reasonable efforts to provide alternative means for qualified disabled students to fulfill course requirements. Academic Deans, in consultation with program directors and department chairs, shall modify academic requirements on a case-by-case basis to afford disabled students an equal opportunity. Academic requirements, which the University determines are essential, cannot be modified.

6.40.12 The student with a disability shall be responsible for self-identification to the Disability Services for Students in the Office of Student Life, providing appropriate documentation of disability, requesting accommodation in a timely manner, and follow-through regarding accommodations requested.

6.40.13 University members shall use reasonable efforts to ensure confidentiality regarding student information related to a disability in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

6.40.20 Appeal of Accommodation Decisions. A University member or student may request a review of an accommodation decision. The request for reconsideration is to be submitted to the director of Disabled Student Services, who shall forward the request to the appropriate Vice President or the Provost for final determination.

6.40.21 The Provost or appropriate Vice President shall review the information received, request additional information if necessary, and make a final decision. The Provost or Vice President shall transmit a decision to the student, the University member and the director of Disability Services for Students.

Appendix D

C22 University Manual 93-9-1 page G-155

UNIVERSITY POLICY ACCOMMODATION OF QUALIFIED STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

ORIGINATOR: Office of Student Life

DATE: October, 1992

POLICY # 92-2

POLICY ON ACCOMMODATION OF QUALIFIED STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES

PURPOSE:

To state policies and procedures concerning accessibility and accommodations for qualified students with disabilities as regulated under federal and state laws.

APPLICABLE TO:

A qualified disabled person is an individual with disabilities who meets the academic and technical standards requisite to admission of participation in any of the universities educational programs or activities. In Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, a disabled individual is identified as anyone with a physical or mental disability that substantially limits one or more of such major life activities as walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, working, or learning. A history of such a disability, whether it is so or not, is also recognized as a disability under both Section 504 and Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

RESPONSIBILITY:

Deans, Directors, Department Heads and Faculty Members (hereinafter University member).

POLICY:

This policy applies to all programs and activities operated or sponsored by or on behalf of the University of Rhode Island. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires that the University operate all programs and activities in a manner, which does not discriminate on the basis of the individual's disability. This includes, but is not limited to: recruitment, admission, academic programs, research, employment, occupational training, housing, health insurance counseling, financial aid, physical education athletics, recreation, and transportation.

Qualified students with disabilities must be afforded an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from all University programs and activities.

Qualified students with disabilities must be afforded the opportunity to participate in an integrated manner in any course, course of study, or other part of the programs or activities offered by the University.

Academic requirements will be modified, on a case-by-case basis, to afford qualified disabled students and applicants an equal opportunity. Course examinations or other procedures for evaluating a student's academic achievement will ensure to the extent reasonable possible that the results of the evaluation represent the student's ability without regard to his/her disability. Essential academic requirements will not be modified.

University programs and activities must accommodate qualified disabled students with reasonable access including, but not limited to, classrooms, sign language interpreters, and location of examinations and student programs.

Students with impaired sensory, manual or learning skills will be provided auxiliary aids, which may include taped texts, interpreters, readers, and classroom equipment adapted for persons with manual impairments as determined by the Office of Disabled Student Services.

Appendix E.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES ON GRIEVANCE AND ON DISCRIMINATION: FROM THE URI STUDENT HANDBOOK, Sections 21 and 19 respectively

SECTION 21 University Grievance Procedures

These procedures for students are designed to handle complaints and grievances concerning the actions, decisions, or inaction of faculty and/or staff members. A student should initiate an attempt to resolve the problem with the individual whose action or decision is being questioned. If satisfaction is not reached at this level, the student should proceed up the normal administrative hierarchy. For example, in academic matters such as a grade complaint, the student should first speak to his or her professor. The normal hierarchy then leads to the department chairperson, dean of the college and provost. Similarly, complaints regarding administrative actions and decisions should first be addressed to the individual whose action or decision is being questioned. The normal hierarchy then leads to the appropriate dean, director, or department head, and then to the vice president or provost of the division in question. In the event of a complaint alleging discrimination, the student may choose to have his or her complaint heard under the procedures listed in Section 19 (Discrimination and Equal Opportunity).

The following offices are available to advise and inform students concerning such complaints:

- Affirmative Action, Carlotti Administration Building, 874-2442, TT only: 874-2120
- Counseling Center, Roosevelt Hall, 874-2288
- Student Life, Memorial Union, 874-2101, Voice/TT 874-2098
- In addition to consulting with these individuals, a student may ask the Ombud (874-2863) to review a complaint or grievance for the purpose of attempting an informal resolution. In most cases the Ombud or student assistant to the Ombud will not become actively involved until the student has personally exhausted the normal grievance procedures.

In situations where a formal appeal mechanism already exists, the University Grievance Procedure may be used only after the specific appeal procedures are exhausted.

SECTION 19 Policy on Discrimination and Equal Opportunity

The University of Rhode Island prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, age, color, creed, national origin, disability or sexual orientation, and discrimination against disabled and Vietnam era veterans in the recruitment, admission, access to, or treatment of students, the recruitment, firing, or treatment of faculty and staff, and the operation of its activities and programs, as specified by state and federal laws including Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, Title IX of 1972 Educational Amendments to the Higher Education Act, Executive Order 11246, as amended, Sections 503/504 of the Rehabilitation Act

of 1973, Section 402 of the Vietnam Era Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974 and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The Affirmative Action Office (874-2442) handles all complaints on discrimination.

The person designated to coordinate the University's efforts to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act as they pertain to students and staff is the Assistant Director of Student Life for Disability Services. The office telephone number is 874-2098 Voice/TT. If you believe you have been discriminated against as an employee or student on the grounds of race, sex, religion, age, color, creed, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation, you may lodge a complaint by following the steps specified below:

19.1 As an employee, discuss the complaint with your immediate supervisor. As a student, discuss the complaint with the supervisor in charge of the department or office where the alleged discrimination occurred. As a student with a complaint against another student, discuss the complaint with the Office of Student Life.

19.2 If you are not satisfied with the results of this discussion, consult with the Affirmative Action Officer or her designee, who shall make a preliminary investigation and attempt to resolve the complaint through informal means. The Affirmative Action Officer may also refer the complainant to the appropriate body for further action.

19.3 Prospective employees and students who believe they have been discriminated against may register their complaints directly with the Affirmative Action Officer, who will make a thorough review of the facts in the case and report these along with recommendations, to the appropriate officer or supervisor. Where necessary, the Affirmative Action Officer will bring her report to the attention of the President.

Appendix F

The Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act of 2008 broadened the definition of disability in the number and types of conditions that could be considered. The new law, however, strengthened the importance of quality, detailed documentation in determining who is eligible for accommodations. Many conditions may now be considered a disability, but in order to qualify for accommodations, a major life function must be significantly, amply or substantially limited in the University Environment.

(for example: a person may be considered “disabled” with a diagnosis of ADHD; but the same person with mild-moderate limitations to a major life function may not be eligible for accommodations. However, the person whose documentation demonstrates substantial, significant or severe impact to a major life function, WOULD be eligible for accommodations.)

The Law, Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990

(derived primarily from the “ADA Compliance Guide”, Thompson Publishing Group, Washington, DC, 1995.)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) extends federal civil rights protection in several areas to people who are considered ‘disabled’. To be considered a ‘disabled’ person and one who is eligible for accommodations under the ADA, a person must have a current condition that impairs a major life activity, i.e., caring for oneself, executing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, sitting, standing, lifting, reaching, thinking, concentrating, reading, interacting with others, learning or working. For the purpose of anti-discrimination only, the ADA also addresses persons with a history of disability and persons regarded as having a disability. Built upon a body of existing legislation, particularly the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Act states its purpose as providing “a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities”.

The ADA is not an affirmative action statute. Instead, it seeks to dispel stereotypes and assumptions about disabilities, and to assure equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living and economic self-sufficiency for disabled people. To achieve these objectives, the law prohibits covered entities (the University) from excluding people from jobs, services, activities or benefits based on disability. The law provides penalties for discrimination.

A disabled person must be qualified for the job, program or activity to which he or she seeks access. To be qualified, a person with a disability must be able to perform the *essential* functions of a job or meet the *essential* eligibility requirements of the program or benefit, with or without an accommodation to his/her condition. The Act allows ‘essential functions’ to be defined on a case-by-case basis.

The University’s obligation to students under the ADA generally derives from Titles II and III of the Act. Title II of the ADA protects individuals from discrimination on the basis of disability by public entities, namely state and local governments. Basically, everything a state or local governmental entity does, from providing social services and sponsoring cultural and recreational events to building facilities and offering job opportunities, must be accessible to disabled individuals. Title III extends the same mandate to privately operated public accommodations. Each of these Titles to the Act may require making reasonable accommodations for a disabled person by providing an auxiliary aid, such as an interpreter, or rearranging a meeting to an accessible room.

Titles II and III of the Act focus on programmatic, rather than structural accessibility. For example, if an English Department of a university were to hold all of its mandatory freshman writing classes on an inaccessible second floor of the building, it would violate the ADA. However, if it were to reschedule one or two sections of that course to the first floor, the program, when viewed in its entirety, would be accessible and comply with the ADA. Likewise, when you, as a professor at the University of Rhode Island, assist in the arrangement of a notetaker for a student, you are making your course and an education at the University accessible to a student with a disability.