



Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science

"A Private University with a Public Mission"

Students with Disabilities Accommodation Policy

Issuing Officer: Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs/Provost

Responsible Offices: Disability Services Coordinator & Academic Affairs

Effective Date: September 1, 2016

Supersedes: *Policy on Non-Discrimination in Programs and Services on the Basis of Disability (effective date: April 23, 2014)*

PURPOSE

This policy defines Charles R. Drew University of Medicine's (CDU) commitment to providing appropriate services and reasonable accommodations for students and employees with disabilities consistent with the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act of 2008, hereinafter referred to as the "The Acts."

Consistent with federal requirements, the University shall operate its programs, activities, and services to ensure that no qualified individual with a disability shall be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination solely by reason of his/her disability.

Furthermore, this policy outlines the procedures by which those individuals alleging discrimination under the provisions of the previously mentioned Acts may seek redress.

BACKGROUND

The two primary federal laws that protect people with disabilities from discrimination in higher educational settings are the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, amended in 2008, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504). Congress subsequently expanded protection for people with disabilities under the ADA through passage of the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA).

The ADA guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public and private sector services and employment. The ADA is split into sections called "Titles." Generally, the ADA makes it illegal to discriminate against someone because she or he has a disability. Specifically, Title II of the ADA prohibits all state and local governmental entities, including public colleges and universities, from discriminating against people with

disabilities. Title III, however, prohibits private colleges and universities from discriminating against individuals with disabilities.

APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science students.

DEFINITIONS

Students

A “student” is any person who is properly enrolled in an academic course at CDU, regardless of the person’s academic status, age, or any other protected class. Under this policy, a student does not need to maintain a specific course load, insofar as the student is enrolled in at least one course during the semester in which the student is seeking accommodations and/or filing a grievance.

Individual with a Disability

An “individual with a disability” is someone with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more “major life activities,” including, but not limited to; caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, and working. “Major life activities” includes school related tasks such as learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, and communicating and also includes the operation of “major bodily functions,” including, but not limited to; functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine and reproductive functions, or an impairment that is in remission that, if active, would substantially limit an individual’s major life activity. Physical or mental impairments include, for example, specific learning disabilities, emotional or mental illness, visual impairments, deafness and hearing impairments, mobility impairments, and some chronic illnesses.

Accommodations

An “accommodation” refers to a change in the status quo. A “reasonable accommodation” in the student setting is a modification or adjustment to a course, program, activity or building that allows the person with a disability to participate as fully as possible in the courses, programs and activities offered by CDU.

CDU is required by law to make reasonable accommodations in practices, policies and procedures and to provide auxiliary aids and services for individuals with disabilities unless to do so would fundamentally alter the nature of CDU’s academic courses, educational programs or other activities or services or would result in an undue financial or administrative burden.

Reasonable accommodations (also referred to as modifications) and auxiliary aids and services which might be provided to a student with a disability can take many forms, depending on the individual student’s needs. Accommodations, auxiliary aids or services may include, but are not limited to: advocacy and disability advising; classroom and testing

accommodations; sign language interpreting; the provision of taped/scanned books; class materials in alternative formats; and assistive technology training and/or use.

Disability Documentation

“Disability documentation” is information, including a written evaluation from a physician, psychologist or other qualified specialist, that provides information establishing the nature and extent of a student’s disability and includes the basis for the diagnosis and the dates of testing. The documentation must establish the current need for an accommodation. The type of documentation will vary according to the disability. Documentation may need to be updated or augmented in order to be reviewed more fully. Students who submit documentation that does not meet the guidelines may be required to provide an updated evaluation before a determination can be made in response to a request for a disability accommodation.

POLICY TEXT

Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science is committed to providing equal access and opportunities to matriculated students with disabilities, and prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. It is the policy and practice of CDU to comply with The Acts (see above), as well as with applicable state and local laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of a disability.

The University makes admission decisions using criteria which do not consider an individual's disability, but rather, the student's individual qualifications, to meet the essential elements of the program, service or activity being offered, assuming incorporation or use of the proper academic adjustment and/or auxiliary aids, if necessary.

Students with a disability recognized by law are entitled to reasonable accommodation(s) if one is needed and properly identified. The law defines a disability as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity or that prevents the exercise of a normal bodily function, a record of such impairment (such as cancer in remission), or a condition regarded by professionals as causing such an impairment.

Reasonable accommodations do not include lower performance standards or items for personal use or convenience. CDU is obligated to provide a reasonable accommodation, which may not be the one requested. The process of identifying and providing a reasonable accommodation is an interactive one. The University is not obligated to provide an accommodation if it would impose an undue hardship on the institutions, or if the person requesting the accommodation poses a direct threat to the safety of self or to others.

The University shall not assume any responsibility for the provision of attendants, individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or any device or service of a personal nature. The arrangements for these types of services are entirely the responsibility of the individual student.

The University may use all resources available to fund the purchase of assistive technology and academic support. While the University will strongly consider requests from students that a specific type of assistive technology or academic support be provided, the University maintains the right to make a final decision about its choice of such educational aid.

PROCEDURES

All students with disabilities who require University assistance with campus accommodations, academic adjustments, or auxiliary aids shall identify themselves to the Disability Services Coordinator (DSC) as soon as they are aware that they require assistance. Students are not eligible for services from the DSC unless they identify themselves to the DSC and provide appropriate disability documentation from a licensed clinician/physician. Students must notify the DSC of a disability as early as possible prior to requesting an accommodation. Disability accommodation requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with no guarantee of immediate approval. Assuming a student provides all necessary documentation, approval for accommodations may take up to ten (10) business days. Retroactive accommodations and/or assistance is prohibited, even if documentation is provided for a disability that would have been accommodated for had the documentation been submitted at an earlier date.

Once a student with a disability has been admitted to CDU and has identified himself/herself to the DSC, the DSC shall work with the various academic departments that will be serving the student to provide necessary assistance or information on accommodations specific to his/her disability. The DSC shall work with the student in locating any necessary educational auxiliary aids and services, acquisition or modification of equipment or devices, or other similar services and actions deemed necessary as educational aids to ensure programmatic and campus accessibility.

Students are wholly responsible for notifying their respective professors about any approved accommodation(s). The student takes the letter from the DSC to his/her professors and notifies the professors of the approved accommodations. Professors are not provided the reason(s) for the approved accommodations, only that accommodations have been authorized by the DSC. Failure to notify his/her professors could delay a student's ability to receive accommodations.

Complaints of Discrimination on the Basis of Disability

If a student is not able to resolve an issue informally, he or she should bring a complaint of discrimination on the basis of disability to the attention of the DSC for clarification of requirements, rights, standards, advice, and other assistance.

After consulting with the DSC, should the complaint not be resolved to the satisfaction of the student, he/she may file a formal grievance with the Compliance Officer, who has the ultimate responsibility in ensuring that the University comply with all mandates enunciated in The Acts.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs/Provost shall serve as the senior officer with ultimate responsibility for proper administration and implementation of this Policy and the University's responsibilities under The Acts.

If a faculty member objects to providing a University-approved accommodation, such accommodation will be provided to the student until a final decision has been reached by

the DSC on the faculty member's objection. No faculty member may unilaterally usurp the duties and obligations of the DSC including, but not limited to, making determinations as to whether a student has a disability, the extent of a student's disability or the appropriateness of an approved accommodation.

The DSC shall report to the Compliance Officer on activities conducted by the University in compliance with the Acts. These activities may include the preparation of all required reports, the coordination of activities among divisions and departments, and the provision of assistance to persons with disabilities.

The Director of Risk Management/Campus Safety & Security, in conjunction with the DSC, shall be responsible for identification and implementation of accessibility in new construction and in projects that require alterations or modifications to facilities and grounds.

COMPLIANCE

The Disability Services Coordinator ensures compliance with this policy and will report allegations of non-compliance to the Compliance Officer.

APPROVING AUTHORITY

President & CEO

RELATED POLICIES

None