Title: #VI-4. Services for Students with Disabilities

Date: December 28, 2016

A. Introduction

West Virginia University at Parkersburg encourages all academically qualified students to take advantage of its academic programs. As set forth in institutional Policy A-34, Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action and Nondiscrimination, West Virginia University at Parkersburg is committed to creating and maintaining a community where all individuals enjoy freedom from discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of disability. WVU at Parkersburg does not discriminate against qualified persons with disabilities in its admission policies or procedures or its educational programs, services and activities. Admission to WVU Parkersburg or to a specific program of study is based upon meeting the institution’s admission requirements.

B. Accessible Parking

All WVUP parking lots provide accessible parking spaces as required by the U.S. Department of Justice and identified by the International Symbol of Accessibility. A disability placard or license plate issued by the individual’s home state is required in order to park in one of the designated parking spaces. West Virginia residents may obtain an application from the West Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, (DMV) which must be completed and signed by a physician for temporary or permanent placards or plates. Ohio residents may obtain an application from the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles, which must include a signed prescription from their healthcare provider for temporary or permanent placards or plates. Application forms from the WV DMV and the OH BMV are also available in the Center for Student Support Services.

C. Service Animals

Students with disabilities who require the use of a service animal are not required to register with the Disability Services office. However, those students are encouraged to contact the Disability Services office for assistance when needed. For additional information, see Answer Book #VIII-8, Guidelines for the Use of a Service Animal.

D. Moving From High School to College

Students having received disability related accommodations in secondary schools will find important differences as they continue in higher education. Being aware of these differences can make the transition easier. Among the differences are:
Once a student reaches the age of 18, they will need to give written consent to the Disability Services office for any kind of parental involvement. Even if parents are assuming the financial responsibility for a student’s education, this release is still necessary.

Secondary schools may have provided for the financial cost of securing necessary documentation of a disability. In higher education, that cost is the responsibility of the student.

The length of time documentation is valid is substantially different in higher education.

Some types of accommodations, such as study guides, that are often used in secondary education are not available at the college or university level.

The amount and type of documentation that will be needed may be different between secondary and higher education. More detailed information about differences may be found at: www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html

E. Academic Accommodations

WVU at Parkersburg is committed to providing reasonable and effective accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities. All WVUP students requesting disability-related accommodations must register with the WVUP Disability Services office and provide up-to-date, appropriate, and objective medical documentation that establishes a logical connection between the significant functional limitations created by a disability and the need for academic accommodations. A “significant functional limitation” means a substantial impairment in the individual's ability to function in the condition, manner, or duration of a required major life activity.

The process of providing disability related accommodations at WVUP follows guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and current case law. This process is designed to assure that reasonable accommodations are provided to all qualified students in a timely manner.

1. Student participation in the accommodation process is essential and necessary at the college level. Any current, incoming, or transfer student seeking disability related accommodations must:

   - Register with the Disability Services office in Room 1019 and provide documentation of a disability as early as possible;
   - Schedule an initial interview with a disability services counselor;
   - Choose the authorized accommodations needed for each class and discuss those accommodations with instructors.
   - Request services on a semester by semester basis.

2. In order to begin receiving accommodations, students must first register for disability services with the Disability Services office located at:

   WVUP Center for Student Support Services, Room 1019

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The Center for Student Support Services is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday; with the exception of official college holidays and closings, as well as other specified times throughout the year.

3. The student is responsible for providing medical documentation which will be reviewed by a disability services counselor. Documentation may be faxed prior to the intake interview. All documentation must be submitted prior to receiving accommodations.

Diagnostic evaluation reports submitted as documentation must:

- Appear on official letterhead and be typed, signed, and dated by a qualified, licensed professional who is credentialed in the area related to the diagnosed condition for which the accommodation is being requested.
- Provide a specific, definite diagnosis, including symptoms and fluctuating conditions related to the student’s disability or condition. When appropriate, a history of diagnosis, including duration, stability, and/or progression of the condition, should be included.
- Provide recent objective findings, test scores, and/or clinical observations used to determine the diagnosis of the student’s disability, the student’s functional limitations, and the student’s current need for accommodation(s).
- Identify current medications the student is taking, as well as any side effects currently experienced by the student.

The following information/documentation is not adequate for determining accommodations:

- A brief note from a physician or health professional requesting an accommodation or providing a diagnosis without offering supporting documentation. This includes information or notes written on a prescription pad, as well as aftercare instructions issued to the patient.
- Evaluation reports of a learning difficulty that are not comprehensive or that identify “problems or challenges” but do not specifically diagnose a learning disability.

4. At the intake meeting, the disability services counselor will review the documentation and discuss with the student his or her accommodation needs. Following this meeting, if the student’s documentation is in order, the counselor will authorize the student for the appropriate accommodations he or she is eligible to receive as a student at WVUP.
5. Authorized accommodations are not implemented automatically for the courses the student has enrolled in. The student will need to select accommodations he or she needs for each class and discuss those needs with each instructor. Authorized accommodations may take at least one week for the instructor to arrange, so it is important for the student to meet with instructors as soon as possible. The student should arrange to meet with each instructor privately to discuss the student’s needs and the best ways to implement the authorized accommodations.

Instructors may not begin implementing accommodations in their classrooms until the student has met with them specifically to discuss how the accommodations will be implemented in class. This is because not all classes are alike, and students’ needs are not all the same.

6. Each semester students must seek authorization for accommodations from the disability services counselor and choose which accommodations to apply to their classes, according to the nature of the course requirements and their needs.

7. If at any time the student feels that he or she needs additional accommodations to those listed in the authorization letter, the student should immediately make an appointment with the disability services counselor.

F. Assistive Technology and Services

The Disability Services office at WVUP offers an array of assistive technology and services for student use or accommodation needs:

1. Assistive Technologies
   - JAWS is the most powerful screen reader and uses an integrated voice synthesizer and the computer’s sound card to output the content of the computer screen to speakers.
   - Kurzweil provides both audible and visual accessibility to word documents and web pages. The company is recognized as the leading developer of reading technology for people with learning difficulties and those who are blind or visually impaired.
   - ZoomText, the world’s leading low-vision solution, is available as a screen magnifier or integrated magnifier/reader. With magnification up to 16x, ZoomText enlarges and enhances everything on the screen, making all applications easy to see and use.
   - FM Systems is an electronic amplification/hearing system that works like a small radio transmitter and radio receiver. The instructor wears the FM transmitter and microphone. The receiver picks up the signal from the microphone and routes it to a personal hearing aid, cochlear implant processor or other device.
   - UBI Duo is an electronic communication device used by individuals with hearing impairments to enable instant communication.
   - Sorenson Video Relay Service® (SVRS®) is a free, 24-hour service that enables users to place and receive calls through a professional American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter via a videophone and a high-speed internet connection. The service is available in the Library (Room 1332). Access after normal business hours is accomplished with the assistance of Campus Security.
• Enlarged key keyboards
• Scanners
• Text in alternative formats

2. **Assistive Services:**
   • American Sign Language interpreters
   • Test reader

G. **Complaints**

If an authorized accommodation formally requested by the student from the instructor is not implemented properly, the student should first speak with the instructor. If the issue is not resolved, the student should immediately contact the Disability Services office at 304-424-8388.

Any student who feels that they have not been appropriately accommodated and/or who wishes to file a complaint of harassment, discrimination or retaliation, may contact the institution’s ADA and Section 504 Coordinator:

Debra L. Richards, M.L.S.
Special Assistant to the President
for Policy and Social Justice, Room 1010
West Virginia University at Parkersburg
300 Campus Drive
Parkersburg, WV 26104
E-mail: drichards@wvup.edu
Telephone: (304) 424-8201
FAX: (304) 424-8204

Complaints may also be filed with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights:

Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
100 Penn Square East, Suite 515
Philadelphia, PA 19107-3323
Telephone: 215-656-8541
FAX: 215-656-8605; TDD: 877-521-2172
Email: OCR_Philadelphia@ed.gov
Website: www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html

**Responsible Administrator: Vice President for Student Services, 304-424-8209**