

Counseling and Disability Services

Counseling and Disability Services (C&DS) provides academic accommodations for students with disabilities. The University abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and other legal mandates that stipulate qualified students with disabilities receive reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to programs and opportunities at the University. The University must balance the individual's right to receive equal access and the University's right to ensure the integrity of its programs. Disabilities may be defined by the following:

- Learning disabilities
- Health impairments
- Physical limitations
- Psychiatric disabilities

Students should set an appointment with professional staff at C&DS to review the nature and history of the disability as well as present concerns related to the academic environment. The procedure for Disability Services is as follows:

1. If a student believes he/she may qualify for reasonable accommodations due to an impairment that creates a disability, the student will be asked to supply current professional diagnostic documentation of the disability and the student's needs. Appropriate documentation identifies the disability and indicates how it substantially limits current major life activities (e.g., learning, working, walking, seeing, hearing) as related to the academic environment. For students who have not had a previous professional evaluation or documentation, referrals may be provided.
2. To receive reasonable accommodations, the Committee for Academic Accommodation reviews the student's request. Students must sign a release of information after which the Committee will review the documentation and determine reasonable accommodations to meet the student's needs in the academic environment. Each student's situation is individually assessed and reviewed. Information regarding accommodations is shared with UST faculty, staff, or administration only on a "need-to-know" basis and will be handled discreetly.
3. Once the student has been approved to receive accommodations, letters outlining the accommodations will be made available for the student to distribute to instructors and academic advisors. Each semester the student must request a new set of letters to ensure continuation of academic accommodations. If testing accommodations are granted, C&DS will notify the office of Career Services and Testing.

Students are encouraged to notify C&DS if problems arise related to their disability and receiving accommodations. Students should follow grievance procedures outlined in this publication to advance complaints related to disability issues.

The University strives to resolve differences through informal procedures whenever possible. Student complaints regarding Section 504-based academic accommodations or general access issues should be directed to the Executive Director of Counseling and Disability Services, who functions as the University's Section 504 Coordinator for students. For grievances regarding employment concerns at the University, complaints should be directed to the Associate Vice President of Human Resources.

More information is available at www.stthom.edu/counseling. For an appointment or additional information, contact Counseling and Disability Services at 713-525-2169 or 713-525-6953.