



# **STUDENT HANDBOOK FOR DISABILITY SERVICES**

**Student Academic Support Services and Inclusion**

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Memphis, TN 38163

(901) 448-5056

Dear Student,

SASSI is committed to ensuring that all students with disabilities, who are otherwise capable of meeting all technical standards of the College in which they are enrolled, are provided access to all facets of UTHSC. We are available to assist and coordinate support services and programs that enable students with disabilities to maximize their educational potential, as well as help increase awareness among all members of UTHSC, so that students with disabilities are able to achieve academic success based on their abilities, not their disabilities. SASSI assists students with documented disabilities by determining their eligibility for services and then working with students to determine reasonable accommodations and services which will, in turn, give the student equal access to the University.

This handbook was created to detail the guidelines and procedures for requesting and receiving accommodations at UTHSC. Please use the contents of this guide to learn more about the accommodations process as well as the services available for students with disabilities at UTHSC.

It is our hope that the information provided addresses your needs, but should you have a question or concern please contact the Disability Coordinator in SASSI at 901-448-5056. Please know that all conferences with SASSI are completely **confidential** and all services provided by SASSI are **free of charge** to students.

SASSI is located in the General Education Building, Room BB9 (basement). Our office hours are 8:00am to 5:00pm Monday through Friday; SASSI is closed from 1:00pm to 2:00pm daily for lunch.

We look forward to working with you!

SASSI Staff

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## **CONFIDENTIALITY AND RELEASE OF INFORMATION**

SASSI is committed to ensuring that all student information, including disability-related documentation, correspondence, and accommodation records, is kept confidential in accordance with state and federal laws.

### **UNIVERSITY OBLIGATION**

- The University has an obligation to confirm that students receiving accommodations have verified disabilities according to state and federal law. We request disability documentation on this information. Accommodations and services may not be provided if the student does not provide appropriate documentation of a disability, does not have a diagnosed disability, or does not follow policies and procedures. Disability documentation is housed in a confidential student file and does not become part of the student's academic record.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

- A student's self-disclosure of a disability is voluntary and students are never obligated to self-disclose their disability to SASSI, faculty, or staff. However, students who wish to obtain accommodations and/or other disability-related services must self-disclose their disability to SASSI and officially request accommodations.
- Disability related information is to be treated as medical information. Any information that regards a student's disability is considered confidential and shall be shared with others within the institution on a need-to-know basis and only for the purpose of assuring appropriate accommodations.
- A student's disability-related information remains in SASSI and is secured and accessible to only SASSI Staff; it does not become a part of the student's academic record. Information in files will not be released except in accordance with federal and state laws or pursuant to a court order or subpoena.
- A student must provide written authorization for information to be released.
- If a student asks that SASSI not discuss their situation with faculty or staff, their request will be honored. However, students must understand that if they are requesting SASSI to provide accommodations and if they prohibit the individuals responsible for implementing accommodations from discussing critical components of the situation, then it may not be possible to implement an accommodation.

## **APPLYING FOR SERVICES**

### **SELF-DISCLOSING AND REQUESTING ACCOMMODATIONS**

Student Academic Support Services and Inclusion (SASSI) provides academic services and accommodations for students with diagnosed disabilities in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008. The ADA defines a disability as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Students disclosing a diagnosed disability with evidence of a functional limitation that impacts the individual in the academic setting will be provided with reasonable accommodations.

Students with disabilities must be able to perform the essential functions (technical standards) of the curriculum with or without accommodations and present no threat to the safety and well-being of others. SASSI requires comprehensive documentation of the disability and a personal interview to determine appropriate services and accommodations.

Accommodations are considered on a case-by-case basis and are based upon specific, individual needs (based on documentation and history) and upon how well the accommodations meet the curricular goals of the course of studies. Both the student and faculty may be engaged in this process through SASSI.

It is the responsibility of the individual student to request accommodations, provide documentation, interact with SASSI personnel, and to advocate on their behalf.

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### **THE FOLLOWING PROCESS *MUST* BE FOLLOWED TO REQUEST ACCOMMODATIONS**

1. Documentation and other supporting evidence must be submitted to the SASSI. Students should submit their documentation and request for accommodations prior to enrollment whenever possible. Guidelines for documentation are outlined below.
  - a. Documentation of disability must be provided by a properly credentialed professional. Additional information may include former IEP's, letters from academic professionals, results of standardized testing and grades.
  - b. Documentation should
    - o Establish the existence of an impairment
    - o Indicate the degree to which the student's impairment substantially limits a major life activity
    - o Describe the manner in which the impairment limits the individual's ability to function in the academic environment
  - c. Documentation may include but is not limited to
    - o Test scores
    - o Objective medical data
    - o Clinical Observations
    - o Past academic or professional history
    - o The student's actual performance in similar situations
  - d. A direct link between the diagnosis and the requested accommodations

***Please refer to pages 9-17 for more detailed information related to documentation guidelines. Documentation guidelines can also be found on the SASSI Blackboard, SASSI webpage ([www.uthsc.edu/sassi](http://www.uthsc.edu/sassi)), or in the SASSI office.***

2. Students must complete and submit the *SASSI Self-Disclosure and Accommodation Request Forms*. Included in the forms is a *Release of Information Form* that students should sign to allow SASSI to discuss the student's needs with their medical provider and/or diagnostician and any offices from which they have previously received accommodations. While this release is not required in order to gain accommodations, it may be of significant help in determining appropriate accommodations.
  - a. ***The SASSI Self-Disclosure and Accommodation Request Forms can be found on the SASSI Blackboard, SASSI webpage, or in the SASSI office.***
  - b. ***Students must request each accommodation they are seeking. Please provide this specific information on the request form as each request is taken into consideration during the review of documentation***
  - c. ***Extra time on clinical performance tests is very rarely granted and only after considerate deliberation by the disability consultant, the academic affairs officer of the College, and the course director/clerkship director.***
  - d. ***In-class quizzes are often times difficult to provide additional time for due to prohibiting a student from participating in class, but should it become problematic students should contact the Disability Coordinator in SASSI.***
3. Upon delivering these forms to SASSI, students must make an appointment for an intake interview to discuss their disability and specific needs for accommodations. Interviews will take place in person, by phone, or through video-conferencing depending on the situation.
4. Students may be asked for additional information and should respond to all requests as soon as possible. Failure to do so may result in a denial and/or delay of the accommodation requests.
5. Students will be provided with a written decision regarding their accommodations after all requested material has been provided and reviewed.
  - a. ***Please note that we try our best to process the requests for accommodations in a timely fashion, however obtaining accommodations is not immediate and can be a lengthy process at times.***
  - b. ***An approved accommodation(s) at UTHSC is not a guarantee that an accommodation(s) would be granted on Board Exams.***
6. Students may appeal the decision regarding accommodations by writing a letter to the Director of SASSI. This appeal will be reviewed with the student and appropriate personnel.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT APPLYING FOR SERVICES:**

- Accommodations are not retroactive. If you are not sure if you'll need accommodations, it is better to have them in place should the need occur.
- Accommodations can be requested at any point during the semester. However, it does take time to process the request and review documentation to determine the provision of accommodations. Don't wait until your test is days away.
- A prior history of accommodations in a previous academic environment is not a guarantee that accommodations would be granted. A prior history of accommodations without a demonstration of a current need does not in itself warrant the provision of similar accommodations.
- For students that have a disability but do not wish to seek accommodations, we still encourage you to register with our office.
- Self-disclosure of a disability is completely voluntary; however students wishing to request accommodations must self-disclose their disability and make a direct request for accommodations in SASSI.
- All information is confidential in SASSI. Written consent by the student would be needed for information to be released.
- Students must be officially approved for accommodations in order for SASSI to provide accommodations.
- An approved accommodation(s) for a test is not a guarantee that an accommodation would be approved on clinicals.
- An approved accommodation(s) at UTHSC is also not a guarantee that an accommodation would be granted on board exams.

## **REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS**

### **WHAT IS A REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION?**

- Accommodations are modifications to a condition that would otherwise cause a student, because of a disability, to be at a disadvantage relative to non-disabled students in their access to the university's programs for students. Reasonable accommodations provide equitable access to programs or facilities and do not fundamentally alter the essential nature of a course or academic program.
- In order for accommodations to be reasonable they:
  - Cannot fundamentally alter the nature of an academic program;
  - Compromise the essential elements of the program;
  - Cause an undue financial or administrative burden;
  - Endanger the safety of patients, self, or others.

*Accommodations are never designed to substantially alter the curriculum or eliminate the student from meeting the academic or technical standards.*

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### **HOW ARE REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS DETERMINED?**

Accommodations are determined on an individual, case-by-case basis. In some rare instances, the academic affairs or course director may be asked if an accommodation is reasonable given the technical standards of the academic program. Further, in addition to the disability consultant, other resources such as the Association on Higher Education and Disabilities, physicians, psychologists, psychiatrists, educators and other relevant experts are frequently consulted. Reasonable accommodations are determined by examining:

- The documentation of the disability and recommendations made by the diagnosing professional;
  - The student's request for a specific accommodation(s);
  - Barriers resulting from the interaction between the documented disability and the campus environment;
  - Possible accommodations that might remove the barriers;
  - Whether or not the essential elements of the course/program are compromised by the accommodation(s).
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*\*\* The amount of time needed for a test is carefully determined by examining disability documentation, observations of the student's ability, and historical information. Extra time on clinical performance tests is very rarely granted and only after considerable deliberation by the disability consultant, academic affairs officer of the College, and the course director/clerkship director.*

*\*\* In-class quizzes are often times difficult to provide additional time for due to prohibiting a student from participating in class, but should it become problematic students should contact the Disability Coordinator in SASSI.*



## GUIDELINES FOR DOCUMENTING A DISABILITY

To provide reasonable and appropriate academic accommodations to UTHSC students with disabilities, SASSI requires documentation to show the current diagnosis, the significant functional limitation in a major life activity being impacted for which an accommodation is being requested, and a rationale for why the accommodation is needed.

UTHSC adheres to the standards set forth by Educational Testing Services (ETS). It is essential that each student understand his/her responsibility to look at the information provided for the *specific* type of disability for which they are asking accommodations and make certain that the documentation adheres to those specific guidelines.

### DOCUMENTATION MUST *MINIMALLY* INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

All documentation submitted to SASSI must include the following information in addition to specific disability information listed on the following pages.

1. **The report must clearly state the diagnosed disability or disabilities.** Terms such as “suggest” or “is indicative of” are not acceptable.
2. **Describe the significant functional limitation(s) and the specific effect(s) it has in the learning environment.** A diagnosis in and of itself is not sufficient for accommodations.
  - o *This information is frequently left out of reports and is essential for the approval of documentation.*
3. **Documentation must be current, in most cases within the last 3 years.** The determination of what is current documentation depends on the nature of the disability: within the last 3-5 years for a learning disability, last 6 months for psychiatric disabilities, or last 3 years for ADHD and all other disabilities. However, SASSI reserves the right to make appropriate modifications to this time frame.
4. **Include complete educational, developmental, and medical history** relevant to the disability for which testing accommodations are being requested.
5. **Include a list of all testing instruments, scores and subtest scores derived from these tests and a discussion of the data** in the evaluation report. SASSI reserves the right to determine which tests are acceptable for diagnosing the disability. Standardized tests must be based on adult norms.

6. **Describe the specific accommodations being requested and explain the rationale for each as to why the accommodations may be needed based upon the student’s functional limitation.**
  - *A request for extended time should have documentation that demonstrates difficulty taking tests under timed conditions. In most cases, the documentation should include scores from both timed and extended/untimed tests, to demonstrate any differences caused by the timed conditions.*
  - *Please Note: If extended test taking time is suggested, the inability to complete an exam is not a sufficient rationale since this does not address the academic need for the accommodation as related to the student’s functional limitation and disability.*
7. **Reports should be typed or printed on official letterhead and be signed by an evaluator qualified to make the diagnosis** (include information about license or certification and area of specialization). Professionals conducting the evaluation/assessment must be qualified to do so, and it is essential that they have experience working with adult populations.
8. **If medications are taken these should be listed.** Any potential side effects caused by the medications should also be listed.
9. **If symptoms involve cognitive recall (memory), appropriate testing needs to be conducted.** Testing for specific learning disabilities may be appropriate.
10. **A doctor’s prescription pad note or a school plan such as an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) or a 504 Plan IS NOT sufficient documentation in and of itself,** but can be included as part of a more comprehensive evaluation report.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

- *It must be understood that evaluation reports themselves do not automatically qualify a student for registration or services through the SASSI. SASSI will make the final decision as to whether reasonable and appropriate accommodations are needed and can be provided to the student.*
- *It is important to note that a prior history of receiving accommodations in previous academic/testing environments is not a guarantee one will be granted accommodations on a high stakes examination. Prior documentation may have been adequate in determining appropriate services or accommodations in the past. However, a prior history of accommodations without demonstration of a current need does not in itself warrant the provision of similar accommodations.*

## DOCUMENTATION FOR A SPECIFIC DISABILITY

*In addition to the general guidelines listed on pages 9-10, documentation for a specific disability must also include the following:*

### **ADHD**

**1. A qualified diagnostician must conduct the evaluation.**

- Professionals conducting assessments and rendering diagnoses of ADHD must be qualified to do so. Comprehensive training in the differential diagnosis of ADHD and direct experience in diagnosis and treatment of adolescents and adults with ADHD is necessary.

**2. Evaluation report must include specific information:**

- Date(s) of assessment;
- Clear diagnosis utilizing the appropriate DSM-5 or ICD code(s);
- A description of the exact symptoms and criteria met for the diagnosis as well as absence of specific diagnostic criteria for ADHD;
- A description of how the condition was diagnosed;
- Identification of tools used for diagnostic purposes;
- Clinical observations;
- Relevant pharmacological history, explanation of the extent to which the medication(s) currently benefit and effect the student;
- Testing results using adult norms and reporting as percentiles or stanines, along with standard scores;
- Description of the functional impact as it pertains to the learning environment;
- Details about the typical progression or prognosis of the condition.

**3. Evidence to support a childhood onset of symptoms and associated impairment.**

- Historical information regarding the individual's developmental, academic and behavioral functioning in elementary and secondary education;
- Review of educational records and parental report in addition to self-report;
- Validity for a self-reported impairment, which must include historical information that confirms developmentally deviant ADHD symptoms and impairment such as difficulties and/or use of accommodations in elementary school, middle school, high school or college;
- Early psycho-educational testing reports;
- Documentation from tutors or learning specialists;
- Disciplinary records.

**4. Documentation should build a case for and provide a rationale for the ADHD diagnosis.**

- In-depth history reflecting a chronic and pervasive history of ADHD symptoms and associated impairment beginning during childhood and persisting to the present day;
- Description and emphasis on how ADHD symptoms have manifested across various settings over time, how the student has coped with the problems and what success the student has had in their coping efforts;

- Documentation must rule out alternative explanations for the identified difficulty, including psychological or physical reasons, cognitive ability, academic background, poor study and test-taking habits;
- All co-morbid issues should be addressed and the manner in which they impact the diagnosis or need for accommodations should also be discussed;
- A thorough explanation of the significant functional limitation(s) to major life activities (e.g. learning, concentrating, thinking) posed by the disability;
- Description of the degree to which the functional limitations apply to the life activity for which accommodations are being requested.

**5. Comprehensive testing battery and diagnostic report with specific assessment data must be included.**

- Summary of the assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis.
- An intellectual assessment including sub-test scores, standard scores and percentiles or stanines:
  - Acceptable IQ Tests:
    - Kaufman Adolescent and Adult Intelligence Test
    - Reynolds Intellectual Assessment Scales (RIAS)
    - Stanford Binet – 5<sup>th</sup> Edition
    - Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-IV (WAIS-IV)
    - Woodcock-Johnson III, Tests of Cognitive Abilities, General Intellectual Ability (WJ-III)
  - NOT Acceptable IQ Tests:
    - Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test (K-BIT)
    - Slosson Intelligence Test
    - Wechsler Abbreviated Scale of Intelligence (WASI)
    - Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children – V (WISC-V)
- A comprehensive academic achievement battery with all sub-test scores, standard scores and percentiles or stanines reported, and should include current levels of academic functioning in such relevant areas as reading (decoding and comprehension), mathematics, and oral and written language.
  - Acceptable Achievement Tests:
    - Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults (SATA)
    - Stanford Test of Academic Skills (TASK)
    - Wechsler Individual Achievement Test – III (WIAT-III)
    - Woodcock-Johnson III Psycho-educational Battery: Test of Achievement (WJ-III)
    - Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests – Revised
    - Nelson-Denny Reading Testing (*to be used as supplemental test*)
  - NOT Acceptable Achievement Tests:
    - Wide Range Achievement Test – 4 (WRAT-4)
- Assessment of short and long term memory, auditory and visual perception and processing, executive functioning, and/or motor ability. Sub-test scores, standard scores and percentiles or stanines should be provided for all normed measures.
  - Acceptable Processing Tests:
    - Detroit Test of Learning Aptitude – Adult
    - Woodcock-Johnson III, Tests of Cognitive Abilities (WJ-III)
    - Wechsler Memory Scale IV (WMS-IV)
    - Wide Range Assessment of Memory and Learning–2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (WRAML -2)
- Age/grade equivalent scores are not sufficient in the absence of standard scores or percentile ranks; all test scores must be included in the report including sub-test scores, standard scores and percentile ranks or stanines.
- Test data should logically reflect a substantial limitation to learning for which the student is requesting the accommodation.

- The particular profile of the student's strengths and weaknesses must be shown to relate to functional limitations that may necessitate accommodations.
- Checklists and/or ADHD symptom rating scales can be a helpful supplement in the diagnostic process, but by themselves are not adequate to establish a diagnosis of ADHD.
- Test scores or sub-test scores alone should not be used as a sole measure for the diagnostic decision regarding ADHD as they do not in and of themselves establish the presence or absence of ADHD.

**6. Each accommodation recommended must include a rationale.**

- Accommodations are not granted on the basis of a diagnostic label. Instead, accommodation requests need to be tied to evidence of current functional impairment that supports their use.
- The evaluator must describe the type and degree of impact ADHD has on a specific major life activity and on the individual.
- Each recommendation should be tailored to the individual and tied to specific test results and clinical observations.
- A detailed explanation supporting the need for *each* requested accommodation must be provided. The rationale should explain why the specific accommodation is needed based upon functional limitations established through the evaluation process.
- If extended time is recommended as an accommodation, specific evidence must demonstrate improved performance with additional time.
  - “The inability to complete an exam” is not sufficient evidence for extended test taking time. It does not address the academic need for the accommodation as related to testing data, the student’s functional limitation(s), and disability.

## **DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING**

**1. Report from an audiologist or otolaryngologist that includes the following:**

- Clear statement of deafness or hearing loss;
- Current audiogram that reflects the degree of hearing loss and current impact the deafness or hearing loss has on the student’s functioning;
  - The type of hearing loss (conductive or sensorineural);
  - The status of the individual’s hearing in regards to whether the hearing loss is temporary or permanent, and if it is stable or progressive;
- Whether the condition is mitigated by hearing aids or medication;
- Recommendations for reasonable academic accommodations.

## **PHYSICAL / MEDICAL**

**1. Letter or report from a physician in an appropriate medical specialization that includes the following:**

- The specific medical condition which causes the disability;
- Whether the condition is temporary or permanent, and if it is stable or progressive;
- Information about current prescribed medications used to treat the disability and possible side effects;
- A description of the functionally limiting manifestations of the condition(s) for which accommodations are being requested;
- Recommendations and rationales for reasonable academic accommodations.

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL**

**1. Psychological or neuropsychological evaluation or report from a psychiatrist or licensed psychologist that includes the following:**

- Clear statement of the condition with the DSM-5 diagnosis;
- Clear description of the specific symptoms experienced by the student which meet the criteria for the diagnosis;
- A summary of the assessment procedures and evaluation instruments which were used to make the diagnosis;
- Information about current prescribed medications used to treat the disability and possible side effects;
- Description of the functional limitation(s) caused by the disability that would impact the academic context for which accommodations are being requested;
- Recommendations and rationales for reasonable academic accommodations.

## **SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY**

**1. A qualified diagnostician must conduct the evaluation.**

- Professionals conducting assessments and rendering diagnoses of LD must be qualified to do so. Comprehensive training in the differential diagnosis of LD and direct experience in diagnosis and treatment of adolescents and adults with LD is necessary.

**2. Documentation must be current.**

- Although LD is normally viewed as lifelong, the severity and manifestations of the condition may change over time. The provision of reasonable accommodations and services is based upon assessment of the *current* impact of the disability on the testing activity, therefore it is necessary to provide "recent" and appropriate documentation.

**3. Evaluation report must include specific information:**

- Date(s) of assessment;
- A clear diagnosis utilizing the appropriate DSM-5 or ICD code(s);
- A description of how the condition was diagnosed;
- Identification of tools used for diagnostic purposes;
- Diagnostic interview and clinical observations;
- Testing results using adult norms and reporting as percentiles or stanines, along with standard scores;
- Description of the functional impact as it pertains to the learning environment;
- Description of both the nature and severity of the learning disability.

**4. Historical information that might support a childhood onset of symptoms and associated impairment.**

- Learning disabilities are commonly manifested during childhood, but not always formally diagnosed, thus historical information regarding the individual's developmental, academic and behavioral functioning in elementary and secondary education is necessary;
- Review of educational records, early psycho-educational reports, parental report in addition to self-report and disciplinary records;
- Validity for a self-reported impairment, which must include historical information that confirms LD symptoms and impairment such as difficulties and/or use of accommodations in elementary school, middle school, high school or college;
- Documentation from tutors or learning specialists.

**5. Rule Out.**

- Documentation must rule out alternative explanations for the identified difficulty, including psychological or physical reasons, poor study and test-taking habits, academic background or attentional, emotional, or motivational problems;
- All co-morbid issues should be addressed and the manner in which they impact the diagnosis or need for accommodations should also be discussed;
- A thorough explanation of the significant functional limitation(s) to major life activities (e.g. learning, concentrating, thinking) posed by the disability;
- Description of the degree to which the functional limitations apply to the life activity for which accommodations are being requested;
- If data indicate that a LD is not present, the evaluator should state that in the conclusion of report.

**6. Comprehensive evaluation and diagnostic report with specific assessment data must be provided.**

- Summary of the assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis;
- An intellectual assessment including sub-test, standard scores and percentiles or stanines:
  - Acceptable IQ Tests:
    - Kaufman Adolescent and Adult Intelligence Test
    - Reynolds Intellectual Assessment Scales (RIAS)
    - Stanford Binet – 5<sup>th</sup> Edition
    - Wechsler Adult Intelligence Score-IV (WAIS-IV)
    - Woodcock-Johnson III, Tests of Cognitive Ability (WJ-III)
  - NOT Acceptable IQ Tests:
    - Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test (K-BIT)
    - Slosson Intelligence Test
    - Wechsler Abbreviated Scale of Intelligence (WASI)
    - Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children –V (WISC-V)

- A comprehensive academic achievement battery with all sub-test, standard scores and percentiles or stanines reported, and should include current levels of academic functioning in such relevant areas as reading (decoding and comprehension), mathematics, and oral and written language:
  - Acceptable Achievement Tests:
    - Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults (SATA)
    - Stanford Test of Academic Skills (TASK)
    - Wechsler Individual Achievement Test – III (WIAT-III)
    - Woodcock-Johnson III, Tests of Achievement (WJ-III)
    - Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests – Revised
    - Nelson-Denny Reading Testing (*to be used as supplemental test*)
  - NOT Acceptable Achievement Tests:
    - Wide Range Achievement Test – 4 (WRAT-4)
- Assessment of short and long term memory, auditory and visual perception and processing, executive functioning, and/or motor ability. Sub-test scores, standard scores and percentiles or stanines should be provided for all normed measures.
  - Acceptable Processing Tests:
    - Detroit Test of Learning Aptitude – Adult
    - Woodcock-Johnson III, Tests of Cognitive Abilities (WJ-III)
    - Wechsler Memory Scale IV (WMS-IV)
    - Wide Range Assessment of Memory and Learning – 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (WRAML – 2)
- Age/grade equivalent scores are not sufficient in the absence of standard scores or percentile ranks.
- Test data should logically reflect a substantial limitation to learning for which the student is requesting the accommodation.
- The particular profile of the student's strengths and weaknesses must be shown to relate to functional limitations that may necessitate accommodations.

**7. Each accommodation recommended must include a rationale.**

- Accommodations are not granted on the basis of a diagnostic label. Instead, accommodation requests need to be tied to evidence of current functional impairment that supports their use.
- The evaluator must describe the type and degree of impact that the LD has (if one exists) on a specific major life activity and on the individual.
- A detailed explanation supporting the need for each requested accommodation must be provided. The rationale should explain why the specific accommodation is needed based upon functional limitations established through the evaluation process.
- If extended time is recommended as an accommodation, specific evidence must demonstrate improved performance with additional time.
  - “The inability to complete an exam” is not sufficient evidence for extended test taking time. It does not address the academic need for the accommodation as related to testing data, the student’s functional limitation(s), and disability.



## **SPEECH IMPAIRMENT**

**1. Report or letter from a speech pathologist or physician that includes the following:**

- The specific disabling condition;
- Whether the condition is temporary or permanent, and if it is stable or progressive;
- A description of the functional limitation(s) caused by the disability on student's academic performance;
- Recommendations for reasonable academic accommodations.

## **VISUAL IMPAIRMENT**

**1. Report or letter from an ophthalmologist or optometrist that includes the following:**

- The specific medical condition which causes the visual impairment and how long the student has experienced the condition;
- The degree of visual acuity, including with corrective lenses;
- The extent of the visual fields;
- Whether the condition is temporary or permanent, and if it is stable or progressive;
- Whether the condition is mitigated by corrective lenses or medication;
- A description of the functional limitation(s) caused by the disability;
- Recommendations for reasonable academic accommodations including any visual aids.

## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The information below explains the rights and responsibilities of students with disabilities as well as the obligations UTHSC has to provide academic adjustments, auxiliary aids, and/or services. Each student receiving academic adjustments, auxiliary aids, and/or services through the SASSI is required to sign a *Student Agreement*, which outlines his/her responsibilities for receiving academic adjustments.

### **Students with disabilities have a RIGHT to:**

- Equal access to courses, programs, services, and activities offered through UTHSC;
- Confidentiality of all information pertaining to the individual's disability, except as disclosures are required or permitted by law;
- Accessible formats of information if reasonably available;
- Equal opportunity to learn through reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services.

### **Students with Disabilities have a RESPONSIBILITY to:**

- Meet qualifications and maintain essential institutional technical standards for courses, services and activities.
- To self-disclose as an individual with a disability when an academic adjustment, auxiliary aids and/or service is needed.
- To follow published procedures and seek information, counsel, and assistance in a *timely manner* to request accommodations and services.
- Complete and submit the "*Self-Disclosure and Accommodation Request Forms*" to SASSI.
- Provide recent documentation from an appropriate professional detailing how a student's disability limits participation in courses, programs, services, or activities and provides support for each accommodation request.
- Submit a copy of class testing dates, as well as any other relevant information such as the clerkship rotation schedule, clerkship sites, etc. each term.
- Discuss the accommodation(s) with the instructor during the first week of class or rotation and/or within one week of being granted the accommodation.
- Inform SASSI if the student elects not to use an approved accommodation. An "*Exam Accommodation Waiver*" form will need to be completed.
- Promptly inform the SASSI Disability Coordinator of any problems with the manner in which an accommodation(s) is being provided.

- If taking exams in SASSI with approved accommodations, the student has a responsibility to:
  1. **Notify the Disability Coordinator no less than 5 days prior to an exam** to ensure it is scheduled at the correct testing time in the SASSI.
  2. **For paper/pencil exams and Blackboard exams, students must notify the professor 3 days prior to each exam** in order to ensure that the exam and/or password information will be available in the SASSI office at the time of the exam.
  3. **In the event there is a schedule conflict due to testing in SASSI with extended time, the Disability Coordinator must be notified as far in advance as possible or no less than 5 days prior to the exam.** Students *cannot* be tardy or miss a class due to testing with extended time. Arrangements would need to be made in advance if there is a scheduling conflict and students must complete an *Alternate Arrangement* form.
  4. Adhere to the honor code policy as stated in *The CenterScope Student Handbook*.
  5. Follow the SASSI Testing Guidelines and Testing Policy as outlined on page 21 of this handbook as well as in the *Self-Disclosure and Accommodation Request Forms*.
  6. Ensure that all tests are scheduled in SASSI between 8am-5pm. The SASSI is closed for lunch each day from 1-2pm. All exams in SASSI must be completed by 5pm.
  7. Notify SASSI Staff immediately should any problems or issues occur while testing in SASSI.
- **Note:** Accommodations are not a guarantee of a certain grade or of success in a particular class; rather they are for the purpose of providing equal access to education. Also, an approved accommodation for a test is not a guarantee of an accommodation on clinicals/rotations. Furthermore, an approved accommodation at UTHSC is not a guarantee that an accommodation will be approved on board exams.

**Faculty and Staff have a RIGHT to:**

- Establish essential functions, abilities, skills, knowledge, and standards for courses, programs, services, and activities, and to evaluate students on this basis;
- To identify and maintain the academic and technical standards that are fundamental to providing a quality academic program, while ensuring the rights of individuals with disabilities;
- To refuse an unreasonable accommodation, adjustment, or auxiliary aid or service that imposes an undue hardship or a fundamental alteration of a program or activity at UTHSC;
- To select and recommend accommodations which are equally effective for individuals with disabilities.

**Faculty and Staff have a RESPONSIBILITY to:**

- Include a statement on syllabi to inform students with disabilities how to access accommodations on campus through SASSI.
- Refer any student that may report having a disability, but that does not currently receive approved accommodations, to the SASSI.

- Maintain the same academic standards for all students, as with appropriate accommodations students with disabilities should be expected to perform at the same academic proficiency levels as their non-disabled peers.
- Work cooperatively with the students and SASSI in providing accommodations **only** to those students approved for accommodations. A notification is received by the college's Academic Dean's Office each semester with the student's that are currently approved for accommodations through the SASSI.
- Ensure that students receive the needed accommodations without undue complications.
- Provide, in a timely fashion, test materials SASSI may need to ensure appropriate accommodations for students.
- Respect the student's right to privacy; keep disability-related information confidential. Students with disabilities are protected under FERPA and the civil rights law. At no time should faculty and staff make any statements or implications that the student with a disability is any different from the general student population.
- Remember that the student has the right not to self-disclose or discuss the particulars of his/her disability with faculty or staff except on a need-to-know basis.
- Contact SASSI immediately in the event problems occur.
- Be aware that further accommodations/arrangements may be made at a later time by a member of the SASSI staff.

Students are not expected or required to provide faculty with detailed documentation about their disabilities. Therefore, SASSI does not give advance notice to faculty regarding students with disabilities who are enrolled in their classes. From a legal standpoint, it is strongly advisable that faculty not request or expect such detailed documentation from the student. It is, however, entirely appropriate for faculty to request that the students provide verification from SASSI that they are registered with the Disability Coordinator.

## SASSI TESTING GUIDELINES

*Tests are proctored between 8:00am – 1:00pm and 2:00pm – 5:00pm*  
*ALL testing must be completed by 5:00pm*

### SCHEDULING

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1. Students are responsible for scheduling their exams with the Disability Coordinator in SASSI.  
*\*\*\* If a student chooses to not use their testing accommodations in the SASSI the Disability Coordinator should be notified.*
2. **At the beginning of each semester:** Students must provide the Disability Coordinator with their exam schedule AND inform their course directors that they test in SASSI.
3. **5 days before an exam:** Students must contact the Disability Coordinator to confirm they are scheduled for the exam.
4. **3 days before an exam:** For paper/pencil exams and Blackboard exams, students must remind their course directors that they test in SASSI so that exam information is available on the scheduled date of administration.

### MATERIALS & TOOLS

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5. Students must lock up their belongings before beginning an exam in SASSI. This includes any ID badges that contain attached information. Pockets should be emptied of papers, cell phones, pagers or any other electronic devices.  
*\*\*\* Only materials the professor has permitted may be taken into the testing room.*

### TIME

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6. **Exams start at the regular class time:** If a student receives extended time and the amount of testing time for an exam would interfere with another course/lab on the schedule, students are responsible for completing an Alternate Testing Arrangement Form and making arrangements with the College, instructors or course directors so that another testing time can be approved in SASSI.  
*\*\*\* Students cannot be tardy or miss a class due to extended testing time in the SASSI.*
7. Students are **not** allowed to start an exam if **more than 15 minutes late**, unless prior arrangements have been made.

### RESTRICTIONS

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8. Every effort should be made to remain in the testing room throughout the duration of the exam.
9. If snacks and/or drinks are permitted in the testing room, a proctor must check each item prior to the student entering the testing area.
10. Students may not use their own computer for computerized tests.

### HONOR CODE

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11. The SASSI upholds the Honor Code of each College and maintains an environment of academic integrity.

***SASSI Staff should be notified immediately should any issues occur while testing in SASSI with approved accommodations.***

In order to provide quality services to students with disabilities, students must provide appropriate documentation of a disability and be approved by the disability consultant for reasonable accommodations. SASSI is unable to provide accommodations to students that have not been formerly approved.

### **WHAT IF A STUDENT HAS A TEMPORARY NEED FOR AN ACCOMMODATION?**

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- At times a situation may occur where a temporary accommodation is provided for a student. It is a provisional arrangement made on a case-by-case basis and is not an official approved accommodation.
- This arrangement is not a substitute for a student with no documentation to get accommodations nor is it a replacement for a student whose documentation has been denied.

### **FOR CONSIDERATION OF A TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION, THE FOLLOWING MUST OCCUR:**

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- **Step 1:** Documentation is provided, even if it may be insufficient information to meeting UTHSC guidelines, which presents a diagnosis and substantiates a need for accommodations.
- **Step 2:** The Disability Consultant is in the process of reviewing documentation to determine the provision of accommodations.
- **Step 3:** Appropriate documentation is in the process of being obtained, including any upcoming evaluation appointments.
- **Step 4:** A request for a temporary accommodation is submitted.

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**Complete documentation must be received within 6-8 weeks of receiving temporary accommodations or else they will be waived. If you have difficulty in meeting this deadline due to troubles making a testing appointment, you must contact the disability coordinator immediately.**

## **DISABILITY RELATED ABSENCES**

The following guidelines describe the process whereby students currently registered with SASSI for a documented disability can arrange to make-up an exam due to an **absence directly related to a previously disclosed and documented disability**.

1. **Students must follow the College/professor's policy regarding notification of an absence from an exam.** The reason/diagnosis for which the absence is based need only be shared with the SASSI staff.
2. Students aware that they will miss an exam prior to its administration must notify the College first and then notify the SASSI by email as soon as possible, prior to the exam.
3. After notifying the College, if the student is not able to notify SASSI due to an unexpected absence it is expected that they notify the SASSI in writing within **12 hours of the original exam administration time**.
4. Within **5 working days** the student must provide SASSI with a written explanation/medical excuse from the diagnosing clinician. Once written notification is received SASSI can verify the absence, if needed, for the professor.
  - a. *The notification must include information that directly supports the need for the absence from an exam based on a documented disability on file with SASSI. This explanation must be from a professional on letterhead and include a projected date for return to campus.*
5. Students must follow the College/professor's policy regarding make-up exams. If taking a makeup exam in the SASSI, follow SASSI procedures for regular exam administration.
6. Faculty members should contact SASSI if they desire verification of the disability-related absence from an exam. Faculty members must refrain from asking the student for specific and detailed documentation of the excused absence as such explanations/documentation constitute a violation of the student's privacy rights.
7. When providing a make-up exam for a student with a disability-related excused absence, faculty members must administer the same make-up exam given to all other students, provided that the make-up exam is given at the same time for all students.
  - a. *Should it be necessary to prepare a separate make-up exam for any student (disability or not), faculty members must provide an exam that is comparable to the original with respect to the types of questions, length of exam, and complexity of the questions.*

**PLEASE NOTE: SASSI should not be contacted unless the excuse is directly related to a disability that has been documented by SASSI. Absences that are not attributable to a documented disability must be handled according to the College/professor's written policy regarding missed exams.**

## **ARRANGING MAKE-UP EXAMS IN SASSI**

The following guidelines describe the process whereby make-up exams in SASSI can be arranged.

1. Students must adhere to the College/professor's policy regarding notification of an absence from an exam.
2. For students scheduling a make-up exam in the SASSI, you must first communicate with the College/professor regarding arrangements for the exam. Any exam scheduled in SASSI must be approved by the College/professor prior to making arrangements with SASSI.
3. To make arrangements for any exam in the SASSI, contact Laurie Brooks, [lbrook15@uthsc.edu](mailto:lbrook15@uthsc.edu). A make-up exam in SASSI cannot be scheduled without the approval of the College/professor.
4. Due to the amount of testing that takes place in SASSI, it is important that we be notified as soon as testing arrangements have been made. **All tests MUST be scheduled in advance in the SASSI to ensure a proctor for the exam and to guarantee testing space in the SASSI.**
5. Testing in SASSI is not an excused absence for being late or missing a class. Policy states that students may not arrive late or miss a class to make up an examination in SASSI without the approval of the College/professor.
6. Make-up exams can be taken in SASSI between the hours of 8:00am–1:00pm and 2:00pm–5:00pm. We close for lunch from 1:00pm–2:00pm. All exams must be completed by 5:00pm, so please keep this in mind when making testing arrangements.



## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

### **Accessible Parking**

- Students with disabilities needing accessible parking should contact the Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) to help facilitate this process with Parking Services. UTHSC Accessible Parking Forms will need to be completed and documentation provided. OED can be contacted at (901) 448-2112.

### **UTHSC University Health Services**

- UHS serves students, employees and families of UTHSC, as well as students from Baptist College of Health Science and Christian Brothers University. Fees are paid within your tuition, so there is no out of pocket expense, for almost all services, which can be found on the UHS webpage: [www.uthsc.edu/univheal/student\\_services/index.php](http://www.uthsc.edu/univheal/student_services/index.php)

### **UTHSC Student Behavioral Health Services**

- UHS has an extensive behavioral health program that includes Student Mental Health, counseling, emotional support services, urgent care, and other related services. Call (901) 448-5360 or visit the UHS webpage and click on Mental Health.

### **Student Assistance Program (SAP)**

- 1-800-327-2255 - Call the toll free number 24/7 to speak with a specialist for personal consultation for situations that can impact your well-being or academic performance (i.e. relationship problems, sexual orientation, alcohol and substance abuse, stress, eating disorders, emotional, financial, and legal problems). Up to 6 free face-to-face visits for any issue and no insurance is filed; thereafter student insurance is a necessity.
- Additional information can be found on the UHS webpage under Student Services -> Student Assistance Program: [http://www.uthsc.edu/univheal/student\\_services/SAP.php](http://www.uthsc.edu/univheal/student_services/SAP.php)

### **The Office of Equity and Diversity**

- For any requests, concerns, or complaints in regards to compliance with the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act at UTHSC contact this office by calling (901) 448-2112.

### **Library Accommodations at UTHSC**

- Contact the Associate Director of the Library, (901) 448-5165