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This handbook is written to assist you, the student, with receiving your accommodations and answering any questions you may have. If you have a question or concern that is not discussed in this handbook, please do not hesitate to contact the DSS office at 601-276-3885 for additional assistance.

It is your responsibility to make yourself familiar with the policies and procedures for receiving accommodations at Southwest Mississippi Community College. Please read and become familiar with the information presented in this handbook as well as the SMCC Student Handbook. In addition, keep this handbook in your possession for future reference.

This handbook is *not* a contract and nothing herein should be construed as such. Please be aware that the policies and procedures in the handbook are subject to change without notice.

We look forward to working with you while you are a student at Southwest Mississippi Community College!

Southwest Mississippi Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, or disability in its programs, activities, or employment practices. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries and grievances regarding the non-discrimination policies: Mrs. Rhonda Gibson, Director of Disability Support Services, 601-276-3885; Dr. Bill Ashley, Vice President for Student Affairs, Title IX Coordinator, and Director of Athletics, 601-276-3717, 1156 College Drive, Summit, MS 39666.

Resources consulted in the preparation of this handbook:

- www.ada.gov
- Student Manual: The Office of Disability Accommodations-The University of Southern Mississippi
- A Desk Reference Guide for Faculty and Staff: College Students with Disabilities-Hinds Community College
- <http://sites.allegheeny.edu/disabilityservices/documentation-guidelines/>

I. INTRODUCTION

Southwest Mississippi Community College provides reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities through the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS). DSS verifies eligibility for accommodations and works with eligible students to develop and coordinate plans to provide those accommodations. DSS, administratively, falls under the Vice-President for Student Affairs. A committee of College staff serves in a liaison and advisory capacity to DSS. The DSS committee provides input and direction to DSS operations, and committee members support DSS activities within their respective units.

The Office of Disability Support Services is committed to creating a positive campus environment where students with disabilities are encouraged to pursue careers on the basis of personal interest and ability. DSS is a non-fee generating program designed to meet the unique needs of SMCC students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are offered in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

A. The DSS Staff

Dr. Bill Ashley, PhD, Vice-President for Student Affairs, Title IX Coordinator and Director of Athletics
Telephone: (601) 276-3717
Email: bashley@smcc.edu

Mrs. Rhonda Gibson, Director of Disability Support Services
Telephone: (601) 276-3885
Email: rgibson@smcc.edu

B. Eligibility

Eligible students include those who are enrolled in degree and non-degree programs offered by Southwest Mississippi Community College, and are considered qualified to meet all college program requirements despite a disability, and meet the definition of disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA. The definition of disability includes any person who "...has a physical, emotional, or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of life's major activities; has a record of disability or is regarded as having a disability". Having a medical condition or disability does not automatically ensure that a student is eligible for protection and services under the ADA. For example, if mitigating circumstances such as eyeglasses, hearing aids, or medication offset the limiting effects of a disability, then a student may not be eligible. Documentation of a disability must substantiate significant limitations, with or without mitigating circumstances, in life areas related to learning. **Students with disabilities have the responsibility to register with DSS; otherwise they may not receive accommodations.** In determining if a student is qualified to meet all program requirements, the college must base its decision on the skills, interests, and aptitudes of a student and not on presumptions that would arbitrarily exclude a student from participation in a program or activity.

C. DSS Accommodations and Services

In pursuing the goal of equal access for all students, the college strives to remove structural and programmatic barriers. Southwest Mississippi Community College is receptive to the needs of students with disabilities across academic and non academic programs. Cooperation and coordination between DSS and SMCC faculty and staff enhance the success of the total program. Services and reasonable accommodations may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Letters to instructors requesting accommodations such as note takers, use of tape recorders in class, extended test-taking time, alternate test formats, enlarged print, and preferential seating.
- Exam modifications (extended time, minimal distraction environment, test proctors, readers, or scribes)
- Information coordination and appropriate referrals off campus
- Referral to other campus services (Career Center, Counseling Center, Student Support Services Program, and Library Services)
- Liaison services between SMCC faculty/staff and student about disability needs
- Faculty/staff orientation and technical assistance to faculty/staff on request
- Liaison services with rehabilitation agencies
- Liaison services with departments (campus orientation, technology, admissions, registration, and housing)
- Sign language interpreters, note takers, and readers
- Accessible classroom/location/furniture
- Assistive technology related to instruction
- Assistance in obtaining materials from Book Recordings for the Blind & Dyslexic
- Study skills, learning and coping strategies, career awareness, disability rights and responsibilities, and other specialized training seminars

Accommodations are designed to meet the individual needs of each student and are therefore planned and implemented in conjunction with the student's documented disability. The college may refuse a request for an unreasonable accommodation or for any adjustment and/or auxiliary aid or service that imposes a fundamental alteration on a program or activity of the college. Institutions are not required to provide services of a personal nature, such as personal attendants, individually prescribed devices, transportation, or readers/tutors for personal use or study.

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations will provide the instructor with an accommodation letter from DSS. **Faculty members will not provide accommodations without this letter.** A sample accommodation letter can be found in the Appendix 30 of this manual.

II. PROCEDURES FOR ACQUIRING ACCOMMODATIONS AND SERVICES

In order to receive reasonable accommodations for a disability, students must "self-identify," which means registering with DSS, making requests for accommodations, and discussing letters written by DSS that outline the accommodations with the pertinent

instructors. **SMCC administrators and faculty cannot approve or provide accommodations without this letter.** Descriptions of the steps involved in registering with DSS and processes that lead to implementation or accommodations are described in detail.

A. Registering with DSS: Application and Documentation

Students wanting to receive accommodations for a disability must complete a DSS application and provide documentation of the disability. (Appendix 22) **To ensure timely delivery of accommodations, students are advised to begin the intake process at least six weeks prior to registration for classes. Forms can be downloaded from www.smcc.edu.**

Documentation of a disability from an appropriate licensed or certified professional with expertise related to a student's disability must be filed with DSS. Documentation must include a statement explaining how the disability, with or without mitigating circumstances, limits a major life area, thus impacting a student's participation in courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities. Evaluations for the purpose of documentation must be recent. (Appendix 32) DSS does not assist students in obtaining appropriate documentation, nor does DSS refer students for eligibility evaluations. **All fees associated with procuring documentation are the responsibility of the student.**

Documentation that is submitted to DSS must:

- Clearly state the diagnosed disability or disabilities
- Describe the functional limitations resulting from the disability or disabilities
- Be age-appropriate-describing how the disability or disabilities currently affect the student in an educational setting
- Be comprehensive-including complete educational, developmental, and medical history relevant to the disability for which accommodations are being requested
- Include a list of all test instruments used in the evaluation report and relevant subtest scores used to document the stated disability (this requirement does not apply to physical or sensory disabilities of a permanent or unchanging nature)
- Describe the specific accommodations requested
- Adequately support each of the requested accommodations
- Be typed or printed on official letterhead and signed by an evaluator qualified to make the diagnosis (include information about license or certification and area of specialization) The DSS Request for Documentation may also be completed. (Appendix 32)

The DSS staff is responsible for reviewing and approving the application and documentation. The college also has consultants, qualified professionals who are available to review questionable documentation to assure that such documentation meets Section 504 and ADA disability criteria. Once the application and documentation are approved, and the interview has taken place, DSS emails the accommodation letters to instructors and mails copies to the student. The student is responsible for reporting any schedule changes to DSS.

B. Interview Process

In the initial accommodation (“interview”) meeting, the student, who is approved as having an eligible disability under the ADA, identifies his/her needs and makes requests for accommodations. DSS may perform a substantive review of requested accommodations and explore reasonable alternatives to the requested accommodations. In order to be approved, accommodation requests must be appropriate for the student’s disability and supported by the documentation of the specific disability. **Approved accommodations are not retroactive.**

Accommodation plans are reviewed and updated **each semester at the request of the student.** Prior to the beginning of each semester and after registering for classes, students should schedule an accommodation meeting with the Disability Support Services staff to identify and re-request their accommodations for the upcoming semester. **Students should bring a copy of their class schedule to the accommodation meetings.** Changes in the schedules and/or in the implementation of the approved accommodations must be reported to DSS by the student receiving the accommodation.

Requests for accommodations should be made in advance to allow reasonable time to prepare for implementation. Last minute requests for accommodations may not be granted.

C. Implementation of Accommodations

Once DSS approves accommodation requests, DSS prepares letters that will be emailed to instructors. (Appendix 30) Students are also given copies of the accommodation letters for their records. It is recommended that students discuss their accommodations with their instructors immediately, allowing time to implement accommodations, rather than waiting until they need the accommodation. Students registered with DSS may not send a second party to make requests on their behalf.

Students are expected to maintain contact with the DSS. It is the student’s responsibility to inform DSS if there is a problem with the approved accommodations.

D. Student’s Responsibility in Requesting Accommodations

Students registered with DSS are expected to self-identify their needs for reasonable accommodations to the Director of Disability Support Services. Identified needs for reasonable accommodations must relate to the documentation of the disability. Upon approval of accommodations by DSS, DSS personnel will work with the student to develop an individualized accommodation plan. Students, however, must meet degree or essential course requirements as established by the College or course instructor. Unreasonable accommodations, adjustment, and/or auxiliary aids or services that impose a fundamental alteration on a program of activity of the College, may be refused. Reasonable accommodations are designed to ensure that students have equal opportunity to attain the same level of performance and to enjoy equal benefits and

privileges as are available to students without disabilities. Students are responsible for procuring or paying for services related to personal use and study.

Students with disabilities have the responsibility to:

- Self-identify disability status to DSS in a timely manner
- Provide current documentation of a disability from an appropriately certified or licensed professional as stated below
 - ADD, ADHD-Psychologist/Psychiatrist/Neurologist
 - Emotional Disability-Psychologist/Psychiatrist/Certified Social Worker
 - Visual Impairment-Ophthalmologist
 - Hearing Impairment-Certified Otologist/Audiologist
 - Learning Disability-Psychologist/Neuropsychologist, School Psychologist/Learning Disabilities Specialist
 - Physical Disability-Medical Doctor
- Request in a timely manner specific accommodations that are appropriate to his/her documented disability
- Maintain reasonable contact with the DSS office
- Follow procedure outlined by DSS

If a student's approved accommodations are not implemented in a satisfactory manner, it is the **student's responsibility** to inform DSS as soon as possible. Delays in reporting problems with accommodations may result in loss of opportunity to correct the situation.

E. College Responsibility

Under the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the ADA, Institutions of Higher Learning must provide reasonable accommodations that afford equal educational opportunities for students with disabilities. Section 504 states that "...No otherwise qualified person with a disability in the United States... shall, solely by reason of... disability, be denied the benefits of, be excluded from participation in, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

Under the Provisions of Section 504, SMCC "...may not discriminate in the recruitment, admission, educational process, or treatment of students." **Students who have self-identified, provided documentation of disability, and requested reasonable accommodations related to their specific disability are entitled to receive the following: information in accessible formats upon request, approved modifications of programs, appropriate academic adjustments, or auxiliary aids that enable them to participate in and benefit from all educational programs and activities in the most integrated and appropriate settings.** Section 504 does not compel educational institutions to disregard the disabilities of individuals or to make substantial modifications in programs to allow individuals who disabilities to participate. Academic requirements which are essential to the program of instruction being pursued by a student or any directly related licensing requirements are not regarded as discriminatory, even if they have an adverse effect on individuals with disabilities. Thus, academic requirements may not serve as barriers to equal opportunity, unless they are deemed essential to a degree program or licensing process.

According to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA, institutions should make reasonable accommodations so that no student with a disability is denied the benefits or excluded from participation in, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any of its education programs or activities because of an absence of educational auxiliary aids. Auxiliary aids include, but are not limited to, typed texts, lecture notes, film transcriptions, interpreters, readers or taped texts, and adapted classroom equipment. **Institutions are not required, however, to provide services of a personal nature such as personal attendants, individually prescribed devices, transportation, or readers/tutors for personal use or study.**

Achieving reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities involves shared responsibility between DSS, students, faculty, and staff. It is the responsibility of the College to educate personnel and faculty regarding the rights of students with disabilities and the policies accessing college resources and in fulfilling degree requirements as established by the college. **When students request accommodations without a letter to DSS, SMCC faculty and staff must refer the students to DSS.** Then DSS will verify the documentation of the disability and plan for reasonable and appropriate accommodations that meet the mandate of federal legislation.

F. Confidentiality of Records

DSS respects students' rights to confidentiality and strives to keep information provided to DSS confidential. DSS requires students to complete a consent form prior to receiving or releasing information, even to parents. Students who enroll in college are considered adults and must act on their own accord. With a student's permission, DSS will consult the student's parents, faculty, staff, and relevant professionals, but reserves the right to request the student's presence. DSS will not disclose specific information about a student's disability or the nature of the disability unless the student makes a direct request to DSS and signs the Release of Records Information section on their Intake Form (see Appendix 22). Only authorized DSS personnel have access to the records. Students' records may, however, be disclosed where permitted or required by law.

G. Student Follow-up and Evaluation of Services

At the end of each semester and prior to graduation or upon leaving the college, students will be asked to evaluate services provided by DSS by completing a satisfaction with services questionnaire (see Appendix 31).

H. Student Conduct

Inappropriate behavior toward persons providing accommodations, instructors, and/or other students or staff will not be tolerated. **Such behavior may result in the loss of privileges or services.** The college's discipline policy will be adhered to as outlined in the Student Handbook.

I. Student Complaint/Grievance

Southwest Mississippi Community College is committed to providing prompt and effective resolution of student complaints or grievances. The college encourages

informal resolution of complaints as close to the source as possible. Students considering filing a grievance should keep in mind that the college may deny a student's request for accommodations and/or auxiliary aids that impose an undue hardship on the campus or which substantially modify academic standards, programs, or course work. When a student's request for disability accommodations and/or auxiliary aids is denied, students should first express their concerns to the Director of DSS on their campus. If a student wishes to file a formal complaint against a college employee, he/she should contact the Office of Student Affairs. The college has established a DSS Committee of professionals who review questionable accommodation requests to ensure that the College is in compliance with Section 504 and ADA. Students have the right to file complaints with the Office of Civil Rights (OCR); however, OCR will investigate a complaint after the college's internal grievance procedure is complete. Students should contact:

**Dr. Bill Ashley, Vice-President for Student Affairs
Southwest Mississippi Community College
1156 College Drive
Summit, MS 39666
601-276-3717**

III. FREQUENTLY REQUESTED ACCOMMODATIONS

A. Note Takers

This service is provided by student volunteers or workers enrolled in the same class section as the student requiring a note taker.

Procedures for Obtaining Note Takers:

1. The student makes a request for a note taker when registering with the DSS Office and completes the note taker agreement form (appendix 25).
2. The student discusses his/her accommodation letter with the instructor and requests that the instructor assign a note taker
3. The instructor will make an announcement requesting a student to act as a note taker. The student who is served by DSS will not be identified by the instructor as the individual requiring this accommodation.
4. The student indicates his/her preferred method of exchanging notes.
 - (a) If the student prefers that his/her identity remain confidential, DSS will inform the instructor. In this situation, the instructor will act as intermediary between the student and the note taker. It is the responsibility of the student to pick up his/her copy of the notes during the instructor's regular office hours.
 - (b) If the student prefers direct contact with the note taker for exchanging notes, the instructor can introduce the student to the note taker in a setting that will insure the

confidentiality of the student. Together, the student and note taker will decide upon a time and place to exchange notes.

4. If the student requiring the note taker service does not receive notes, it is the student's responsibility to alert DSS of the problem. Once informed, DSS will quickly facilitate the resolution of the problem. **Note takers are not required to provide notes for classes that students miss or for the portion of the class that students do not attend unless the absence is directly related to their disability.**

B. Readers

Readers are SMCC students who are interviewed and hired by the DSS. The role of a reader is to read to or for a student, not to tutor the student. Readers are limited to a maximum of 40 hours per month. Hours over 40 must be justified. Readers may be paid from sources other than the college and are typically paid minimum wage.

Procedures for Obtaining Readers:

1. Students requiring readers will provide the DSS with **advance notice** of their need for readers.
2. DSS interviews students for a reader position and selects readers for the student needing this service. When the selection is made, consideration is given to the preferences of the student requiring a reader. If the student locates a reader without the assistance of DSS and it is expected that Vocational Rehabilitation or the college will compensate the reader, the student must inform DSS and follow all procedures outlined.
3. Readers must fill out forms at DSS. The reader's compensation source will determine what forms must be completed.
4. DSS will provide readers with the DSS Logs to account for time spent reading for the student. It is the responsibility of the reader and the student to keep track of the number of hours spent reading.
5. DSS Logs must be completed and turned into DSS at the end of each month. This form must be verified by a DSS official, the student, and the reader.
6. If Vocational Rehabilitation is compensating the reader, an authorization form must be completed each month by the reader.

Please remember: Readers will not be paid until all necessary forms (employment forms, tax forms, Vocational Rehabilitation's authorization forms, and DSS Log) are completed. If the forms are turned in late, the reader's payment will be delayed.

Since the readers are typically SMCC students, they have demands that may conflict with needs of the student needing a reader. For this reason, students who rely heavily upon the service of readers are encouraged to have at least two readers. Also, DSS cannot promise to locate a reader without advance notice.

C. Interpreters

Upon request, interpreting services are provided for students with documented hearing loss or deafness. Students qualifying for interpreter services are responsible for keeping a record of interpreter hours.

Procedures for Obtaining Interpreting Services:

- A student with a hearing disability makes a request to DSS for an interpreter. When making the request, the student provides DSS with the exact dates, times, and locations for interpreter services.
- DSS contacts the interpreters and arranges the services.
- Interpreters maintain time sheets. Time sheets must be signed by the interpreter, the instructor, and the student requiring the service.
- The interpreter turns in the time sheets to DSS.

Students receiving reading and/or interpreter services are responsible for notifying DSS of class cancellations, changes in schedules, or absences. Assuming there is no emergency; DSS requires 24 hours' notification. Failure to notify DSS of cancellations, changes in schedules, or absences may result in loss of interpreter services. DSS schedules all interpreters. A student may only request services from an individual interpreter if he/she intends to assume personal financial responsibility or payment for requested services. Interpreters are not provided for personal use.

All students using interpreter services must sign an Interpreter Use Agreement Form. A copy of this form can be found in the Appendix 28.

Both oral and sign language interpreters must have appropriate qualifications. Qualified interpreters:

- Interpret for classroom/lab and school sponsored activities and events, workshops, meetings, and campus activities when assigned.
- Provide information to instructors, students, or other staff on how to maximize benefits or interpreter services.
- Understand and professionally comply with the Code of Ethics of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.
- Perform all duties pertaining to the program and student as assigned.

Interpreters must be dependable, reliable, honest, and punctual in carrying out assigned duties. They are responsible for reporting to SMCC, in a timely manner, conflicts that will prevent them from providing services so that replacements can be arranged.

D. Exam Modifications

Accommodations involving exam modifications include, but are not limited to, extended test-taking time, use of assistive technology, minimal distraction testing environment, oral examinations, use of readers, and the use of scribes. If an instructor is unable to

provide exam accommodations, DSS can assist. Students must sign a Student Exam Agreement form (see Appendix 24) before taking exams at DSS.

Procedures for Obtaining Exam Accommodations:

- The student requiring the exam modification(s) will meet with his/her instructor to discuss the accommodations outlined in the accommodation letter.
- The instructor will determine if the modified exam can be administered in the classroom or an appropriate setting relative to the accommodation.
- If the instructor is unable to provide the accommodation, DSS can administer the exam. However, the student's schedule of other classes and the schedules of DSS staff may result in exams being administered one to two days late.
- For DSS to administer the exam, DSS must be given five working days of advance notice. It is the student's responsibility to call DSS five working days before the test to schedule the testing time.
- The instructor completes and signs a Testing Instructions Form (see Appendix) for each exam. The instructor is responsible for forwarding (either by mail or hand delivery) the exam to DSS. If the exam is not accompanied by a completed Testing Instruction Form, then it cannot be administered by DSS.
- DSS utilizes staff to administer or proctor the exam in a study room at the library or another appropriate setting.
- Students who schedule examinations of DSS must sign a Student Exam Agreement Form (see Appendix 24), which contains the following information:

To schedule an exam with DSS, students must

- Contact DSS at least five working days prior to the exam date.
- Schedule the exam at the same time (and date) as the class exam if at all possible.
- Remind the instructor that they will take the exam with DSS. (student must do this for every exam taken with DSS)

To reschedule an exam, students must

- Provide proof, written documentation from an appropriate professional, of extenuating circumstances that prevented, or will prevent, the student from taking the exam. DSS reserves the right to contact the professional to verify the extenuating circumstances and make a judgment as to whether the exam may be rescheduled with DSS.
- Either take the exam by the date the instructor gives on the Testing Instruction form or obtain the instructor's approval to take the exam after that date. Once the instructor approves the rescheduling, the student ensures that the instructor informs DSS that the student is allowed to reschedule. Then the student contacts DSS for rescheduling.

If a student is late for an exam (more than five minutes), it will be regarded as a missed exam and upon instructor approval, it may be rescheduled with the student following DSS exam rescheduling procedures. If DSS suspects academic dishonesty during an exam, it will be investigated immediately and dealt with according to college policy.

E. Alternate Format of Books and Information

Students requiring alternate format to access books, literature, and information must inform DSS in advance of their need, as SMCC **requires a reasonable amount of time to obtain or convert the information into a usable form.**

Many textbooks are available on tape or another format through the Book Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D) or textbook publishers. **Students who use alternate formats of textbooks or reading materials should pre-register for classes and inform DSS of their schedule.**

Students receiving notes from a note taker that will require conversion into an alternate format should inform DSS of this need.

F. Assistance with Registration

DSS can provide assistance with course registration for students whose disability prevents them from registering. Students requiring assistance with registration must seek advisement and then make an appointment with DSS prior to the student's registration period.

G. Applications for Nonstandard Testing Conditions

DSS can assist students who are registered with DSS in completing applications for nonstandard test conditions for standardized exams. To receive this assistance the student must make the request in a timely manner. Students should call DSS to schedule an appointment with the coordinator or assistant coordinator to review and complete the application. Since DSS relies upon the assistance of other campus offices for embossing applications with the college seal, the process of preparing applications can take some time. **DSS cannot help a student if the student fails to meet the application deadline.** Students should not expect to be eligible for an accommodation for standardized exams, if they did not receive the requested accommodation during the time that they were served by DSS.

H. Transportation

Transportation is not a college accommodation mandated under 504/ADA unless it is provided to all students. Transportation to, from, and around campus is a personal responsibility. Students are responsible for arranging for personal mobility needs. In the event of an emergency situation, assistance may be provided by the Campus Police. Students with mobility problems are encouraged to visit the campus before classes begin to assess their ability to move across campus. In some instances, students may need to explore the option of acquiring a motorized chair or scooter, or arranging for a friend or personal care attendant to assist them.

Students with mobility problems are also encouraged to schedule their back-to-back classes in buildings located in close proximity to each other or to schedule free periods between classes to allow time to travel to the next class. DSS is not responsible for transporting students from class to class.

I. Handicap Parking

Students requiring the use of handicap parking spaces must register with the Office of Disability Support Services and be approved to receive a Southwest Mississippi Community College handicap decal. Student's vehicles displaying this decal will be allowed to use any campus handicap parking space or legal parking space, excluding fire lanes, no parking zones, reserved areas, services zones, and in an area that would block handicap curb cuts. When students use campus handicap parking spaces without a visible Southwest Mississippi Community College handicap decal, they are at risk for receiving a parking ticket and having their vehicle towed.

J. Tutoring

Tutoring is not a college accommodation mandated under 504/ADA. Tutoring services are sometimes provided by some of the academic departments. Check with DSS to obtain a current list of tutorial support services on campus if available. **Compensation for a tutor is the responsibility of the student. However, on occasion, Vocational Rehabilitation has paid for tutoring services for students registered with their office.**

K. Personal Care Attendants

The college does not provide personal care attendants (PCAs) for students. If a student requires the service of a PCA and requests the PCA as a roommate, there will be a residence room charge for the PCA. Locating and compensating the PCA are the responsibility of the student, unless the student also receives services from Vocational Rehabilitation. Vocational Rehabilitation may elect to provide PCA services for students attending SMCC.

L. Accessible Furniture

Accessible furniture, including adjustable tables and desks, should be specifically requested through DSS by the student needing these accommodations. All requests should be made to DSS in advance, with students informing DSS of the classroom location and meeting times. Students must make this request each semester and should inform DSS of any changes in their schedules or in the location of their classes.

M. Course Substitutions and Waivers

Requests for course waivers are not granted as accommodations for a students' disabilities. However, requests for course substitutions will be forwarded to the appropriate Vice-President or Director provided that the documentation of the student's disability supports such a request. DSS can only support the student's request for a course substitution; it cannot be mandated. The decision to substitute a course is made by the Vice-President or Director, not DSS.

Substitutions cannot be made for courses in the College's General Education Curriculum. Southwest Mississippi Community College considers these courses essential to any college degree.

N. Excused Absences

At SMCC, course attendance policies are stated on the course syllabus in accordance with the college's attendance policy (see SMCC handbook). However, extended absences may be granted on a case by case basis. Even with extended absences, all course requirements must be met.

O. Delaying Due Dates

Requests for delaying due dates for course projects or papers will be evaluated on a case by case basis and **only** if the disability warrants the accommodation. However, there is no guarantee that due dates can be delayed. For consideration of such a request, students may be asked to obtain written information from a qualified health care provider supporting the request. In considering the request for delaying papers' or projects' due dates, input from the instructor and/or head of the academic department is taken into account. When flexibility is given, it is done in a reasonable manner with a limit on the time extension granted.

P. Library Services

DSS works with library staff to ensure that students with disabilities receive appropriate and reasonable accommodations so that all library resources are accessible. Students requiring extensive assistance may contact DSS to make arrangements for reasonable accommodations.

In the case of students with special needs, the SMCC Library will apply the recommendations of the DSS so that adequate accommodation is rendered. In order to make the efficient use of library resources, the following actions by the student are recommended.

Before the first library assignment occurs:

- Students make requests to DSS. Appropriate library accommodations will be determined by DSS, who will give the student an Approval for Library Assistance form (see Appendix 27) describing the approved library accommodations.
- Students are encouraged to contact the head librarian on campus to discuss DSS approval for library assistance.

When library use is needed:

- Students (registered with DSS) who use readers should utilize them when working on library assignments. SMCC Library personnel will train DSS students including those with readers in use of the library. Library personnel are available to answer reference questions and assist with other informational needs.
- Students must make appointments and plan ahead when needing assistance so that someone is available to help. If the accommodation recommends that others make photocopies for you, please provide full information and a reasonable turn-around time.

IV. ADDITIONAL SERVICES AND POLICIES

A. Medical Emergency Response Procedure for Students with Disabilities

- It is the student's responsibility to notify DSS and his/her individual instructors of medical conditions that might result in an emergency situation. Medical conditions that would require notification include, but are not limited to, seizure disorders, heart disease, abnormal heart rhythms, diabetes, hypoglycemia, cardiomyopathy, asthma, other breathing disorders, fainting spells, blackouts, chronic fatigue syndrome, severe arthritis, and head injury. Students with any medical condition that may cause an emergency should inform DSS to insure proper care. Students should complete the emergency plan form. (see appendix 26)
- If a medical emergency should occur while a student is on campus, 911 will be called and an ambulance requested. The student may be transported to an emergency room. The student has the right to refuse transport and care. Prior notification to staff at DSS and to professors will assist the observance of the student's wishes. Medical emergencies will require relocating students to a safe environment, for example, moving the student out of classrooms, cafeterias, etc.
- The personnel of DSS are not medical personnel. Therefore, 911 should be called first for the student to receive appropriate medical attention. DSS should be notified for support of the student, which includes notifying family/friends of an emergency, providing health information if the student were unable to do so, and serving as a liaison with faculty following an emergency.

B. Resident Life

Physically accessible housing facilities for students with disabilities are available at Southwest Mississippi Community College. Students with special needs for housing should identify and request these needs on their housing application.

Applications for campus housing are processed by date of receipt of the housing application. Submission of a housing application does not guarantee on-campus residence/housing. Room/housing assignments are assigned based on the order in which the applications were received.

Students requiring the service of a personal care attendant may note this requirement and the attendant's name on their application. Students may request the attendant as a roommate. There is a residence room charge for attendants.

C. SMCC Cafeteria Services

DSS works with the food services director to coordinate accommodations and special nutrition services for students with disabilities.

D. Intramurals/Fitness Center

For students, faculty, and staff who wish to participate in leisure, fitness, or competitive programs, Southwest Mississippi Community College provides opportunities in a variety of recreational and fitness-related activities.

V. CAMPUS ACCESSIBILITY AND SAFETY

To ensure physical accessibility, SMCC strives to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Accessibility Guidelines (ADAG) for buildings and facilities. Students should report ADA accessibility problems to the Director of DSS. For safety purposes, it is recommended that students with disabilities keep a cellular phone with them at all times.

A. Elevators

Students who are dependent on elevators may wish to request that their classes be held on the first floor of a building. This request should be made to DSS at pre-registration to ensure ample time for alternate room arrangements. Students should not allow themselves to be carried up or down stairs by faculty or other students. If a student cannot get to class because of a non-working elevator, he/she may request that the class be moved until such time the elevator is in working order.

In the event that an elevator is out of service, students dependent on elevators should never try to walk up the stairs. Any absences due to elevator problems will be excused. Students who miss a class may request alternate means of obtaining class content and materials. This could include tape recording of class lectures, copies of professor's notes and class notes, or individual makeup sessions with the professor. Students should immediately report a faulty elevator to SMCC faculty or staff.

B. Construction

If a student is having difficulty traveling a route or accessing a building because of construction, he/she should call the DSS for assistance. Students should also report accessibility or travel hazards to the DSS coordinator.

C. Service Animals

Service animals are allowed in all campus buildings and in all classrooms. If a class environment poses a threat to the animal (i.e., some science labs, med tech labs, etc.), the student should contact DSS to seek an alternative accommodation. Ongoing use of a service animal should be reported to DSS. If a student has a seizure animal, he/she should inform DSS, professors, and campus police of the animal's typical responses and reactions to the student and others when a seizure occurs. Under the ADA, a service animal is defined as a dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. The task(s) performed by the dog must be directly related to the person's disability.

D. Miniature Horses

In addition to service dogs, miniature horses that have been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities will be permitted on campus, where reasonable. (Miniature horses generally range in height from 24 inches to 34 inches measured to the shoulders and generally weigh between 70 and 100 pounds.) Regulations set out four assessment factors to assist entities in determining whether miniature horses can be accommodated in their facility. The assessment factors are (1) whether the miniature horse is housebroken; (2) whether the miniature horse is under the owner's control; (3) whether the facility can accommodate the miniature horse's

type, size, and weight; and (4) whether the miniature horse's presence will not compromise legitimate safety requirements necessary for safe operation of the facility.

E. Student Dismissal for Safety Reasons

All students, regardless of disability, must conform to SMCC's code of conduct. Students who behave in a manner that places others in danger may be dismissed from class and/or the College according to ADA's definition of Direct Threat.

F. Fire Safety

- If a fire alarm goes off and students are on the first floor of a building, they should leave through the closest accessible exit.
- Students on upper floors should not attempt to use the elevator, but should move to the nearest enclosed stairwell. If the stairwell is not enclosed, students should remain in the hall next to the stairs.
- In case of smoke, students should move to the closest restroom.
- Students should call, or notify a faculty member to call, campus police and tell the dispatcher that a fire alarm sounded and that they cannot exit the upper floor because of a disability. Students should state their name and exact location. The dispatcher will inform the fire department of the students' location. Students should stay on the line with the dispatcher and wait for further instructions.
- If there is a real fire, the dispatcher or the fire department will determine if the elevators are safe to use and will inform the student. Students should remember that fire fighters are specially trained in evacuation techniques and students will be safer if they are familiar with and follow SMCC's fire policy guidelines.

G. Evacuation Procedures for Persons with Disabilities

A primary concern of the Disability Support Services Office and Campus Police is the safety of individuals with disabilities on campus in the event of an emergency. DSS and Campus Police want to insure the optimal method of safe evacuation of students with disabilities, as well as the appropriate response in the event of medical emergency. In order to facilitate safe and prompt evacuation and proper emergency response, students registering with DSS are asked to complete an individual emergency plan (see Appendix 26).

VI. HELPFUL RESOURCES

A. Sources for Students with Disabilities

<http://www.bestcolleges.com/resources/disabled-students/>

<http://www.additudemag.com/resources/printables.html>

<http://www.additudemag.com/adhd-guide/college.html>

http://www.add.org/?page=college_resources

<http://www.studygs.net/adhd/>

<http://psychcentral.com/lib/a-toolkit-for-school-success-15-study-tips-for-students-with-adhd/0009398?all=1>

<http://psychcentral.com/blog/archives/2011/08/19/11-tips-for-succeeding-in-college-when-you-have-adhd/>

<http://teacch.com/educational-approaches/preparing-for-college-tips-for-students-with-hfa-aspergers-syndrome-new-gladys-williams-and-ann-palmer>

<http://www.nclد.org/types-learning-disabilities/dyslexia/helpful-resources>

http://www.brainline.org/landing_pages/categories/abouttbi_results.php

<http://www.nclد.org/students-disabilities/assistive-technology-education/apps-students-ld-dyslexia-reading-difficulties>

<http://www.additudemag.com/adhd/article/10231.html>

<http://www.inov8-ed.com/2011/07/theres-a-special-app-for-that-part-9-apps-for-college-university-students-with-learning-disabilities/>

www.ada.gov

<http://www.onlinecollegesdatabase.org/online-college-learning-for-students-with-disabilities/>

<http://www.thesimpledollar.com/college-scholarship-guide/>

www.thesummitrehab.com

B. State Testing and Accommodations-The Student's Responsibility

Students that plan to seek accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) are responsible for providing documentation and requesting accommodations prior to scheduling state examinations. For more information concerning state testing, please visit or call the agency in charge of the testing.

NCLEX-Testing accommodations are available for students with disabilities who meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) disability requirements. You must submit a Special Accommodations Request for NCLEX testing form prior to registering for the NCLEX. For more information, visit the following websites:

<http://www.msbn.state.ms.us/Documents/Nclexacc.pdf> (MS NCLEX)

<http://www.lsbn.state.la.us/Portals/1/Documents/Forms/NCLEXRequestSpecialTestingAccommodations.pdf> (LA NCLEX)

GED-Under the law, individuals with documented disabilities are entitled to reasonable and appropriate accommodations on standardized tests such as the tests of General Educational Development (GED). In order to request accommodations when taking the GED, one of four forms must be submitted. For more information, visit:

<http://www.ldonline.org/article/15574/>.

C. What to Expect When Transferring to a Four Year Institution

Four year institutions are required to provide accommodations under Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). However, students that want to continue receiving accommodations when transferring to a four year institution must self-report to that institution's Disability Support Services office and provide all necessary documentation.

VII. Appendices



Disability Support Services Request & Release Form

PLEASE USE BLACK OR BLUE INK TO COMPLETE THIS FORM

Name: _____ Semester: Fall Spring Summer

Student ID: _____ Year: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

E-mail: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Relationship: _____

Phone: _____ Secondary: _____

DISABILITY INFORMATION

Categories-check all that apply:

- | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ADD/ADHD | <input type="checkbox"/> Auditory | <input type="checkbox"/> Chronic Illness | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobility |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neurological | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical | <input type="checkbox"/> Psychological | <input type="checkbox"/> Seizures |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Learning Disability | <input type="checkbox"/> Visual | <input type="checkbox"/> Service Animal | |

Specific Diagnosis (es): _____

Specific Accommodations Requested: _____

Type of Documentation Submitted: _____ Date Submitted: _____

VERIFICATION INFORMATION:

I give permission to Disability Support Services to contact my parents and/or legal guardians and my diagnosing healthcare professional in their attempt to verify my eligibility for academic accommodations. I understand that this permission extends to verification process only. I also understand that arranging services will necessitate sharing with my instructors, information regarding my disability as it relates to my academic welfare. I give my permission for DSS personnel to contact my instructors regarding my academic progress, as needed.

Student Signature

Date

****Office Use Only****

- NEW SAME AS PRIOR CHANGED DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED

NOTES: _____

RELEASE OF RECORDS INFORMATION

I hereby authorize Southwest Mississippi Community College's Disability Support Services to communicate with the following: *(Please check)*

Parents

List exclusions: _____

SMCC Faculty/Staff, On Campus Services (i.e. Campus Police, etc.)

List exclusions: _____

Off Campus Services (i.e. Professionals, Schools, Vocational Rehab, etc.)

List exclusions: _____

Communication as denoted above may include obtaining and/or releasing student's historical and/or current information regarding assessment, diagnosis, needs, recommendations, treatment, prior services, academic records, performance, or information that may relate to accommodating student's needs on SMCC's campus. This consent form will be valid until revoked by student. A photocopy of the original consent form shall be as valid as the original consent form.

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Witnessed by _____ **Date** _____

This form requires a second signature from another individual. Please have this individual sign on the line after "Witnessed by."

DISCLOSURE INFORMATION:

By completing and signing this intake application, you are voluntarily disclosing a disorder and requesting accommodations. You understand that disclosure of your disorder at this time does not necessarily confirm your eligibility status for services or accommodations. You also understand that the length of the verification process will depend upon the appropriateness of the documentation that you have submitted. In addition, you understand that all information submitted to this office is to be completely confidential and used only for this institution's commitment and obligation to students with disabilities.

By signing below, you confirm that you have read and understand this document.

Student Signature **Date**

DSS Staff Signature **Date**

Date Application Received _____



Student Exam Agreement Disability Support Services (DSS) Southwest Mississippi Community College

To schedule an exam with DSS, I understand that:

- I must contact the DSS at ***least five working days prior*** to the exam date.
- If my class schedule or DSS's schedule does not interfere, the ***exam will be scheduled at the same time (and date) as the class exam.***
- ***For each test that I take with DSS, I will remind the instructor*** that DSS will administer the exam.

To reschedule an exam with the DSS, I understand I must:

- ***Provide proof, written documentation from an appropriate professional***, of extenuating circumstances that prevented, or will prevent, me from taking the exam at the scheduled time. *DSS reserves the right to contact the professional to verify the extenuating circumstances and make a judgment as to whether the exam may be rescheduled with DSS.*
- ***Take the exam by the date the instructor gives on the "Testing Instructions" form, or obtain the instructor's approval to take the exam after that date.*** The instructor must call DSS to convey that the exam can be rescheduled. *I can reschedule the exam only after the instructor calls DSS.*

If I am late for an exam (more than 15 minutes), I understand that it *will be regarded as a missed exam and will only be rescheduled if allowed by my instructor.* I will follow the appropriate rescheduling procedure as described above.

If DSS suspects academic dishonesty during an exam, it will be investigated immediately. Mirrors, cameras and observation will be used to insure that cheating does not occur. Students' personal belongings, purses, books, book bags, etc., will not be allowed in the testing room unless specified on the *Testing Instructions Form* that is completed by the instructor.

I have read and understand all of the above.

Student Name _____ **SMCC ID#** _____

Student Signature _____ **Date** _____

DSS Staff Signature _____ **Date** _____



**Student Note Taking Agreement
Disability Support Services (DSS)
Southwest Mississippi Community College**

Please read the following carefully before signing.

- I understand that I must attend class as scheduled and take my own notes.
- I understand that if I miss a class, I am responsible for obtaining the notes for the class that I missed.
- I understand that note takers are not required to share their notes on days that I miss unless the absence is directly related to my disability.
- I understand that I am responsible for communicating with the DSS Office if the notes are not clear or appropriate for my needs due to my disability.
- I understand that am responsible for notifying DSS if I experience problems with the quality of the notes, or the dependability of the note taker.
- I understand that I can choose to either receive the notes directly from the note taker or, if I wish to remain anonymous, I will get the notes from the instructor. I understand that it is my responsibility to state my preference at my interview with DSS.

I understand that if I abuse any of these agreements, DSS may suspend or terminate these services until a resolution can be reached.

I have read and understand that I must comply with the above requirements in order to receive note taking assistance as an accommodation at Southwest Mississippi Community College.

Student Name _____ **SMCC ID#** _____

Student Signature _____ **Date** _____

DSS Staff Signature _____ **Date** _____

For office use only
Approved by: _____ **Date approved:** _____



Disability Support Services (DSS) Testing Instructions Form

*For an exam to be administered by DSS, the Testing Instructions form must be completed and signed by the instructor. Please insure that this form is attached to the exam when the exam is delivered to DSS. **Please do not write the student's name on the outside of the envelope when forwarding the test to DSS.***

Student's Name: _____ Course: _____

Instructor's Name: _____ Phone Extension: _____

Amount of time class has to take exam: _____

Exam date for class: _____

At times, students cancel and reschedule exams, especially those with chronic health conditions. If an exam is canceled and rescheduled, the exam must be administered by this date (please specify): _____

Students can: (check all that apply)

- use scantron use bluebook use extra paper
- use statistical tables keep exam use textbooks (specify) _____
- use notes (specify) _____ use calculator (specify) _____
- other (specify) _____

To retrieve completed exam:

- DSS will return in campus mail Deliver to instructor
- Instructor will pick up at DSS

Office Number: _____ Office Location: _____

Instructor's Signature _____

DSS Staff Signature _____



Approval for Library Assistance

Date:

To:

From:

Please see that SMCC Library personnel provide assistance to _____ for collection access / use with the following. Assistance will not circumvent the intellectual process of information discovery for research purposes.

- Making photocopies
- Pulling library materials from the shelves for use
- Transporting library materials to a work space WITHIN THE LIBRARY
- Individual library orientation / tour for students and/or helper(s)
- Individual research training for student and/or helper(s)
- Special checkout of non-circulating materials for use with assistive equipment
- Other _____

Approved by: _____ SMCC Library Services

Please contact Rhonda Gibson, Director of Disability Support Services, at 601-276-3885 if you have any questions or concerns.



Student Agreement Use of Interpreter Services Provided by Southwest Mississippi Community College Disability Support Services

Upon request, interpreting services are provided for students with documented hearing loss or deafness. Students qualifying for interpreter services are expected to follow the policies and procedures as outlined in this agreement.

- The student must make a request for an interpreter in a timely manner through DSS. When making the request, the student must provide DSS with the exact dates, times, and locations for interpreter services. DSS will contact the interpreter and arrange for services.
- The student must notify DSS in changes of schedule(s), cancellation of class (es) or events, planned absences, illness or emergency absences. Assuming there is no emergency; DSS requires 24 hours' notification for changes in interpreter schedules. **Failure to notify DSS of cancellations, changes in schedules or absences may result in loss of interpreter services.**
- The student is responsible for keeping their own record of interpreter hours. Interpreters maintain a time sheet, which must be signed by the interpreter, instructor, and the student requiring the service.
- If a student personally requests services from an individual interpreter, he or she will assume personal financial responsibility or payment for these services. **Interpreters are not provided for personal use.**
- It is the student's responsibility to promptly inform the DSS if there is a problem with interpreter services.

I, _____, have read and understand the policies and procedures as described in *The Student Agreement Use of Interpreter Services* at Southwest Mississippi Community College. I understand that failure to follow the policies and procedures may cause me to lose interpreter services or become liable for rendering payment for services.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

DSS Staff _____ Date _____

Sign Language Interpreter _____ Date _____



August 15, 2016

Information contained in this letter is confidential.

To: Mr. Houseman
From: Rhonda Gibson, Director of Disability Support Services
Re: **Spring 2015 Accommodations for Suzy Saran (ID#00000) BIO3333**

Suzy is enrolled in your course for this semester. She has documentation of a qualifying disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on file with Disability Support Services (DSS). She has been approved for the following accommodations for the spring 2015 semester:

1. **Permit extended test taking time:** Please permit the student extended time (1 ½ times) within your classroom to complete tests, **when requested**. *If you are unable to do this, you may request that our office administer the exam.* However, we ask that you provide the student with at least five working days of advance notice of an exam and remind the student to call our office to schedule a testing time. **Prior to the exam date, please deliver the test and completed Testing Instructions form to our office.** Our office will utilize staff to proctor the exam in a quiet room. Testing Instructions forms are included in this letter.
2. **Provide a Note Taker:** Please locate a student that takes good notes and provide a copy for Suzy. This will not excuse her from taking her own notes and/or participating in class. I will be glad to provide carbon paper if needed.

For your records, please record the date that you receive this letter in the designated blank at the end of the letter and file this letter in a place that will insure the confidentiality of the student. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the DSS Office at ext.3885. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Rhonda Gibson
Director of Disability Support Services

C: Student File; Student

Received by: _____

Date of receipt: _____



Disability Support Services Request for Documentation

I hereby authorize you to release all necessary and appropriate information to Southwest Mississippi Community College's Disability Support Services regarding my request for accommodations:

Student's Name _____ **SSN** _____
(Please print)

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Witnessed by _____ **Date** _____

This form requires a second signature from another individual. Please have this individual sign on the line after "Witnessed by."

Professional Evaluator's Response

The above student has requested that Southwest Mississippi Community College provide classroom accommodations. Please assist the DSS Office in making the appropriate determination by answering the following questions and providing any additional documentation needed.

1. What is your professional area of expertise? Licensing information?
2. When and on approximately how many occasions have you treated this individual?
3. Does this individual have a mental or physical impairment?
If yes, please describe the nature of the impairment, its duration, diagnosis, and prognosis. (Please attach any additional documentation.)
4. If the individual has a mental or physical impairment, does that impairment substantially limit any major life activity?
If so, please describe which major life activities are adversely affected and in what manner they are affected. (Please be specific. Please attach any additional documentation)

5. If you answered yes to the above question, please describe what mitigation, correction or self-help measures are available to the individual to minimize the impairment.

6. What mitigating, corrective, or self-help measures does the individual currently use?

7. What, if any, accommodations do you recommend that will enable this student to fulfill his or her course requirements? (Please be specific.)

8. Please add any additional information, comments, or suggestions that will assist the college in determining whether the student is disabled within the meaning of the law, and, whether the student is eligible to receive reasonable accommodations as stated under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

<p>Evaluator's Name _____ (Please print) (Email address)</p> <p>Signature _____</p> <p>Please list the name and address of office/clinic below as well as the phone and fax numbers. _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

Thank you for your timely response. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the following.

Rhonda Gibson, Director of Disability Support Services
Southwest Mississippi Community College
1156 College Drive
Summit, MS 39666
Office: 601-276-3885 Fax: 601-276-3896
rgibson@smcc.edu