



COLUMBIA COLLEGE

HANDBOOK FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

2011

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COLUMBIA COLLEGE

HANDBOOK FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Welcome to Columbia College!

We are glad you have chosen Columbia College as your educational institution. It is our commitment to assist you in any way possible to be successful.

This Handbook provides you with the steps you need to take to get approval for reasonable accommodations and presents other information that might be of use to you when planning to attend Columbia College. There is also a section for students who have a non-permanent condition (transitory illness) and need special accommodation on a short-term basis.

Services Provided by Columbia College for Students with Disabilities

- Planning for reasonable accommodations
- Advising regarding disability-related academic matters
- Assistance in accessing government funds for disability-related services or equipment
- Assistance with securing exam writing accommodations
- Assistance with securing Note-taking support
- Assistance with securing Tutoring
- Assistance with securing Academic Strategist support
- Assistance with securing Assistive technology training and support
- Assistance in converting print materials to alternate formats
- Classroom accommodations

DISABILITY SERVICES STAFF

Lucy Dooley, Manager Student Services

Doug Leong, Unit Supervisor Career Services – Disability Services Lead

Disability Services Advisors

WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE FOR ADMISSION?

Students with disabilities are expected to:

- 1.1 Follow the admission process as outlined in the calendar.

If you require an accommodation in order to take the Columbia College Assessment, you should identify this need to the Admission Advisor. The Admission Advisor will discuss the request with the Disability Services Advisor and contact the applicant with information regarding the necessary arrangements.

- 1.2 Review the Accommodation Policy for Students with Disabilities and the Handbook for Students with Disabilities.

HOW DO I ARRANGE FOR ACCOMMODATIONS?

- 2.1 Once the College has informed you that you have met entry requirements, your Admission Advisor will arrange for you to meet with a Disability Services Advisor.

- 2.2 For the initial meeting with the Disability Services Advisor bring documentation in support of your request for accommodation. Documentation is treated as medical information. It is confidential and kept on file by the Disability Services Advisor. It will not be shared with your facilitators or anyone else in the College without your permission.

General Documentation guidelines: (Please note specific requirements located in the Accommodation Policy for Students with Disabilities)

- 2.3 You will be asked to sign information release forms in accordance with privacy and confidentiality requirements.

- 4.1 Discuss any accommodations or supports needed with the Disability Services Advisor. The Disability Service Advisor will fill out a form that outlines your request for accommodations. This form will be submitted to the Unit Supervisor of Career Services – Disability Services Lead and to the Manager of Student Services for approval.

- 4.2 For funded services such as assistive technology, academic strategist support, alternate format materials, note taker, exam reader/scribe, and interpreter, you will be given information regarding the approximate costs associated with these supports and information on the funding to cover their cost.

- 4.3 Your request for accommodation will be reviewed, and you will be provided with a written response that will contain the approved accommodations.

- 4.4 The Disability Services Advisor will work with you to develop a written accommodation plan based on the approved accommodations.

- 4.5 The Disability Services Advisor will prepare a letter regarding the required accommodations that have been granted and this will be forwarded to the Program Chair/designate for discussion with your facilitators. You will receive a copy of this letter.
- 4.6 While your facilitators will know you are coming and know which accommodations are being provided, you may wish to prepare a Letter of Introduction to give to the facilitator or may wish to arrange a meeting to speak with your facilitators. Meeting with facilitators should be arranged through the Program Chair/designate.
- 4.7 Be aware of various timelines as follows:
- Applying for grants (Canada Study Grant can take up to 8 weeks for approval). If not approved, you can apply for DRES funding, which can take another two months or more for approval.
 - Alternate format of textbooks require adequate time to organize and prepare. Some textbooks can take up to one month to secure or prepare in an alternate format.
 - Exam accommodations. Students should speak to their facilitators and make arrangements for their exams at least two weeks prior to the exam date. See section on how to make arrangements for exam accommodations.
- 4.13 Meet with the Program Chair/designate at least a week prior to class start to review the accommodation plan.

Ongoing Arrangements

- 4.14 Meet with the Program Chair/designate and Disability Services Advisor at the beginning of each semester (pre-career programs) and at least once or twice during the certificate or diploma program in order to review your accommodation plan.
- 4.15 Make an appointment with the Disability Service Advisor if you have any concerns or are facing any barriers to your academic success. Another source of support is your Program Chair.

Appeal

- 5.1 Students wishing to appeal a decision are referred to Columbia College's appeal process. (ADM-P177 – Student Appeals Policy)

IS A REDUCED COURSE LOAD A GOOD IDEA? – This might be a good idea. If you require a reduced course load, please consult with your Disability Services Advisor.

Grant funded students may obtain full time learner benefits while taking a minimum of a 40% course load each semester. The student may receive up to 50 funded months of training benefits to complete their Service Plan. Reduced course loads must be approved by an Alberta Employment and Immigration official in order to receive funding.

Students on Student Loan would be considered full-time students while taking a 40% course load each semester. Reduced course load must be approved by Student Finance.

HOW ACCESSIBLE IS THE CAMPUS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES?

Doors and ramps

All the buildings used by Columbia College students for their education have access ramps. At this time there are no electronic doors.

Elevators

Building 803 has an elevator that takes students up to the third floor.

Transportation

At present, the Handi Transit bus drops off and picks up students at Bldg. 802.

Accessible Handicapped Parking

All of the buildings have designated handicapped parking. You will need to have a handicapped parking placard to hang on your windshield. A handicapped parking placard may be obtained by having your physician fill out a form that you present to Alberta Registries. For further information visit Service Alberta's website at www.servicealberta.ca or call toll-free, 310-0000.

A campus Access Map is located at the back of this handbook.

Washroom Facilities

All our buildings have handicapped washroom facilities.

OTHER SERVICES

Safewalk – Any student may request to be accompanied to their car by contacting 403-313-7709 (24 hr. contact) or Willowglen Security at 619-7704 or Region Security at 619-7706.

Students with physical limitations – Upon your acceptance to Columbia College, a staff member will be assigned to assist you to exit the building in case of fire or another emergency

WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF POSSIBLE ACCOMMODATIONS AND SERVICES?

The following are examples of accommodations and services that may be available to you. Individually funded services means that there is a fee for this service. This type of service may be covered by applying for a grant.

Examples of Classroom Accommodations and Services

*Individually funded services

- Use of assistive devices (e.g. spell checkers, laptops for note taking)*
- Use of oral and sign language interpreters*
- Permission to audiotape lectures
- Special seating and preferential seating location
- Access to facilitators' overheads, when available
- Extra breaks during class-time
- Use of note-takers*
- Use of adaptive technology in the classroom and labs (scanner, screen reading software, etc.)*

Examples of Quiz and Exam accommodations

* Individually funded services

- Extra time to write quizzes/exams*
- Distraction-free environment*
- Exams divided into sections in order to permit breaks
- Alternate exam formats for all or portions of the exam*
- Taped quiz/exam*
- Oral quiz/exam*
- Use of assistive devices (JAWS, ZoomText, etc.)*
- Use of adaptive technology (spell checkers, calculators, computers)*
- Reader or scribe*
- Access to computer

Students requiring exam reader/scribe and having arranged for funding/payment for services will be responsible for the following steps:

- a) Fill out a Request for Testing Accommodations Form (available from Reception Bldg. 802, your Disability Services Advisor) and submit it to your Facilitator for signature and then forward it to your Disability Services Advisor. See Appendix A)
- b) If you need a reader or scribe, you will be responsible for paying the reader/scribe at the time of the test.

Specialized Academic Strategist Support

*Individually funded service.

The Academic Strategist will provide disability-related academic support for students who require this service. It may be necessary to provide additional specialized support from a program specialist where strategy implementation is needed to gain competency within a specific program. For example, the student may need both Academic Strategist support, as well as, support from a nurse facilitator in order to transfer specific strategies to gain nursing competency and skill development.

Examples of Specialized Academic Strategist Supports include:

- Individualized strategy training including special techniques for students with specialized needs
- Demonstrating and modeling of appropriate learning techniques
- Opportunities to practice strategies using actual course work
- Application of general strategies for organization, time management, test-taking, study skills, reading skills, writing skills, note-taking skills, and critical thinking skills
- Use of adaptive technologies to support strategy development

Tutoring

*Individually funded service.

Students who require tutoring because of a disability will need to meet with their Disability Services Advisor to discuss their needs. The student is responsible for payment of the tutor. Your Disability Services Advisor will assist you in finding a tutor, but if a tutor cannot be found, the student is responsible for finding a tutor.

Note Taking

*Individually funded service.

Since the College programs are intended to prepare a student for employment, a note-taker would only be considered as an accommodation if all other avenues have been exhausted. Should a note-taker be required, the student is responsible for payment of the note taker. Your Disability Services Advisor will assist you in finding a note-taker, but if a note-taker cannot be found, you will be responsible for finding a note-taker.

Guidelines for students who require a note-taker:

- a) Be on time for class. Note-takers will not substitute for the student. If the student does not show up for the class, the note-taker will leave and will need to be reimbursed by the student.
- b) Provide minimum 24 hours notice to the note-taker for absence from class. Failure to do so means that the note-taker will be reimbursed for the class. Note-takers will not attend class if the student is absent.
- c) Meet and discuss with the note-taker the type of notes you want taken. i.e. bulleted style, full sentence, etc.
- d) Students are responsible to pick up their notes from the note-taker.

Obtaining Alternative Format Textbooks Materials:

*May be a funded service.

Canadian copyright law permits the reproduction of published work for people with print disabilities. Print disabilities include:

- Vision loss or blindness or the inability to focus or move one's eyes
- The inability to hold or manipulate a book
- Reading disabilities

Obtaining textbooks in alternative format is a time consuming process.

The student will fill out a Request for Alternative Format Materials (See Appendix) and submit it to his/her Disability Services Advisor. The library will contact the publisher and/or Alberta Education to try to get the book in digital format. If the book is not available from the publisher or other sources, the textbook will need to be scanned. If the text needs to be scanned, this is an individually funded service.

If a student is blind or has dyslexia, the student can contact Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D) for access to an extensive library of textbooks on tape, as well as a recording service for new titles. Membership with RFB&D is required to access materials. The student would apply online at www.rfbd.org or telephone at 1-800-RFB-TEXT.

Adaptive Technology Training

Individually funded service.

This service provides the following:

- Demonstration and trials of adaptive technologies which address a particular learning need
- Training on specific adaptive technologies to promote learner independence

WHAT SPECIFIC ACCOMMODATIONS ARE POSSIBLE FOR MY TYPE OF DISABILITY?

Each disability category provides a brief description of the disability, followed by sample accommodations. This is not meant to be an all-inclusive list. These lists are intended to help students in their decision making as to what accommodations may be helpful to them

Mobility

Some students with physical and mobility impairments may require physical accommodations such as those listed below. Others may not require any accommodations.

- Common accommodations include:
 - Assistive technology
 - Note-takers
 - Scribes
 - Test/Exam accommodations
 - Specialized transportation (e.g. for field study or practicums)

Learning Disabilities

Learning disabilities refer to a variety of disorders that affect learning. Learning disabilities are distinct from intellectual disabilities and range in severity. Often these disabilities interfere with one or more of the following important skills: oral language (e.g. listening, speaking, understanding), reading (e.g. decoding, comprehension), written language (e.g. spelling, written expression) or mathematics (e.g. computation, problem solving).

- Common accommodations:
 - Alternate format materials – CD, MP3, voice recording
 - Copies of overheads, lecture notes
 - Audio taping
 - Assistive technology and training
 - Note takes/scribes
 - Test/Exam accommodations
 - Preferential seating

Attention Disorders

Some students have been diagnosed with attention disorders such as ADHD (Attention Deficit/hyperactivity Disorder) or ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder). These students will typically have difficulty sustaining attention. They may also present as impulsive, easily distractible, and restless.

- Common accommodations:
 - Preferential seating at front of class in order to minimize distraction and assist the student in focusing

- Test/Exam accommodations, including extra time and/or exams in a distraction-free room
- Permission to record lectures
- Assistive Technology
- Use of audio systems to reduce environmental distractors
- Extra breaks, moving around to help with refocusing

Deaf or hard of hearing

A hearing impairment is a condition involving the entire range of hearing loss. A student may use sign language, speech reading and other non-verbal means of communication. Hard of hearing refers to a less severe condition of hearing loss.

- Common accommodations:
 - Interpreting services
 - CART services (Communication Access as Real-Time)
 - Amplification systems
 - Tutoring or scribe services
 - Provision of all assignments in written format
 - Test/Exam accommodations

Mental Health

Some students have been diagnosed with psychiatric disabilities such as anxiety disorders, depression, bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia.

- Common accommodations:
 - Test/Exam accommodations, often the use of a distraction-free environment
 - Use of tape/digital recorder in class
 - Accommodations regarding timelines for assignments as a result of periods of illness
 - Accommodations for attendance or lates

Visual Impairment

Visual impairment reflects a range of vision from legal blindness to impairments such as color blindness, tunnel vision, night blindness, and a lack of visual acuity.

- Common accommodations:
 - Alternate format material (Braille, CD, MP3 or enlarged print)
 - Preferential seating in class
 - Note taker or scribe
 - Audio taping of lectures
 - Visual aid software, Braille, magnifier or other assistive devices
 - Test/Exam accommodations
 - Voice recognition software, scanner or other assistive technology

WHAT FUNDING IS AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES?

If you are a student with a documented disability, you may be eligible for government funding for assistive services (examples include tutoring, note-taking, interpretation, assistive technology and other such supports). For students who are transitioning from high school to a college education, individual learning supports have a cost attached to them and these are not funded in the same way as they were when you were in school.

Funding for the cost of disability related supports can come from a variety of sources including Workers Compensation Board, private insurance companies, Canada Student Loan or provincial government disability services. Grants are sources of funding that do not have to be paid back.

In general, if you are applying for **Canada Student Loans**, you may be eligible to access the Canada Student Grant. Please review the information and instructions on the back of "Schedule 4".

If you are not eligible for Canada Student Loans, you may be eligible for funding from provincial services. In Alberta, services may be covered by **DRES (Disability Related Employment Supports) funding**, which can be accessed through Alberta Employment and Immigration. A learner with a disability must apply for a Canada Student Loan and the Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Persons with Permanent Disabilities if your program of study is designated for loan funding. Columbia College's professional programs are all eligible for Student Loan Funding. Pre-Career programs are not eligible for Student Loans. All sources of funding must be accessed before applying for DRES.

In addition to the available types of post-secondary funding, as a student with a permanent disability, you may be eligible to receive the following funding:

- Canada Grant for Persons with Permanent Disabilities
Up to \$2,000 per year (for education and living cost) and/or
- Canada Grant for Services and Equipment for Persons with Permanent Disabilities
(For disability related equipment and services) – Up to \$8,000 per year and/or
- Alberta Grants for Students with Permanent Disabilities
Up to \$3,000 per year for students not eligible for federal funding

You would usually meet with the Disability Services Advisor who will work with you to create a suitable proposal for an external funding agency. The proposal outlines your needs and the estimated costs. In some cases, written price quotes and product descriptions must be obtained.

HOW CAN I MAKE ARRANGMENTS FOR QUIZZES AND EXAM ACCOMMODATIONS?

Disability Services will help faculty and students with accommodations in this area. It is the student's responsibility to take the initiative in this area.

Minor Accommodation: Sometimes, the student may need a slight accommodation such as more time to write or a distraction-free environment. Once the facilitator receives a letter from Disability Services permitting the accommodation, the facilitator may be able to arrange this type of accommodation quite simply by placing the student in an adjacent, unoccupied room. The student should not have a cell phone, purse or other extra materials when writing in an adjacent space. The facilitator should keep a record of the accommodation for future reference.

External Special Accommodation - Exam Scribe: On the other hand, the student may require, for example, an exam scribe or need to be supervised outside of the classroom or in the library testing room. This accommodation may be recommended for students with manual or upper body mobility limitations. The scribe writes longhand or keyboards on a computer precisely what the student dictates. No assistance is given to the type of answer provided, spelling, grammar or interpretation of the questions. For essay questions, the student will tell the scribe where to begin a new paragraph. During dictation, the student will be able to see what is being recorded and provide revisions. The student then approves the final version of the dictation.

Procedure: If the student requires specialized quiz and exam accommodations, the student must fill out a form entitled "Request for Testing Accommodation." The facilitator fills out the appropriate section, and approves and signs the request.

The student delivers the form to his/her Disability Services Advisor. The student must make the request at least 5 school days in advance of each quiz or exam.

The facilitator makes arrangements for the exam to be delivered to the Disability Services Advisor who will then manage the process for accommodation. An electronic version of the exam/test is preferred. The exam should be forwarded a minimum of 3 days prior to exam/test schedule.

- **Use of Spell/Grammar Check function:** A student with a disability may be permitted to use a Spell/Grammar Checker, but this will need to be part of permitted accommodations related to the particular disability. Normally, students do not use Spell/Grammar checker.
- Exams/tests will be scheduled for administration during office hours and taken in the library or other arranged area.

Number of Exams and Time Extension: Only one exam per day may be recommended for students with disabilities or students with conditions that affect their ability to sustain concentration or manage fatigue. Another situation that could arise is the time needed to write the exam. It is common for students to receive time-and-a-half (ie. 1.5x). For example, for an exam that takes 2 hours – the student would get an accommodation that equals 3 hours.

Form to be used: ADM-F117 – Request for Testing Accommodations – This form requests that the exam/test is to be written outside of the classroom under Disability Services arrangements.

ESOURCES

Disabilities

ALIS: Accommodations – Working with Your Disabilities
<http://www.alis.alberta.ca/ep/eps/tips/tips.html?EK=165>

ALIS: What to Say About Your Disability – and When
<http://www.alis.alberta.ca/ep/eps/tips/tips.html?EK=163>

ALIS: Succeeding in the Workplace as a Person With a Disability
<http://www.alis.alberta.ca/ep/eps/tips/tips.html?EK=162>

The Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work – a resource on employment diversity
<http://www.workink.com/>

National Educational Association of Disabled Students
<http://www.neads.ca/en/>

Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta
<http://www.ldaa.ca/>

LD Online
<http://www.ldonline.org/>

Attention Deficit Disorder Association
<http://www.add.org/>

Learning Disabilities Association of Canada
<http://www.ldac-taac.ca/index-e.asp>

Canadian Mental Health Association
<http://www.cmha.ca/youreducation/introduction.html>

Policies/Legislation

Alberta Human Rights Commission (Sept. 2010), Interpretive Bulletin: “Duty to accommodate student with disabilities in post-secondary educational institutions.”
http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca./Bull_Duty_to_accom_students.pdf

Alberta Human Rights Act
<http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca./about/legislation.asp>

Columbia College Accommodation Policy for Students With Disabilities

Funding

Alberta Employment and Immigration – Disability Related Employment Supports (DRES)

<http://www.employent.alberta.ca/AWonline/ETS/4345.html>

Canada Study Grant

http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/en/goc/accommodation_disabilities.shtml

Student Funding Contact Centre

www.alis.gov.ab.ca

National Student Loans Service Centre

www.canlearn.ca

Learning Strategies

Successful Strategies for Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities

<http://www.ldaamerica.org/aboutld/teaches/understanding/strategies.asp>

For Teachers –Information on teaching students with disabilities

<http://www.ldanatl.org/aboutld/teacher/index.asp>

Learning Strategies for students with Learning Disabilities

<http://www.nichcy.org/pubs/bibliog/bib14txt.htm>

The Learning Toolbox – for teachers, students and parents

<http://coe.jmu.edu/Learningtoolbo/>

Learning Strategies Database

<http://www.muskingum.edu/~cal/database/general/memory.html>

Learning Strategies Handouts

<http://www.cla.purdue.edu/asc/studentsupport/handouts/>

Assistive Technology

Aroga

<http://www.aroga.com/contact.asp>

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STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES CHECKLIST

When applying to Columbia College:

6 months before classes begin:

_____ Begin the admission process as outlined in the calendar

If you require accommodations to take the Columbia College Assessments, please inform your Admission Advisor prior to having an assessment booked.

_____ Review Columbia College Policy on Students with Disabilities and Handbook for Students with Disabilities.

Once admission requirements have been met:

_____ Meet with a Disability Services Advisor. An appointment will be made for you by your Admissions Advisor.

_____ To your meeting with the Disability Services Advisor, bring in documentation of your disability(s) from a qualified professional.

_____ Participate in the process of discussing reasonable and appropriate accommodations for your program of study.

_____ Sign Student Waiver Forms so that your Disability Services Advisor can communicate with appropriate personnel to set up your services.

_____ Review your Accommodation Plan.

_____ Complete funding application. Wait for funding approval.

Once funding has been approved:

_____ Make arrangements for note-takers, tutors, interpreters or other supports before classes begin.

_____ Make arrangements for Alternate Format texts or materials as required. A minimum length of time required is at least one month.

_____ Make arrangements with accounting for payment of "funded individual services" where applicable.

In the weeks before the start of the semester:

_____ Attend Orientation and pick up your texts and any other materials. You will only be able to do this if your funding is in place.

_____ Pick up your copy of the letter to facilitators from your Disability Services Advisor.
(week before classes start)

_____ Speak to your Program Chair in order to get assistance in making an appointment with the facilitator/s to discuss your needs. (optional)

Ongoing:

_____ Meet with the Disability Services Advisor and Program Chair in the beginning of each semester (pre-career programs) to review the accommodation plan. Students in professional programs will meet at least once during the certificate and once during the diploma program to review the accommodation plan.

_____ Meet with the Program Chair/designate when needed to discuss any program related needs.

_____ Meet with the Disability Services Advisor to discuss any additional needs or revisions necessary in your current supports.

