



Policy Title: Accommodations Policy

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Web Links: [The Americans with Disabilities Act | ADA.gov](#)

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide all members of the Pacific College community with expectations on the reasonable accommodation process for applicants and students. There are important steps that must be taken to ensure that reasonable accommodations are documented, communicated, and provided in a timely fashion. These steps ensure equal opportunity for applicants and students with disabilities.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

Pacific College (the College) is committed to providing equitable access to educational opportunities and an inclusive educational environment for students of all abilities. The College is committed to ensuring that no individual with a documented disability is excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the College based on their disability. Additionally, no individual should be subjected to discrimination or bias. Reasonable accommodations are provided to qualified applicants and students with disabilities. Programs and activities must be provided in the most integrated setting appropriate. The College is not required to provide any aid or service that would result in a fundamental alteration to the nature of the program. To be licensed in California, the graduates of nursing programs are required to take and pass a nationally-normed examination administered by the appropriate nursing board. Therefore, the College's accommodations policy is based on the protocols and procedures that graduates will encounter as they apply to take those examinations.

III. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. **SCOPE:** This policy and its supporting procedural guidance apply to all students and employees of Pacific College.
2. **DEFINITIONS:** The following terms are defined in the context of the accommodation(s) requested. The terms are in alphabetical order, not necessarily in the order they may be encountered in the administration of this policy.

“Disability” is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the person’s major life activities, a record of such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment.

“Disability supporting documentation” is medical, psychological, educational, or other relevant documentation that establishes that a person has a disability as defined above and helps to demonstrate how the disability affects the person’s ability to participate in services or activities of the College.

“Discrimination” is unequal treatment based on a disability that interferes with an individual’s ability to participate in Pacific College’s programs, services, or activities.

“Essential Element” In the academic context, an accommodation is not reasonable if it means making a substantial change in an essential element of a course or a given student's curriculum. It is the institution's responsibility to demonstrate both that the change requested is substantial and that the element targeted for change is essential to the conduct of the course or curriculum. Whether or not the change requested is substantial/essential may be based upon pedagogical precepts, the class syllabus, and/or the judgment of administrators and service providers with knowledge of the class and the student's disability. Sometimes the question hinges not on the course of study but the way a specific course is conducted.

“Examinations” are a test of knowledge, especially a formal assessment of student's understanding and mastery of course content. A significant number of the examinations used at Pacific College to determine final course competence are provided by a third-party vendor and contain objective multiple-choice questions, which are administered by computer in an adaptive format. The examinations do not require knowledge of computer operation. The number of questions may vary from a minimum of 75 to a maximum of 265. The maximum time limit to complete the examinations includes the tutorial, sample items and rest breaks if appropriate. The examinations are administered at the Campus, either in the computer laboratory, the Learning Resource Center, or in regular classrooms.

“Interactive Process” is ongoing communication between the applicant or student and Pacific College personnel for the express purpose of providing reasonable accommodation.

“Fundamental Alteration” While the College makes every effort to provide reasonable accommodations, the College is not required to provide any aid or service or make any modification that would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of the program. For example, where a course requirement is essential to the program of instruction taken by the student, the College is not required to waive the requirement. In evaluating whether the requested program modifications would require substantial program alteration or would fundamentally alter academic standards or programs, the program administrator should consider the underlying academic reasons for the program components, the academic standards institutionalized in the program, how the challenged components are consistent with the program standards, and how the requested accommodations would be inconsistent with the academic goals and standards of the program.

“Quiz(zes)” a test of knowledge, especially a brief, informal assessment of student understanding as part of the instructional process. Instructors routinely use quizzes, both oral and written, to assess student progress toward meeting lesson objectives. Quizzes have many uses in instruction, but they are primarily used during instruction as a method of helping students retain concepts and information.

“Reasonable accommodations for students” are any changes to a course, program, the classroom environment, or the way things are usually done that allow an individual with a disability to participate in educational activities or enjoy equal access to benefits available to other individuals in the school environment. Modifications must address the applicant's or student's particular disability(ies) and should not fundamentally alter course delivery, or institutional, program, or degree requirements.

“Retaliation” is action taken against an individual solely because of seeking an accommodation related to disability, filing a complaint of discrimination based on disability, or participating in an investigation or proceeding concerning allegations of discrimination based on disability.

“Undue Burden” The College need not make modifications or provide auxiliary aids or services if it constitutes an undue burden. In determining whether an undue burden exists, the factors to be considered are the nature and cost of the action needed in the context of the overall financial resources of the College.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

Academic Accommodation Requests

The process of obtaining an accommodation request begins with an interactive dialogue between the Student Services Office and the applicant/student to determine and implement reasonable accommodations.

Applicants and students must identify themselves as having a disability so that the College can understand how their ability to participate in and benefit from Pacific College educational programs, services, and activities is affected. The supporting documentation that students must submit will help the College arrange the appropriate accommodations. All supporting disability documentation, as defined in the forms that are included as part of this policy, will be kept confidential.

During the interactive process, Student Services will document approved accommodations in an *Accommodation Plan*. A record of the *Accommodation Plan* shall be retained in the student's records in Student Services. The student will not need to go through the interactive process again unless they request additional accommodations. All supporting disability documentation will be kept confidential and maintained by Student Services separate from other student records maintained by the College. All supporting documentation and student files will be destroyed 10 years after a student graduates or becomes a discontinued student.

Students must submit a request to Student Services if they require an adjustment or change to some aspect of the educational environment for a reason related to a disability or chronic medical condition. For accommodations to be implemented by the first day of class, students should have all required documentation sent to Student Services **at least two weeks before their first class starts** to allow for the process to be completed.

Eligibility Determination

Student Services will review the completed ***Request for Accommodation of Disabilities*** and supporting medical documentation as needed and meet with the student to determine if the individual is eligible for accommodations. Once all required documentation has been submitted, Student Services will work to determine eligibility within five (5) business days.

Continuation of Accommodations

Prior to the start of each semester, the student meets with Student Services with a copy of their schedule to formally request continuation of services and accommodations. Requests for continuation of services or accommodation should be made as early as possible to allow time to review requests and documentation and make proper arrangements. Accommodation arrangements may be compromised or denied if a request is not made before the new term starts. A disclosure of disability or request for an accommodation made to a faculty or staff member, other than the staff of Student Services, will not be treated as a request for an accommodation.

Additional Accommodations and Modifications to the Accommodation Plan

Requests for additional or modification of current accommodations must be submitted, in writing, by the student. The request must explain the reason for all additional and modifications. Student Services may request additional documentation to evaluate the student's request. Student Services will make reasonable efforts to review the request within five (5) business days of receipt of the request and additional documentation, if any.

Evaluation

In consultation with students, their instructor(s), and the program director(s), Student Services will evaluate the effectiveness of the accommodation when a party notifies the office of a concern. This

evaluation should occur outside of the College academic evaluation process. Any determination of grades for coursework is not part of this evaluation process. Instead, the focus is on the effectiveness of the accommodations. If an accommodation is no longer effective, then the interactive process should be revisited.

Denial of Accommodations

The College is not required to provide any aid or service or make any modification that would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of the program. For example, where a course requirement is essential to the program of instruction taken by the student, the College is not required to waive the requirement. In evaluating whether the requested program modifications would require substantial program alteration or would fundamentally alter academic standards or programs, the program administrator should consider the underlying academic reasons for the program components, the academic standards institutionalized in the program, how the challenged components are consistent with the program standards, and how the requested accommodations would be inconsistent with the academic goals and standards of the program.

Additionally, an accommodation that makes a substantial change in an essential element of a course or a given student's curriculum is not reasonable and therefore not required. It is the institution's responsibility to demonstrate both that the change requested is substantial and that the element targeted for change is essential to the conduct of the course or curriculum. The determination of whether the change requested is substantial/essential may be based upon pedagogical precepts, the class syllabus, and/or the judgment of administrators and service providers with knowledge of the class and the student's disability. Sometimes the question hinges not on the course of study but the way a specific course is conducted. The College also is not required to make modifications or provide auxiliary aids or services if it constitutes an undue burden on the College's overall institutional budget. In determining whether an undue burden exists, the factors to be considered are the nature and cost of the action needed in the context of the overall financial resources of the College.

Finally, the College is not required to make an accommodation that poses a direct threat to the health or safety of the student or others.

If Pacific College denies a request for an accommodation, or a request for a modification of an accommodation, Student Services will provide written notice to the requesting student or applicant explaining the reason for the denial.

Appeals

Students have the right to file a grievance on discrimination based upon disability. A student who believes he/she has been denied equal access in the form of appropriate accommodations, modifications, auxiliary aids, or effective communication, or who believes he/she has suffered discriminatory harassment should contact the ADA Compliance Officer at adacompliance@Pacific-College.edu for procedures. Appeals will receive a written decision within 30 days.

A summary of this policy shall be provided in the College Catalog, and the entire policy and the included forms will be placed on the College website for access by applicants and students.