Winthrop University | Office of Accessibility

Faculty/Staff Handbook 2023-2024

Winthrop University prides itself on serving an impressively diverse community of students. Approximately 400 Winthrop students have documented at least one disability with the Office of Accessibility and utilize accommodations, facilitated by Winthrop faculty and staff, on an annual basis. This number does not take into consideration students that choose not to disclose their disability status but benefit from other support and services offered throughout the university.

Access for students with disabilities includes the removal of architectural barriers and the provision of auxiliary services. Reasonable accommodations must also be made in the instructional process to ensure a full educational opportunity. This principle applies to all teaching strategies and modes, including online and other electronic modes of instruction, as well as to institutional and departmental policies. Achieving these ideals involves an understanding of disability and the tools available to students, staff, and faculty for meeting the educational needs of students with disabilities.

This handbook was created to provide easy access to information relevant to student accessibility on campus. OA plays a significant role in ensuring students have access to all aspects of university life. Without the support of community members, this work would be incomplete. Community support is essential for the creation of an environment that values and welcomes diversity.

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OFFICE OF ACCESSIBILITY OVERVIEW

Office of Accessibility

Location: 101 MacFeat House
Phone: 803-323-3290
E-mail: accessibility@winthrop.edu

Fall/Spring

Monday – Thursday from 8:30am - 5:00pm

Friday 9:30am – 4:00pm

Summer

Monday – Thursday from 8:00am - 5:30pm

Friday – 8:00am – 11:30am

OA Test Center

Location: 104 MacFeat House
Phone: 803-323-3290 ext. 6173
E-mail: testcenter@winthrop.edu

Fall/Spring

Monday – Thursday from 8:00am - 5:30pm

Friday 9:00am – 1:30pm

Summer

Monday – Thursday from 8:00am - 5:30pm

Friday - CLOSED

Office of Accessibility Staff Directory

Shardae Nelson-Johnson
Director
nelsons@winthrop.edu
Ext: 6188

Ashley McLean
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Ext: 6174

Hope Williams
Administrative Specialist
williamsh@winthrop.edu
Ext: 3290

Karen Medlin
Test Center Operations Manager
medlink@winthrop.edu
Ext: 6173

Requesting Consultation

OA staff members are available for consultation with faculty and staff at any time. OA staff members can meet with faculty and staff individually and can present to small groups, departments, etc. The range of topics are customizable and can include topics, such as general overviews of OA services and accommodations, student/faculty/staff rights and responsibilities, ensuring accessible programming/content/events in and outside of the classroom, and diversity and inclusion. To inquire about a consultation or presentation, please contact the Office of Accessibility at 803/323-3290.

Reporting Barriers

Access is the responsibility of the entire Winthrop community. Concerns regarding accessibility (e.g., elevators issues, non-functioning accessible door push buttons, inaccessible information on the Winthrop website, etc.) can be reported using the Report Barrier and Access Issues Form. Use this form to report an issue and OA will investigate the matter with the assistance of Facilities Management.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

Creating access is a shared responsibility of the entire Winthrop community. OA engages in an interactive process with students, faculty, and staff to create accessible educational environments for students with disabilities.

OA-registered students are responsible for:

- communicating their accommodation requests in a timely manner
- adhering to guidelines and procedures specific to each approved accommodation
- maintaining communication with their instructors and OA throughout the semester

Faculty and staff are responsible for:

- being available to students and OA staff for discussions about and coordination of accommodations
- notifying OA when there are questions or concerns about requested accommodations
- maintaining the confidentiality of OA registered students

OA is responsible for:

- approving and providing appropriate accommodations, devices, and services in a timely manner
- training registered students in the appropriate use of their approved accommodations
- consulting with faculty and staff on how to best implement reasonable accommodations based on the format or fundamental requirements of a specific course, policy, procedure, or facility

DISABILITY LAW IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The information below defines the term "disability," explains Winthrop's responsibility to provide reasonable accommodations, and describes the laws that guide the provision of disability-related accommodations here at Winthrop University.

Disability Defined

A disability is a physical and/or mental impairment that limits one or more major life activities. Major life activities include, a person's ability to care for one's self, perform manual tasks, see, hear, eat, sleep, walk, stand, lift, bend, speak, breath, and work. Major life activities also include school-related tasks such as learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, and communicating. Major life activities include the operation of "major bodily functions," including, functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, as well as digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.

Qualified Students

The term "qualified," in post-secondary education, means that students (with or without disabilities) meet academic and technical standards required for admissions and standards for participation in classes, major program, or educational activities. Students who have a disability and meet these standards cannot be treated differently (e.g., denied admissions, graded poorly, harassed, etc.) due to a disability. Thus, colleges and universities are required to make reasonable accommodations in their practices, policies, and procedures. Colleges are also required to provide auxiliary aids and services for persons with disabilities. These accommodations are required unless to do so would fundamentally alter the nature of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, and advantages they offer, or would result in an undue financial or administrative burden on the institution.

The Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, along with the Amendments Act of 2008, prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, state and local government, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation, and telecommunications.

Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states: "no otherwise qualified person with a disability in the United States shall, solely on the basis of disability, be denied access to, or the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity provided by any institution receiving federal financial assistance."

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

Students with documented disabilities can request accommodations related to housing, coursework, the classroom setting, etc. The conditions that lead students to require accommodations can range from those that affect their physical well-being to those that impact their mental health. Disabilities may be divided into separate categories as seen below. Keep in mind that many students are "dual diagnosed" with more than one condition, in the same or different categories.

Disability categories include, but are not limited to:

- **Medical Conditions:** e.g., asthma, diabetes, fibromyalgia, HIV-AIDS, cancer, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, traumatic brain injury, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, lupus, heart disease, Crohn's disease, sickle cell anemia, epilepsy

- **Psychological Conditions:** e.g., anxiety disorder, depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, recovery from alcoholism and substance abuse, obsessive-compulsive disorder

- **Learning Disabilities:** i.e., an inability to receive, process, store, or respond to information, or to speak, listen, think, read, write, spell, or compute

- **Neurological Conditions:** e.g., attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, brain injury, brain tumor, carpal tunnel syndrome, cerebral palsy, Asperger's Syndrome

- **Deaf and Hard of Hearing:** "Hard of Hearing" indicates mild to severe hearing loss. "Deaf" indicates profound hearing loss (i.e. hearing only very loud sounds or no sound).

- **Blind and Low Vision:** i.e., a decreased ability to see to a degree that causes concerns not fixable by usual means, such as glasses. Total blindness is the complete lack of light perception and form perception.

- **Mobility-related Disabilities:** e.g., arthritis, polio, spinal cord injuries, scoliosis, and other conditions that cause movement difficulties or result in the use of a cane or wheelchair

- **Temporary Disabilities:** i.e., treatable impairments of mental or physical faculties that may impede the affected person from functioning as they typically would while they are under treatment (broken wrist, leg, or other acute or short-term injury or condition). Note: Pregnancy is not typically seen as a disability; however, an underlying condition related to the pregnancy may be considered and warrant reasonable accommodations.

Students with disabilities who require accommodations are responsible for identifying themselves to the Office of Accessibility (OA). Students begin the process of registering with OA by first completing the OA New Student Accommodation Request Application and submitting any documentation that verifies their disability/condition to OA.

Eligibility for accommodations will be determined on a case-by-case basis following communication with a student and a thorough review of documentation that describes functional limitations that would impact the student in an academic setting.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND RELEASE OF INFORMATION

All materials pertaining to a student's disability are confidential. All student records are governed by FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act). The primary rights given to students under FERPA are the right to inspect and review education records, the right to seek to amend education records, and the right to have some control over the disclosure of information from education records.

Exception to the Rule

Under FERPA, OA professional staff are permitted to release information to a school official who has a legitimate educational interest that is specified in his or her position description, related to a student's education, or related to the discipline of a student.

What this means:

A student may grant OA written permission to discuss their disability with faculty and staff, parents, coaches, and/or advisors who require further information. Disability-related information will be shared only on a limited basis within the institutional community. Information will not be released without consent unless federal or state law requires it.

While faculty and staff will need information about student accommodations approved by OA, they will generally not need to know specific information regarding a student's disability. ***OA's professional staff members will only share information with other school officials when appropriate and will carefully balance a student's request for confidentiality with the request for additional, relevant information about the student.*** OA seeks to preserve the student's wish to keep their disability information and status confidential and will remain sensitive to this issue.

ACCOMMODATION EXPECTATIONS

Accommodations are provided for the purpose of **ensuring equal access** to goods, services, facilities, activities, courses, and the overall educational experience Winthrop University offers.

Academic Accommodations

Academic accommodations do not offer a guarantee of a certain grade or level 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.

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 or program of study. They are NOT intended to replace regular classroom attendance or participation.

Accommodations are NOT provided retroactively. The Office of Accessibility is unable to provide accommodations for academic work completed before the student is approved for accommodations or before the student requests accommodations each semester. Therefore, it is imperative that students request accommodations as early in the semester as possible. Untimely requests may result in delay, substitutions, or denial of accommodations. **Students must renew their accommodations each semester by logging into the AIM Student Portal and following the appropriate steps.**

Campus Access and Services Accommodations

Students with disabilities can request accommodations related to on-campus housing, facility access, meal plans, etc. if needed. Faculty and staff who encounter students interested in requesting these types of accommodations due to a disability should refer these student to OA or the OA website to learn the specific requirements for requesting these type of accommodations. By speaking with an OA staff member or reviewing information provided on the website prior to submitting a request, students can ensure that they are completing the correct forms with their providers and following the procedures specific to the type of accommodations they are requesting. Winthrop University will make a good faith effort to provide reasonable accommodations as soon as possible, but may not be able to guarantee that appropriate provisions will be available within the same semester the accommodation is requested.

ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (AIM) SOFTWARE

Accessible Information Management (AIM) is an online accommodation management portal used by the Office of Accessibility to help students independently coordinate their academic accommodations. The system protects confidential information about the students, and allows more transparency and streamlined communication among students, instructors, and OA staff members. Access the AIM Instructor Portal here.

Current Options in AIM

Students can:

- Request new accommodations or modifications to existing accommodations.

- Generate their Letter of Accommodation (LOA) which outlines the accommodations they may use in their courses.

- Submit and modify exam scheduling requests for accommodated testing they anticipate completing with the OA Test Center.

- Download textbooks and course materials that have been converted to an alternative format by OA.

Faculty can:

- View a list of all the students enrolled in their courses who are registered with OA and have requested accommodations for the courses.

- Download a copy of their students' accommodation letters once students have made the letters available to them using the AIM Student Portal.

- View a list of their students' requests for testing with the Test Center.

  Note: For students using the OA Test Center, complete the Alternative Testing Agreement to outline specifically the parameters of the exam to ensure academic integrity.

- Securely upload student exams to the AIM portal for access by the Test Center staff.

Faculty Uses of AIM

A. Letters of Accommodation

When students request to share their accommodation information with faculty, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be sent to instructors via email.

- The LOAs will list students' names, course names and section numbers, and the accommodations the students are requesting to use for their courses.

    - Please keep this information confidential.

    - The LOAs will also include a link to the instructor portal.

1. If students have requested to use their testing accommodations in the OA Test Center, the LOAs will ask instructors to complete an Alternative Testing Agreement.

    - The Alternative Testing Agreement is mandatory if instructors are **not** proctoring their own exams.

    - Instructors only need to do one Alternative Testing Agreement per course section. If an instructor teaches two sections, they may complete one agreement for the first class section. The information given in the first agreement can then be copied to a second agreement for the second class section if the same information applies.

The OA staff member assigned to students will be listed in the letter should instructors have additional questions about any student's accommodations.

B. Testing Agreements

Before students can take exams with the OA Test Center, they must read and acknowledge our Test Center Guidelines (required every semester). When they request an appointment with the OA Test Center, this request automatically generates an email to instructors requesting additional information. Students must schedule testing appointments one week in advance of their requested testing dates.

- Access the Alternative Testing Agreement in AIM using one of two methods:

    1. Click the Alternative Testing Agreement link provided in the student's Letter of Accommodation.

        Note: Ensure that the correct class name and section number is displayed at the top of the Alternative Testing Agreement.

2. Log into the AIM Instructor Portal. Select the "Alternative Testing" tab, then choose the correct class and section in the "Specify Alternative Testing Agreement" section.

- Instructors will be asked for the following details about testing in their course:

  - What are students allowed to use in the classroom? Calculator, ruler, notes, textbook, etc.

  - Provide any special instructions in the "Additional Note or Comment" box.

  - If your exams require special software (SPSS, MATLAB, etc.) please mention this in the notes.

  - How would you like to be contacted if the student has questions during the exam? Text or email? Only OA staff has access to info.

  - What is your anticipated exam schedule? Giving us your tentative schedule helps OA Test Center get an idea of the volume of tests for that day and to expect and confirm that the student is requesting an exam for the appropriate day.

  - Student requests for changes in exam days/times are not allowed without your permission. This policy is intended to protect the integrity of your exams.

  - How much time is allowed for students testing in the classroom?

Faculty AIM Tutorials

These video tutorials review the faculty uses of the AIM accommodation management portal:

- Instructor AIM Portal - Alternative Testing (Part I)
- Instructor AIM Portal - Alternative Testing (Part II)

These PDF tutorials review the faculty uses of the AIM accommodation management portal:

- How to Complete an Alternative Testing Agreement
- How to Upload a Test in AIM
- How to Retrieve a Completed Test from AIM
- How to View Student Accommodations in the Instructor AIM Portal

COURSE DESIGN AND ETIQUETTE

Planning Ahead

Students with disabilities, like all students, bring a unique set of strengths and experiences to college. While many learn in different ways, their differences do not imply inferior capacities. Although some may manage without accommodations, many students count on reasonable accommodations and modifications in the way information is presented to successfully meet their course requirements. Instructors can support the continued success of students with disabilities by implementing certain practices. The best practice is to consider the access requirements of people with disabilities while designing courses. It is up to course instructors to create educational experiences that are inclusive of, and accessible to, people with a wide range of disability access requirements.

Syllabus Statement

It is crucial that faculty include in their syllabi a statement that invites students with disabilities to meet with them in a confidential environment to discuss making arrangements for accommodations. Dialogue between students with disabilities and their instructors is essential early in the term, and follow-up meetings are recommended. This syllabus statement is critical for several reasons:

- this statement both normalizes the accommodation process and helps to create a positive and welcoming environment for students with disabilities,
- the statement creates a collaborative vehicle for providing accommodations, and
- the statement serves as a reminder to students who need accommodations that these arrangements require advance notice.

The Office of Accessibility's recommends this statement, or one similar, for course syllabi:

Winthrop University is committed to providing accessible learning experiences and equal access to education for all students. The syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request.

If you are a student with a disability (including mental health concerns, chronic or temporary medical conditions, learning disabilities, etc.) and you anticipate or experience academic barriers due to the condition, please contact The Office of Accessibility (OA) via phone at 803/323-3290 or via e-mail at accessibility@winthrop.edu for information on accommodations, registration, and procedures. After receiving approval for accommodations through OA, please make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely manner.

ACCESSIBLE CONTENT

Digital materials (e.g., syllabi, presentations, handouts, and multimedia) and digital documents (e.g., PDFs, PowerPoints, and Word Docs) used to provide information regarding Winthrop courses, services, and programs must be accessible to all users.

Digital Copies of Materials

Digital materials are useful to students with diverse disabilities because they can be saved and accessed as needed. Some formats are compatible with screen reading software (e.g., .pdf documents). Keep in mind that some digital materials that are image files are not widely accessible (e.g., .jpeg and .pdf files that are Non-OCR).

Captions for Video and Audio Files

The importance of **captioning** lies in its ability to make auditory information more accessible in numerous ways. Captioning allows individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to access auditory dialogue, helps some people to focus on and remember auditory information more easily, and supports access to auditory dialogue in sound-sensitive environments. This is important as the use of video, audio, live, and recorded information increases.

Those who require assistance creating accessible digital materials should contact Winthrop University's Office of Online Learning at 803/323-2212 or blackboard@winthrop.edu. Other helpful information can also be found by

- Visiting the Accessibility Information for Instructors page at the Office of Online Learning,
- Visiting the Frequently Asked Questions for Accessible Online Classes page provided by the Office of Accessibility,
- Browsing the Center for Professional Excellence calendar for professional development sessions.

Note taking Assistance

To ensure that students can access class information, they may be approved for note taking accommodations such as receiving copies of the instructor's notes, power points, overheads, etc. (if available) due to disability. They may also be approved to utilize assistive technology software and hardware (e.g., digital tape recorders, smart pens, smart phones, tablets, or laptops) to ensure access to the information. Students review and sign the Smart Pen/ Recording Device Student Agreement (PDF) when approved to record class information. Instructors with questions regarding the use of any of these accommodations should contact the Office of Accessibility at 803/323-3290.

DISABILITY-RELATED ANIMALS ON CAMPUS

Service Animals/ Service Animals in Training

A "service animal" is a dog (or rarely, a miniature horse) that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. Examples of such work or tasks include guiding a person with vision loss, alerting a person with partial or total hearing loss, or alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure. Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or tasks a service animal has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. Animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals. Service animals are allowed to accompany students with disabilities in all areas of campus where students are allowed to go. Faculty and staff may not receive a notice from the Office of Accessibility concerning a student's use of a service animal.

Identifying Service Animals/ Service Animals in Training

No approval, request, documentation, nor proof of training is required for a service animals or service animals in training to be with students in the classroom, campus offices, residential housing, etc. If a service animal's role is not apparent, faculty and staff can ask the handler the two following questions:

1. "Is that a service animal for a disability?" and
2. "What service does it perform for you?"'

Animals are the responsibility of their handlers and should be under the handler's control and housebroken. An animal's behavior is considered the handler's behavior; animals will be held to the same standard of conduct as their handlers. If they are disruptive to university business or community behavioral expectations, handlers can be asked to correct the animal's behavior or remove it from the environment. If a particular setting is not conducive for a service animal (e.g., labs with chemicals or areas with limited space for all students) to safely maneuver, consult with OA as soon as possible.

Emotional Support Animals (ESAs)

ESAs alleviate one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability. The owner typically trains the ESA. In some cases, no special training is required. Unlike a service animal, an ESA does not assist a person with a disability with activities of daily living, nor does it accompany a person with a disability at all times. ESAs are typically limited to their handler's housing facility and restricted from entering other campus buildings unless approved by OA.

Please see the Disability-Related Animals on Campus Guide (PDF-238KB) located on the OA website for specific information regarding the animals allowed on Winthrop's campus.

DISABILITY ETIQUETTE

While working at Winthrop University, faculty and staff may have the opportunity to interact with students who have various disabilities. The information provided below will assist with effectively communicating information to these students and allow faculty and staff to facilitate an environment in which students with disabilities can participate equally in class, programs, discussions, and activities.

Meeting Students Who Use Wheelchairs or Other Mobility Devices

- Do not lean on a student's wheelchair or other device.

- Avoid stiff necks! Try to get at the person's eye level, which means an instructor or staff member might need to kneel down or sit down.

- Do offer assistance, wait until it is accepted, and provide the help in the way the student asks. Do not be offended by a refusal. Students with disabilities are independent adults who are used to doing many things for themselves.

- Do not worry about making mistakes; ask questions if additional information or clarification is needed.

- Talk to the individual with disability, not to their assistant.

Meeting Students with Vision Loss

- Tell the person who you are and introduce other students who are present. Indicate where others are in the space in reference to the individual with vision loss.

- Do not grab a person to guide them; let the student take hold of an arm. Do ask the student if they wish to be warned about steps, doors, or obstacles.

- Do say clearly where the student's seat is located, or place their hand on the back or arm of the chair.

- You may use a common saying like "see you tomorrow".

- Remember that the person may miss a gesture or facial expression and so appear to respond inappropriately; it may seem that the person does not get a joke, for example, when in fact it was not properly communicated to them.

Meeting Students with Disabilities Related to Hearing or Speech

- Repeat or rephrase questions/comments from the others before responding.

- Face the audience and speak naturally, at a moderate pace.

- Avoid the temptation to increase speaking pace when class, presentation, or meeting time becomes limited.

- Avoid speaking with the back of the body toward the audience while writing on the board.

- Present or lecture from the front of the room. Avoid pacing around.

- Point out who is speaking during group discussions.

- Do not drink or chew gum while speaking as these actions make speech/lip reading more difficult.

- Do not stand or sit in front of a window. Shadows might impede speech/lip reading.

- Discuss privately any concerns about a student's ability to hear what is said during classes, presentations, meetings, etc.

- Provide announcements, assignments, proper names, technical vocabulary, formulas, and unfamiliar/foreign words in printed/written format.

- Always use captioned films/videos or provide a written manuscript.

- Arrange for students who are deaf/hard-of-hearing to have a written copy of any orally administered test.

- Do not shout at student(s); they will benefit from faculty and staff positioning themselves in their line of vision and attracting their attention with a light touch or a wave if necessary.

- Be aware that students who are deaf may regard American Sign Language (which has a unique grammatical structure) as their first language, not English.

- Be patient with students with a speech impairment. Please avoid correcting them and do not finish their sentences. If faculty and staff do not understand what a student is saying, they should not pretend that they do. Ask these students to repeat what they have said if necessary, and tell them what has been understood thus far.

Ensuring Class/Presentation/Event Accessibility:

- Utilize spaces that are usable and accessible by all. If visiting an area outside of a classroom or lecture hall, inquire about the ease of access.

  Consider physical access and space, including seating and space for wheelchair users. Is there room for them to maneuver?

- Anticipate the need for captioning/subtitling for all video and audio files. Prepare a transcript as a supplement to the media. Assess the need for real time captioning for live video feeds (Zoom meetings, Blackboard Collaborate, etc.).

- Engage a sign-language interpreter and determine the seating arrangement needed to augment signing.

- Provide the sign language interpreter or real time captionist with any specific terminology or names that may be unfamiliar or specific to the class ahead of time (this is typically done via email).

- Produce literature in forms other than standard print e.g., large print, Braille, and electronic format.

- Ask persons fielding questions from the audience to use a microphone when possible. Also, repeat the question so that everybody has heard and the sign language interpreter may interpret the question.

Always treat students as individuals and put the emphasis on the person, not their disabilities (the principle of "person with a disability" instead of "a disabled person").

Finally, when in doubt, do not hesitate to ask students about their needs or what may be helpful to them. They are the experts!

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

During an emergency, faculty behavior is likely to influence student responses. Faculty who have a ready plan of action may be better prepared to handle an emergency in a calm and efficient manner. While this preparedness is important for the welfare of all the students in the class, it is essential for the student with disabilities in the classroom who may need extra help in dealing with the emergency.

Always ask a person with a disability what help is needed before giving emergency evacuation assistance. Ask how they can best be assisted or moved, and if there are any special considerations or items that need to come with them.

Building Evacuations

To assist persons with visual impairment:

- Announce the nature of the emergency.

- Offer to guide the person (or offer someone to do so). The individual with the visual impairment will typically take the guide's elbow for assistance.

- Tell the person with the visual impairment where they will be guided to as they walk. Inform the student of any obstacles they might encounter.

- After arrival at the safe location, orient the person to where he or she is and ask if any further assistance is needed before leaving.

To assist persons who are Deaf/ Hard of Hearing:

- If the person is using a sign language interpreter and the interpreter is present, explain to the individual what is happening and give instructions to the nearest emergency exit.

- If you must get a person's attention:

  o Flash the room's lights

  o Tap the person's shoulder. Perform gestures that will explain what is happening and what to do.

  o Write on the board or a piece of paper, the nature of emergency and evacuation route.

To assist persons with mobility impairments:

- Always ask these students first if they have special needs or requirements.

   Individuals with mobility impairment who are located at ground floor locations may exit the building without help.

- If the individual is not on the ground floor and is unable to safely exit the building, every effort should be given to move the individual to the nearest and safest stairwell or landing, which are recognized Evacuation Zones.

   - If the individual will wait in a stairwell, make sure that the fire doors are closed.

   - Call Campus Police (803/323-3333) to notify rescue personnel of the individual's location.

If there is imminent danger and evacuation cannot be delayed, the individual may be carried or helped from the building in the best and fastest manner. The individual is the best authority on how to move him or her out of the building.

Medical Emergencies

Faculty and Staff should call 911 in the event of a medical emergency. If faculty and staff are not sure whether an ambulance is needed, still call 911. Describe the medical emergency the student is experiencing to the 911 dispatcher and let them know that this emergency is taking place at Winthrop University. Tell the 911 dispatcher the building and room location (e.g. Kinard, first floor, room 115). Then, contact Campus Police at 803/323-3333. Explain the situation and tell the Campus Dispatcher that an ambulance has been called.

If a student is experiencing a medical emergency, unconscious, or there is potential for loss of life, call 911 and Winthrop Police in ALL instances. Calling parents, friends, etc. is not a suitable substitute for calling emergency personnel and the police.

Elevator Breakdowns and Repair

Elevator breakdowns occur. When an elevator ceases to operate, contact Campus Police at 803/323-3333. Be prepared to give Campus Police the details of any emergency situation, which is especially important in cases where time is of the essence.

If there is a breakdown of a building's main elevator, assist the student in finding and using an alternate elevator, if one is available. Contact the Office of Accessibility about getting a class changed to a different location if there is a long-term elevator issue.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The following is a list of frequently asked questions regarding the roles and responsibilities of Office of Accessibility (OA) staff members, faculty, and other staff members throughout the university in providing accessible learning environments for students with disabilities.

Please keep in mind that OA determines appropriate accommodations. The FAQ is meant to be a quick and useful resource guide, but contact OA at 803/323-3290 when there is doubt about how best to meet the needs of a student with a disability.

Q: *How does OA determine what accommodations are appropriate for a student due to disability?*

A: OA staff members base their accommodation decision upon disability documentation provided by students' medical providers and students' former educational institutions. OA also considers students' self-reports which is collected during student interviews.

Q: *Are all students with documented disabilities registered with OA?*

A: No, some students with disabilities choose not to register with OA. In this instance, faculty and staff are not required to provide these unregistered students with accommodations due to a disability. Some students attempt to register with OA but may not meet the eligibility criteria for services.

Q: *Are faculty members required to provide testing accommodations to students who request them?*

A: Students with disabilities are protected by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504. This law requires that qualified students with disabilities get equal access to an education, and this includes testing accommodations.

Q: *A student has asked for accommodations. How do I know the student truly has a disability and needs accommodations?*

A: Each student who is approved for disability-related accommodations has provided documentation from an appropriately licensed professional who confirmed that the student lives with a disability. Students who are registered with OA and who want to request accommodations for an instructor's class will send faculty a copy of their Letter of Accommodation (LOA) using AIM software. OA will send an eligibility notice about non-academic accommodations (i.e., those related to on-campus housing, meal plans, financial aid, etc.) to the appropriate Winthrop office. LOAs and eligibility notices confirm with instructors and staff members that a student has a disability and is eligible for specific accommodations.

Q: *A student disclosed a disability, but has not requested any accommodations. In this case, are instructors still responsible for providing accommodations?*

A: No, instructors are only required to provide disability accommodations that are approved by OA and requested by the student. In these situations, it would be appropriate to encourage the student to register with OA and offer the opportunity to discuss reasonable accommodations for the class if needed.

Q: *What are some of the testing accommodations available to students with disabilities?*

A: Testing accommodations are based upon the documented functional limitations a student experiences due to a disability. Some of these accommodations include, but are not limited to: extra time for exams (typically 50% or 100%), use of a computer (students may use speech to text software, screen enlargement programs, screen/test readers, or spelling/grammar check software), a distraction-reduced testing space, and the use of a closed circuit TV to enlarge print.

Q: *A student with a disability has requested to take an exam at the OA Test Center. What measures does the OA Test Center have in place to ensure that exams will be safe and that accommodated students will get no unfair advantage?*

A: Faculty must complete an Alternative Testing Agreement using AIM software. From there, they also upload any exam materials needed during a student's testing appointment to AIM. All tests are kept in a locked cabinet until each student arrives for their test. All students are required to present their Winthrop student ID upon arrival. No tests will be administered without proper identification.

Typically, tests are taken in one sitting unless a student has an accommodation that would necessitate bathroom breaks. Instructors will be notified if a student leaves the testing space for any reason during testing. Because classroom policies vary on this matter, any action taken beyond that notification is at an instructor's discretion.

Test proctors utilize random walk-throughs, security mirrors, computer monitoring software, and lockdown browser software to ensure academic integrity. Students are limited to approved testing materials at the test stations. Lockers are provided to store their personal belongings.

In the event of testing irregularities, a report documenting the incident will be sent to instructors and the Dean of Students Office. Signs indicating this reporting policy are posted at each test station as a deterrent to unwanted student behavior.

Q: *Are ASL interpreters or real time captionists required to provide services for a student who is deaf? Some rooms can be crowded and students who do not need interpreting services sometimes watch the interpreter instead of paying attention to the lecture/presentation.*

A: It is required by law that students have access to what is essential for them to have equal access to information and activities, and this includes a sign language interpreter or real time captionist.

Q: *A student with a disability asked for a copy of instructor's notes and overhead materials. Do faculty have to give these materials to students?*

A: Instructor's notes and overhead materials can assist students in closing gaps in their own note taking so they have access to adequate lecture information. It is important that instructors assist students in gaining access to pertinent lecture information students are not able to capture on their own due to a disability. Instructors are asked to provide these materials to students approved for these accommodations if available. If unavailable, speak with students concerning other options that might assist with note taking or refer them to the Office of Accessibility to discuss the matter.

Q: *A student is experiencing difficulties in a class and an instructor thinks that this student may have a disability. What can an instructor do to help this student?*

A: Talk privately with the student to discuss the observed difficulties. The student may reveal that they have a disability. If this is the case and the student is registered with OA, suggest that the student talk to his/her OA advisor. Students may also be referred to OA for information about diagnostic testing for a suspected learning disability if they have not been diagnosed with a disability. Suggest that the student call OA at 803/323-3290 for additional information. Students may also benefit from connecting with other offices on campus that are designed to address the particular difficulties they are experiencing. For example, a student who is experiencing issues related to mental health may benefit from connecting with OA <u>and</u> Winthrop's Counseling Services.

Q: *Are instructors required to lessen the rigor of a required assignment because a student has a disability?*

A: No, this is not required. However, some students with disabilities may exhibit their knowledge, production, and other course expectations differently than their peers. For example, a student with a learning disability in writing may produce an essay exam by using a computer or scribe rather than writing out an answer without the use of these accommodations. The rigor of assignments and instructors' expectations of satisfactory work from students with disabilities should be the same as students who do not live with disabilities.

Q: *Can a student be prohibited from recording lectures?*

A: No, students who are approved to record lectures as a disability-related accommodation should not be prohibited from recording class lectures. Recordings of lectures provide meaningful access to the educational experience by giving some students equal access to class information. The recording of lectures is one of the accommodations specifically mentioned in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The issue of copyright and other concerns are referenced at the Auxiliary Aids and Services for Postsecondary Students with Disabilities page.

Q: *Do instructors have any recourse if they have concerns about facilitating or providing a requested accommodation?*

A: To voice any concerns about a requested accommodation, instructors can contact OA to speak with either the OA Director or Coordinator at 803/323-3290.

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

The Office of Accessibility assists students with receiving accommodations and is available to answer any questions or concerns of faculty and staff members. Because of confidentiality, OA may not be able to discuss a student's specific disability, but can assist in providing information on reasonable accommodations. Contact OA via phone at 803/323-3290 or by email at accessibility@winthrop.edu if assistance is needed.

In some instances, other departments on campus may be needed to meet an instructor or student's needs. Please view the list of our campus partners below.

Academic At-Risk or Reporting Students of Concern

Academic At-Risk or Reporting Students of Concern allows faculty and staff to inform the Academic Success Center and Division of Student Affairs of student who are experiencing difficulties (e.g., excessive absences, missed work, concerning behaviors, threatening behaviors, relationship violence, sexual misconduct, etc.).

University College
209 Dinkins Hall
Rock Hill, SC 29733, USA
803/323-3900
803/323-3910 (fax)

Academic Success Center

The Academic Success Center focuses on helping students achieve academic excellence and earn their college degrees by providing tutoring opportunities and tools to excel in their classes, students are motivated to be the drivers of their education.

106 Dinkins Hall
Rock Hill, SC 29733, USA
803/323-3929
803/323-3910 (fax)
success@winthrop.edu

- Philip Adams, Director
  Telephone: 803/323-3912

- Cathy Brown, Academic Coach
  Telephone: 803/323-3920

Dean of Students Office

The Dean of Students Office supports the development of the whole person by helping students build character and self-awareness, while empowering them to be responsible individuals and community members.

246 DiGiorgio Center
Rock Hill, SC 29733, USA
803/323-4503
803/323-4514 (Fax)
DeanofStudents@winthrop.edu

- Amber Slack, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs & Dean of Students
- Collins Cornwell, Director of Student Conduct
- Miranda Knight, Assistant Dean of Students
- Dr. Gloria Jones, Student Advocate
- Amy Sharpe, Executive Assistant

Center for Student Wellness

Center for Student Wellness (CSW) supports the health and wellbeing of Winthrop students through various offices, such as Health Services, Counseling Services, Health Promotion, and Student Advocacy and Trauma Support.

CSW also offers Self-Help Resources, consisting of various helpful apps, community resources, and library guide

Center for Wellness
Crawford Building
Rock Hill, SC 29733, USA
803/323-2206
803/323-3332 (fax)

Office of Online Learning

The Office of Online Learning provides assistance with captioning, TechSmith Relay, Blackboard Collaborate, and Blackboard Ally.

Online Learning
307 Tillman Hall
Rock Hill, SC 29733, USA
803/323-2212

- [Kimarie Whetstone](#), Director of Online Learning
  Location: 310 Tillman
  Telephone: 803/323-2551
- [Kim Brazzell](#), Learning Designer
  Location: 307-H Tillman
  Telephone: 803/323-3841
- [Daniel Charles](#), Online Learning Support Specialist
  Location: 307-E Tillman
  Telephone: 803/323-2212
- [Heather Keely Delux](#), Learning Technologist
  Location: 307-J Tillman
- [Lee Clark](#), Learning Designer
  Location: 307-I Tillman
  Telephone: 803/323-2563
- [Jane Eckert](#) - Blackboard Administrator
  Location: 307-D Tillman
  Telephone: 803/323-3391
- [Schedule](#) One-on-One meetings with any of the Online Learning staff

Writing Center

The [Writing Center](#) provides a free writing consultation service to members of the university community. The Writing Center's purpose is to help writers at all levels learn more about their writing through tutoring sessions--and thus improve their ability to write well.

- [Dr. Devon Ralston](#), Director
  Location: 242 [Bancroft Hall](#)
  Telephone: 803/323-2138
  Email: winthrop.writingcenter@gmail.com

Math Tutorial Center

The Mathematics Tutorial Center (MTC) is open to students enrolled in all mathematics courses but is primarily designed to support students enrolled in MATH 101, MATH 104, MATH 105, MATH 111, MATH 112, MATH 141, MATH 150, MATH 151, MATH 201, and MATH 291. No appointment is needed! Students needing assistance in courses not on this list should use their instructors as their primary support mechanism.

- [Dr. Kristen Abernathy](#), Director of the Mathematics Tutorial Center
  Location: Bancroft 271
  Telephone: 803-323-2175
  Email: math@winthrop.edu