



# Accessibility Resource Center

“Promoting Access, Inclusion and Community”

Division of Academic Affairs

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## Accommodation Guidelines for Faculty and Instructional Staff

The Accessibility Resource Center (ARC) is charged with the mission of creating an accessible University campus and climate for students with disabilities. We appreciate and rely on faculty and staff collaboration in providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. UWM could not meet its legally mandated obligations without your individual commitment. Your efforts are vital as we work together to provide an inclusive academic environment for all students.

Providing access to a diverse student population is imbedded in the philosophy of UWM. We recognize disability as an aspect of diversity that is integral to society and to the campus community. To this end, ARC collaborates with students, faculty and staff to create an equitable and inclusive learning environment. We promote and facilitate awareness and access through training, partnerships, innovative programs and accommodations. ARC is available to provide training to departments and individuals as requested.

For more information, The ARC Web page ([www.uwm.edu/arc](http://www.uwm.edu/arc)) provides information and resources for faculty and staff. Visit our website for assistance and answers to your questions. Contact the Accessibility Resource Center at 229-6287/archelp@uwm or Interim Director, Barbara Simon, at 414-229-5822/barbaras@uwm.edu.

We offer the following suggestions to all instructors who are teaching students with disabilities. Please respect a student’s confidentiality in all aspects of accommodation coordination!

### 1. VERIFICATION OF DISABILITY

ARC uses a form called a VISA (Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations) to verify disability and to assist students in their communications with faculty and staff regarding accommodations. The VISA indicates what accommodations the student is eligible to receive, although it is up to the student to identify which of these accommodations are needed for each individual course. Students are responsible for communicating directly with you and can give you a copy of their VISA form for your reference. The VISA is confidential and must not be shared without the student’s permission. It is not appropriate to discuss it with the student in public or in the classroom when others are present. In some instances students may elect to have ARC

staff also prepare specific correspondence regarding accommodations. Please note the name and contact information of the ARC counselor listed on the VISA as well as the expiration date. For questions you may have concerning a student and/or a VISA form, please contact the ARC counselor listed on the form. We encourage you to contact ARC staff with questions you may have. A copy of the VISA form is attached for your reference.

## 2. CLASS STANDARDS

Academic accommodations are provided in the spirit of equalizing opportunity rather than lowering standards or waiving requirements. With reasonable accommodations, students with disabilities are to be held to the same educational standards as other students. Together we are charged with the legal responsibility to assure that students with disabilities are not precluded from educational opportunities when reasonable accommodations are available.

## 3. ACCOMMODATIONS

### A. [Alternative Text](#)

Alternate format materials for students with print disabilities. Students should order alternative text and class materials six weeks prior to the beginning of the semester. Your cooperation is essential, and it is critical that you make every effort to comply with these time frames by listing your required text in the UWM Virtual Bookstore (and/or PAWS) with this 6-week time frame in mind.

It is vital to prepare all course materials, including but not limited to handouts, diagrams, board work, videos, etc., in accessible format. Please refer to the [Essential Accessibility Considerations \(& Resources\) for Instructional Materials](#) for information and resources. ARC can assist in preparation of these materials when given appropriate notice.

### B. [Testing](#)

Students registered with ARC may need accommodations for exams and quizzes. These include accommodations which you can arrange in your department (extra time, taking the exam in a separate quiet room) and some accommodations which need to be arranged by ARC (use of assistive technology or devices). Students eligible for these accommodations are expected to talk with you during the first week of classes. Their VISA form will confirm testing accommodations needed.

If students without a VISA tell you that they need testing accommodations, please refer them directly to ARC. Based on disability documentation the Accessibility Resource Center will determine what testing accommodations are appropriate.

If exams are to be proctored by ARC, the student will meet with you to fill out an Alternative Testing Request Form. Please provide the student with the necessary information as soon as possible. It is the student's responsibility to return the completed form to our office to schedule the exam. (Please do not send it through campus mail or have your Teaching Assistant drop it off.)

Please note that all tests must be forwarded to ARC 24 hours in advance. Following these guidelines is critical to ensure that the student can receive alternative testing in ARC. Electronic versions of tests can be sent to [archelp@uwm.edu](mailto:archelp@uwm.edu).

Please share this information with your Teaching Assistants (TA). It is essential that TAs understand and follow the procedures involved.

The Accessibility Resource Center has established procedures to safeguard exam security and protect the integrity of the exam process. Please contact our office should you have any questions or concerns regarding this. We will be pleased to work with you to resolve any concerns.

#### C. [Notetakers](#)

If a student VISA includes note taker, we are requesting your assistance to either provide your notes, TA notes, or engage in finding another student in the class to take notes. Please discuss your choice with the student. If you are utilizing another student as a notetaker, send an email to your class list or make an announcement in class to solicit interested students. You can then connect the ARC student to the student note taker by providing email or other contact information. See Notetakers are paid. Notetakers can be essential to the success of students who require this accommodation. Be sensitive to the ARC student's privacy in requesting notetakers – all accommodation needs are confidential.

#### D. [Interpreters & Captionists](#)

ARC provides sign language interpreters and captionists to facilitate communication between the student, instructor and classmates. Sign language interpreters and captionists have completed intensive education and training programs to ensure complete and accurate communication for all involved. As with all students, please communicate directly to students utilizing these services (please avoid saying, "Tell him/her"). Sign language interpreters and captionists abide by a strict code of ethics and professional conduct. They are precluded from providing any other services or assistance other than direct interpreting. This means students are responsible for their own performance and attendance in class. Please note: in order to be fully accessible and to prompt universal design, all videos and films shown in class should have captioning or subtitles available. For more information regarding captioned or subtitled media, please contact DHH – [caption@uwm.edu](mailto:caption@uwm.edu).

## E. Assistive Technology

The Accessibility Resource Center (ARC) may recommend assistive technology devices or services as an accommodation to ensure that students have equal access to instruction and to all aspects of the learning environment. Assistive Technology (AT) may be a device or a service. Devices include “any item, piece of equipment or product system whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized that is used to increase maintain or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.” An assistive technology service “directly assists an individual with a disability in the selection, acquisition or use of an Assistive Technology Device. When Instructor involvement is required, you will be notified by ARC. For more information regarding assistive technology, please contact [Shannon Aylesworth](#).

## 4. SYLLABUS

Please include the following statement in your syllabi: "If you will need accommodations in order to meet any of the requirements of this course, please contact me as soon as possible." Please avoid placing deadlines for such requests on your syllabi. Suggestions to contact the instructor within the first few weeks are acceptable.