



# DARTMOUTH COLLEGE

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*The Faculty of Arts and Sciences*

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To: Members of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences

From: Inge-Lise Ameer, Vice Provost for Student Affairs  
Michael Mastanduno, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Date: September 17, 2015

Re: Students with Disabilities

Each year, we provide guidance to the faculty for working with students with documented disabilities. About 400 Dartmouth students are identified with the Student Accessibility Services Office (SAS). This number continues to grow and includes, among others, students with limited mobility, hearing loss, information processing disorders, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorders, chronic health conditions, and psychiatric disabilities.

The Offices of the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and the Dean of the Faculty developed a series of frequently asked questions for faculty members as a way to heighten awareness and assist instructors as you endeavor to make your classes more inclusive. These FAQs can be found below.

## ***1. What qualifies as a disability?***

As defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act (Section 504), an “individual with a disability” is any person who (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, (2) has a record of such impairment, or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment.

Dartmouth is required by Section 504 and the ADA to ensure that every student has meaningful access to all programs, services, and activities of the College, and to provide appropriate academic adjustments and services as needed.

Student Accessibility Services and the Case Management office (646-9157, Sarah.McKinney@Dartmouth.edu) also work with students who have temporary impairments—such as broken limbs and concussions—that may affect them for limited periods of time.

## ***2. What must a student do in order to qualify for disability-related academic adjustments and/or services for a course?***

Students only need to (1) identify that they may need disability-related services and/or academic adjustments to SAS, an instructor, or an administrator (instructors and administrators should then refer the student to SAS), (2) provide SAS with information that substantiates their disability-related needs, and (3) follow reasonable procedures for securing and using academic adjustments and/or services.

SAS professionals review relevant documentation and engage in an “interactive process” with each student as required under disability civil rights law before making final, long-term determinations on an individualized basis. As needed, SAS consults with others, sometimes including the professional(s) who provided the documentation. SAS will occasionally consult instructors to ascertain the fundamental requirements of a class and options to address those requirements.

## ***3. What kinds of academic adjustments and services are there?***

Academic adjustments include extended time for in-class exams, use of word-processing for written portions of exams, alternative means of assessment, and small-group testing. Services include note taking support, document conversion, real-time captioning, sign language interpreters, and adaptive technology.

## ***4. How do faculty members comply with the requirements of the ADA?***

When a student does not have an authorization from SAS, it is appropriate to refer the student to SAS. When a student presents the *SAS Services and Consent Form* or a letter on SAS letterhead that documents authorized academic adjustments and services, or a faculty member receives a letter or electronic mail message from SAS’s Director or Assistant Director, the faculty member must comply in order to keep Dartmouth in compliance with applicable law and campus practice.

*If the faculty member has questions or concerns regarding the authorized academic adjustments and services, the faculty member should consult the SAS representative (either the Director or Assistant Director) who signed the communication. SAS may reconsider its authorizations as long as the student’s needs and legitimate objectives of the course are protected. Until the matter is resolved, however, the initial SAS authorization necessarily prevails. This practice prevents students from being underserved while discussions are underway.*

## ***5. What should faculty members do to address students’ disability-related needs in their courses?***

- Include language in course syllabi such as:

*Students with disabilities who may need disability-related academic adjustments and services for this course are encouraged to see me privately as early in the term as possible. Students requiring disability-related academic adjustments and services must*

*consult the Student Accessibility Services office (205 Collis Student Center, 646-9900, Student.Accessibility.Services@Dartmouth.edu). Once SAS has authorized services, students must show the originally signed SAS Services and Consent Form and/or a letter on SAS letterhead to their professor. As a first step, if students have questions about whether they qualify to receive academic adjustments and services, they should contact the SAS office. All inquiries and discussions will remain confidential.*

- Faculty members may not set an absolute deadline by which students must discuss academic adjustments (e.g. “within the first two weeks of the term”). Instructors may expect students to request services in a manner that is timely with respect to the action needed (e.g. three business days before an in-class examination for extended test time). SAS encourages students to discuss their disability-related needs with their instructors as early as possible, hopefully at the beginning of each term.
- The most commonly authorized academic adjustment is extended time on timed, in-class assignments, exams, quizzes, and the like. Often, exams are conducted in a separate room, perhaps with a few other students who are receiving extended time. Faculty members should select the room and *assure that the circumstances of the exam are comparable to those in the main exam venue*. For example, students in the separate room must receive announcements, corrections, clarifications, etc. comparable to students in the main testing venue, and should have the same opportunity to consult the instructor and ask questions.
- If a student in your class has a disability-related need for note-takers, SAS may approach you for assistance in recruiting classmates as paid note-takers. This may involve posting an announcement on your Canvas site, making an announcement in class, and/or sending a message to the students in your class. Note-takers may also be SAS employees who are not students in your class.
- Some students use technological services in class that may require the participation of their instructors, teaching assistants, etc. These include Camtasia lecture capture, assistive listening, real-time captioning, and video captioning. Similarly, some students have disability-related permission to use laptops for word-processing or to utilize specialized software, and some students use “smart pens” loaned by SAS.

#### ***6. If faculty members have concerns about a student, where should they go?***

Contact the Undergraduate Deans Office (646-2243) or Student Accessibility Services (646-9900).

#### ***7. Where should faculty members go to learn more about disability issues at Dartmouth?***

- Ward Newmeyer, Director of Student Accessibility Services, 646-9900
- Bill Hankel, Assistant Director of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 646-3197
- Evelyn Ellis, Vice President for Institutional Diversity and Equity, 646-3197
- Kevin O’Leary, Associate General Counsel, 646-2444