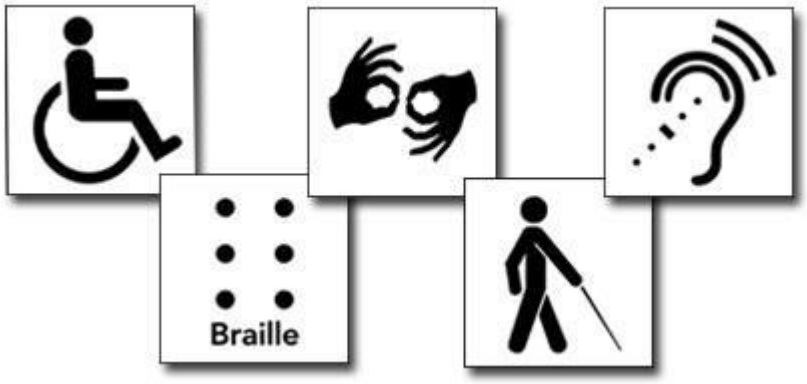
University of Arkansas Pine Bluff

Disability Services Office



HANDBOOK
For
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Disability Services Office
1200 North University Drive
Mail Slot 4949
Pine Bluff, AR 71601
Phone: (870) 575-8089
Fax: (870) 575-4618
Email: **bumpersm@uapb.edu**
www.uapb.edu

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ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

NOTE: This handbook is intended for those students who have been verified as eligible to receive academic accommodations. Students who have not disclosed a disability, submitted documentation and/or been verified as eligible for accommodations must contact the Disability Services Office (DSO) for additional information.

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 us for additional assistance.

It is your responsibility to make yourself familiar with the policies and procedures for receiving accommodations at The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. Please read and become familiar with the information presented in this 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 The University of Arkansas Pine Bluff!

CONTACT US

DSO is here to assist students with the implementation of academic accommodations and program accessibility. Because of this we encourage you to contact us if you have any questions about your accommodations or if problems occur regarding your accommodations. **We cannot assist you with a problem or concern if we are unaware that there *is* a problem or concern.** Students must communicate frequently with DSO!

DSO is located in room 208 of Caldwell Hall. Our hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8:00am – 5:00pm.

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Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of any assistance to you!

OFFICIAL DSO STATEMENT

Mission Statement

The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, seeks to help all students reach their highest level of academic and personal achievement. The Mission of The Disability Services Office is to collaborate with and empower students who have disabilities by coordinating coordinate support services and programs that enable access to an education and university life. Through our various student services and programs, we emphasize the importance or recognizing and embracing individual differences. In keeping with this Mission, UAPB is committed to helping students with disabilities obtain equal access to academic and programmatic services while allowing students to maintain a sense of independence.

STUDENT SELF-ADVOCACY

Good self-advocacy and personal responsibility skills are vital to help you make the transition to post-secondary education and to have a successful college experience. The University of Arkansas Pine Bluff will make a good-faith effort to provide reasonable accommodations and modification which may be necessary for you to have equal access to educational opportunities. **It is your responsibility, as the student, to use your approved accommodations, access other types of university support if needed, and to work towards academic success. It is the responsibility of the Student to:**

- **Know your disability and how it impacts your learning.** You are the expert on how your disability impacts you and it is important that you be able to articulate that impact.
- **Be proactive.** Request your accommodations early. Take action immediately if you start to struggle academically.
- **Keep written records.** Keep copies of forms and emails; take notes about your contact with instructors and others. This will help you keep track of your efforts to self-advocate.
- **Understand your learning style.** Understanding your learning style can help you articulate your academic needs and ask for appropriate assistance.

- **Know what you need.** Students should be able to articulate clearly what they need so that if those needs are not met, the student can advocate for more appropriate assistance.
- **Know your rights and responsibilities.** Students should be familiar with their legal rights and responsibilities. Knowing your rights and responsibilities will help you advocate appropriately for the assistance you may need.
- **Be willing to compromise.** Students should be willing to negotiate and compromise when necessary in order to receive the most appropriate assistance in the class. A willingness to compromise and work with an instructor will help to build trust and respect.
- **Know where to go for support.** Everyone needs support occasionally, even those who can successfully advocate for themselves. Become familiar with the assistance provided by the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff so you know where to go should you need assistance.

STUDY HABITS FOR COLLEGE*

You can succeed by knowing what to expect and how to handle it. Think of college as a full-time job, in which you spend 40 hours a week on class, labs, study groups and doing homework.

Decide When to Study
Work out about how many hours you need to study every day. Then make a schedule.

- Figure out what blocks of time you have available throughout the day, in the evenings and on weekends.
- Consider what time of day you are most alert — there are morning people and night owls — and try to schedule your studying accordingly.
- Think about whether you do better studying for a few hours at a time or sitting down for marathon sessions.

Choose Where to Study
Where you should study depends on two factors: the environment in which you are best able to concentrate and the type of work you are planning to do.

- The best places to study have good light, a comfortable temperature and enough desk space — usually your dorm room, your apartment or the library.

- For completing problem sets or brainstorming possible test questions, you may want to study with a group or at least in a setting where fellow students are available for discussion.
- When you are reading book chapters or working on a research paper, you are probably better off in a less social environment.

Improve Your Study Habits
Here are simple steps you can take to help you get a handle on studying:

- Have a routine for where and when you study.
- Choose reasonable and specific goals that you can accomplish for each study session.
- Do things that are harder or require more intense thought at your most productive time of the day.
- Take breaks if you need them so you don't waste time looking at material but not absorbing it.
- Get to know students whom you respect and can study with or contact to ask questions.
- Keep up with the workload and seek help when you need it.

Do the Reading
You need to do more than just read the chapters you are assigned — you're expected to understand them thoroughly. Here are some tips:

- Don't skim. Read all the material carefully.
- Break up difficult assignments into sections you can digest — chapters, subsections or even paragraphs.
- Look up any words that you don't understand.
- Pause to think about whether you understand the material; ask questions in class about anything that is unclear.
- Take notes instead of highlighting — this makes you think through and rephrase the key points.
- Create a summary sheet of what you learned from each assignment you read.

*From College Board: Inspiring Minds http://www.collegeboard.com/student/plan/college-success/116.html

TIME MANAGEMENT TIPS FOR STUDENTS*

Managing your time well is an important element of success — especially if you're a student. If you set priorities that fit your needs and lifestyle, you'll have a better chance of achieving your goals. Here are some tips for taking control of your time and organizing your life.

1. Make a To-Do List Every Day.
Put things that are most important at the top and do them first. And don't forget to reward yourself for your accomplishments.

2. Use Spare Minutes Wisely.
When you're commuting on the bus or have time between classes, use the time to get some reading done.

3. It's Okay to Say No.
If your friend asks you to go to a movie on a Thursday night and you have an exam the next morning, realize that it's okay to say no. Keep your short- and long-term priorities in mind.

4. Find the Right Time.
You'll work more efficiently if you figure out when you do your best work. For example, if your brain handles math better in the afternoon, don't wait to do it until late at night.

5. Review Your Notes Every Day.
Reviewing helps you reinforce what you've learned, so you need less time to study before a test. You'll also be ready if you get called on in class or have to take a pop quiz.

6. Get a Good Night's Sleep.
Your brain needs rest to perform at its peak. Lack of sleep makes the day seem longer and your tasks seem more difficult.

7. Communicate Your Schedule to Others.
If phone calls or text messages are proving to be a distraction, tell your friends that you are only available at certain times of day and not to expect a response at other times.

8. Become a Taskmaster.
Give yourself a time budget and plan your activities accordingly. Figure out how much free time you have each week before you add any commitments.

9. Don't Waste Time Agonizing.

Instead of agonizing and procrastinating, just do it. Wasting an entire evening worrying about something that you're supposed to be doing is not productive, and can increase your stress.

10. Determine Your Priorities.

You can't do everything at once. Establish the importance of each item. Then set realistic goals that are attainable.

*From College Board: Inspiring Minds http://www.collegeboard.com/student/plan/college-success/116.html

ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR COLLEGE SUCCESS

In addition to having strong self-advocacy and study skills, the following tips are important to college success:

- **Never miss class!** This is one of the most important things to remember in college. Missing too many class periods can cause you to fail the class, even if your grades are okay. Also, the more classes you miss, the more information you miss. Attendance is absolutely essential!

- **Review and keep the syllabus for each class!** The syllabus gives you information on course requirements, due dates, attendance policies, policies on make-up work, and information on how to contact your instructors.

- **Get to know your instructors!** Next to never missing class, this is the most important thing you can do for yourself once you are in college. Your instructor is the expert in his/her class. The instructor can give you information on how to study for exams, where to find information for projects and papers, and what you can do to succeed in the class.

- **Use your approved classroom accommodations!** If you are approved to use specific classroom accommodations, USE THEM. Accommodations are provided to level the playing field and give you an equal opportunity to succeed in college. They will not benefit you if you don't use them.

- **Become familiar with other types of assistance provided At UAPB!** Each college will have other types of academic assistance available to all students. Familiarize yourself with what is available and take advantage of this additional assistance should you find you need it. Again, it won't help you if you don't use it!

VERIFICATION OF DISABILITY

It is important that you be aware of the type of verification status you have been assigned. Some types of verification are temporary pending the submission of additional documentation to this office. If your verification is temporary, please make every effort to submit all necessary documentation before your temporary verification expires. Newly verified students are notified regarding the type of verification which has been approved and any expiration date which may be assigned.

On-going - Students who receive an on-going verification have submitted comprehensive documentation which supports their request(s) for accommodations. These students are verified for as long as they are qualified students at the University of Arkansas Pine Bluff and will not be required to submit additional documentation UNLESS they request an accommodation that has not previously been approved and which is not supported by the documentation already submitted.

Yearly Renewal - Yearly renewal verification is approved for those students who have a disorder or impairment, the impact of which may change over time. These students will be required to submit updated documentation once each year so that DSO can adjust verification status and accommodations as needed.

Temporary - Temporary verification status may be given to students who have submitted documentation which may confirm a diagnosis but who have not submitted the requisite documents for "on-going" status. Examples of this include students who submit outdated documentation or partial documentation. These students are verified on a temporary, semester-long basis, allowing them time to gather the necessary documentation.

Temporary Injury/Illness - Although temporary injuries or illnesses are not covered as disabilities under Federal laws, the University recognizes that such injuries/illnesses can occur during the school year. Temporary accommodations for those students who have been injured are provided based on the availability of resources and service providers. Such accommodations must meet the same criteria as for permanent disabilities.

It is your responsibility, as the student, to know the type of verification for which you have been approved. If you have been approved on a temporary or yearly renewal basis, it is your responsibility to know the date your verification expires and what you have to submit to this office in order to extend your verification.

Do not hesitate to contact us if you require additional information about your verification status.

ACCOMMODATIONS: WHAT THEY ARE AND WHAT THEY ARE NOT

Accommodations are provided for the purpose of **ensuring equal access** to an education. They are **not** a guarantee of a certain grade or of success in a particular class; rather, they are intended to **"level the playing field"** for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are expected to fulfill all academic and course requirements and evaluation standards, as is expected of all students.

Accommodations are approved on a **case-by-case** basis. They are assigned depending on the documentation that each student submits, the impact of each student's disorder, and our conversations with each student regarding his/her strengths, weaknesses, and needs.

Accommodations are also provided on a **class-by-class** basis. An accommodation which is reasonable in one class may not be reasonable in another. **No accommodation will be provided if it compromises or alters essential elements or evaluation standards of a course.**

Accommodations are considered to be **classroom supplements**. They are NOT intended to replace regular classroom attendance or participation.

Accommodations are NOT provided retroactively. DSO is unable to provide accommodations for academic work completed before the student is verified as eligible for accommodations or before the student requests accommodations each semester. Therefore it is **imperative** that you request accommodations as early in the semester as possible.

REQUESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations are NOT automatically assigned each semester. In order to receive classroom accommodations, you must complete the following steps **each semester**:

STEP 1: Meet with your academic advisor, determine your desired course schedule. **Please note, DSO does not provide academic advising for students with disabilities.** Students should contact the Basic Academic Services at 870-575-8358 or the department of their scholastic major for advising information.

STEP 2: Review your WebAdvisor account to determine if you have any "holds" on your academic record. Students who have a "hold" on their record will be unable to register for classes until the "hold" has been lifted. DSO cannot lift any hold that has been placed on a student's record.

STEP 3: Register for classes by logging onto your personal online account at **www.uapb.edu.**

STEP 4: Make an appointment to meet with a staff member at the Disability Services Office in order to:

- Complete a Classroom Accommodations Request Form.
- Read and sign other forms as required for accommodations.
- Sign and receive Notification of Classroom Accommodation form.

STEP 5: Make an appointment to meet with each instructor to deliver the Classroom Accommodations form and discuss accommodations. **You should NOT just hand the forms to your instructors and walk away!** It is extremely important to discuss with instructors the implementation of approved accommodations in each class.

INSTRUCTOR NOTIFICATION OF THE NEED FOR ACCOMMODATIONS

If direct classroom accommodations are recommended and you choose to use them, you will be given a Classroom Accommodations form to give to each instructor. **A new form must be completed for each semester.** Classroom Accommodations forms verify for the instructor that you are registered with DSO and inform the instructor of your approved reasonable accommodations.

It is your responsibility to deliver the Classroom Accommodations forms to each of your instructors. Because of policies regarding the confidentiality of disability-related information, DSO does not automatically inform your instructors that you may require accommodations. Students are required to self-disclose the need for accommodations by delivering the Classroom Accommodations form directly to instructors.

As previously stated, you **SHOULD NOT** hand the Classroom Accommodations form to the instructor and then walk away. It is in your best interest to make an appointment to meet with each of your instructors to discuss your approved accommodations and the implementation of those accommodations in each class.

Also, please be aware that instructors require **timely notice** of the need for accommodations so that arrangements can be made. You must submit your Instructor Notification forms and speak with your instructor as early in the semester as is possible. Waiting until the last minute may result in an inability to make appropriate arrangements and you may not receive a requested accommodation.

PLEASE NOTE: When requested, instructors will be expected to assist in the provision of classroom accommodations when reasonable and necessary. Instructors are not expected to compromise essential elements of the course or course evaluation standards.

If an instructor denies the use of an approved accommodation, please contact DSO **as soon as possible** so we can discuss with the instructor his/her concerns.

ACCOMMODATION DESCRIPTIONS

Listed below are descriptions of some of the most common accommodations assigned through the DSO office. Also included is the procedure for requesting and receiving each accommodation. *Please remember that accommodations are assigned on a case-by-case basis and therefore inclusion of an accommodation in this handbook does not constitute individual verification!* You should review the accommodations listed, paying particular attention to those for which you have been approved. This is not an all-inclusive list. You may have been approved for an accommodation that is not listed in this handbook. If so, you will have been given information about that accommodation in a separate document.

If you have any questions or concerns about your approved accommodations, please do not hesitate to contact us. As previously stated, we cannot assist you if we are unaware that you need assistance.

Alternate Testing Environment

An alternate testing environment is defined as a quiet room that is less distracting than the classroom. You must work closely with your instructors and DSO to arrange your accommodation. As with all accommodations, you should give your instructors timely notice of your need for an alternate testing environment. Do not wait until the day of an exam to notify your instructor of your need for this accommodation. Without enough notice, we cannot guarantee that your DSO will have the time to arrange an appropriate alternate testing site. As stated, it is important for you to discuss this aspect of your accommodations with your instructors well in advance of test time.

Assistive Computer Technology and Other Equipment

The Disability Services Office computer lab is outfitted with several adaptive technologies and softwares to assist our students in the completion of their academic tasks. Only those students registered with DSO may use the technology resources in the DSO computer lab. In addition to the standard word processing and internet capabilities found in most computer labs on campus, we also offer the following:

JAWS - JAWS is a screen reader which will read aloud what is on the computer screen and will allow those with low vision to access the internet, email and other computer programs.

ZoomText - This program allows the user to enlarge selected text and graphics on the computer screen.

CCTV Stationary – CCTV is a standalone piece of hardware that allows the student to use a document camera to enlarge and view their written documents. The contrast can be inverted so that the screen appears to be white writing on a black background as well as enlarge the document for easier viewing.

Extended/Relaxed Time on Exams and Assignments

The University of Arkansas Pine Bluff does not provide "unlimited" time on exams as an accommodation. Double time is the standard amount of time allowed on exams for students who are verified for this accommodation. For example, if a class is allowed an hour to take an exam, the student verified for extended time will be allowed two hours.

If you are verified for this accommodation and you believe that additional time, in excess two hours may be beneficial, you should discuss this with your instructor. Instructors cannot give you *less* than two hours but they can give you more time if they choose. Discuss your needs with your instructors. Let the DSO office know if you have a need for more than two hours.

If extended time on an exam will cause a time conflict with another class, it is your responsibility to speak with both instructors in an attempt to resolve the conflict. **Instructors are not required to change the date and time of an exam.**

Note-taking

The purpose of note-taking as an accommodation is to provide to students who are impacted in their ability to take notes independently with classroom notes to assist them with their learning. The use of NCR paper (duplicate carbonless paper) for note-taking will allow immediate access to notes at the end of each class.

The Note Taking NCR Program is a supplemental note taking program providing notes taken by a student volunteer enrolled in the class. It is the responsibility of the student receiving notes to provide the NCR paper to the note taker prior to the beginning of class and obtain a copy of the written notes following class. The student and note taker must complete a log form each day that notes are provided to allow DSO to track community service hours or other necessary information. The student is responsible for keeping up with this log form.

It is the student's responsibility to immediately alert DSO if accommodation problems arise. Once informed, DSO will quickly facilitate the resolution of the problem. Note-takers should not provide notes for classes that students miss or for portions of the class that students do not attend.

Procedures for Obtaining Note Takers:

1. Students requiring a note-taker must deliver the Classroom Accommodations and the Note taker Needed Announcement to instructors.

2. Instructors make in-class announcements requesting a student to volunteer to be a note-taker. When asking classes for volunteers, instructors will not identify the student registered with Disability Services Office.

3. Students may choose to have DSO recruit a note taker or the student may recruit a note-taker. If DSO recruits a note taker, the office will introduce the student to the note taker once one has been assigned. The student and the note taker will make arrangements for the delivery of NCR paper and the receipt of completed notes.

4. The student receives notes immediately following the end of each class.

5. Notetakers are informed that they must contact the student in advance if the notetaker will be absent from class. It is then the student's responsibility to find another student in the class to take notes for that day.

6. Note-takers are asked to obtain the completed log form from the student and return it to DSO indicating that they have provided this volunteer service. Log forms must be submitted to DSO by the deadline. At the end of each semester, DSO provides a letter of commendation to volunteers and a certificate of community service hours (upon request).

Permission to Record Lectures

Students approved for this accommodation are encouraged to record their lectures as a way to enhance memorization and notetaking. Any information recorded in the classroom is for the student's personal use only and should not be distributed in any way except with the permission of the instructor. Instructors may ask a student with this accommodation to sign a form promising not to distribute the contents of the recorded information. Students are responsible for purchasing a tape or digital recorder for use in the classroom.

Reader, Scribe and/or Assistive Technology for Exams, Tests, and Quizzes

ONLY students who have been approved through the verification process for the use of a reader and/or scribe or assistive technology (CCTV, word processor, voice-recognition software, and text-to-speech software) will be allowed to use the alternate testing environment within the Disability Services Office (DSO).

- Students using assistive technology software must train with the program well in advance of any exam or they may not be able to utilize that particular testing accommodation.

- It is the student's responsibility to request the use of readers, scribes, or assistive technology through DSO **at least two business days before *each* exam** in order to reserve a room and service provider or computer station with assistive technology. If the date of an exam changes, the student should contact DSO with the new exam date as soon as it is known. Again, if not enough notice is given, DSO cannot guarantee that a room or service provider will be available.

- Students must notify instructors several days prior to *each* exam of their intentions to take an exam in DSO.

- Students using DSO Alternate Testing Environment are required to take their exams on the same day and at the same time as it is given to the class. If a student arrives late for an exam, DSO will not administer the exam without first getting permission from the instructor.

- Readers and scribes are required to stay in the testing room for the entirety of the exam. If the student decides that the services of a reader or scribe are not necessary, the student will take the exam with the class using other accommodations that may be approved, such as extended time.

- Students are allowed only as much time for taking an exam as is approved by the instructor. Instructors must abide by any extended time accommodation for which the student has been approved.

- Only materials approved (i.e. notes, books, formulas) in advance by the instructor are allowed in the testing room. All electronic devices (cell phones, iPods, etc.) must be stored in the office of a staff member.

- Instructors will be notified if any student is caught cheating or if it is believed that the security of the exam has been compromised in any way. The instructor will then determine what actions to take against the student in accordance with the M-Book Disciplinary Code.

APPEAL PROCESS

It is important that you are aware of your right to appeal academic and/or accommodation-related decisions that you believe may have been made in error. The University of Arkansas Pine Bluff has procedures in place both for the appeal of academic decisions and for the appeal of a decision regarding accommodation for students with disabilities.

To appeal a decision regarding **accommodations** for students with disabilities, you can contact the Director of Disability Services by calling 870-575-8089.

To appeal an **academic** decision follow the student academic grievance procedure outlined in the Student Handbook.