



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. 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. In some instances students may elect to have ARC staff also prepare specific correspondence regarding accommodations. A copy of the VISA form is attached for your reference. We use this form to encourage student responsibility and self-advocacy. Please note the name and contact information of the SAC 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 since this information is confidential; it is not appropriate to discuss it with the student in public or in the classroom when others are present.

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. ALTERNATIVE MATERIALS for STUDENTS with PRINT IMPAIRMENTS:

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.

In addition, it is vital to prepare handouts, diagrams, boardwork, videos, etc., in accessible format. ARC can assist in preparation of these materials when given appropriate notice.

If books are ordered from other than the Bookstore, please leave information with your department staff on where the book may be obtained.

When writing (ex. Math, Economics), please verbalize the material that you are presenting. Class videos can be improved by offering descriptions of information not offered in the dialogue. Please provide clear and legible copies of written material. ARC can enlarge this print for students who would benefit by it.

When materials are not made available in a timely manner, students cannot be held responsible for this information in examinations. But more importantly, inaccessible information diminishes the student's academic experience and is contrary to law.

4. TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS:

Students registered with ARC may need accommodations for exams and quizzes. These include accommodations which you arrange in your department (extra time, taking the exam in a separate quiet room) and accommodations which need to be arranged by ARC (use of adaptive equipment). Students eligible for these accommodations are expected to talk with you during the first three weeks of classes. Their VISA form will confirm testing accommodations needed; you may request a copy from the student.

If students without a VISA tell you that they need extra testing time because of a disability, please refer them directly to ARC. We require proper documentation of a disability from them. Based on this 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 and have the student return the Alternative Testing Request Form to our office. 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 (TA) 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.

Please share this information with your TAs. Students often schedule testing with TAs, and 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.

5. NOTETAKERS

If you have received communication from a ARC student or the ARC office requesting your assistance in finding a classmate to take notes in class, please discuss with the student how the request should be communicated. Following discussion, this may be accomplished by making a class announcement requesting a volunteer notetaker, sending an email to your class list, approaching an individual student, or giving the student lecture notes prepared by faculty or TAs. Notetakers are paid. Notetakers can be essential to the success of students who require this accommodation. Be sensitive to the student's privacy in requesting notetakers – all accommodation needs are confidential.

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. WEB PAGE:

The ARC Web page (www.uwm.edu/arc) provides information and resources for faculty and staff. Visit our website for assistance and answers to your questions.

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, contact the Accessibility Resource Center at 229-6287 or Barbara Simon at 414-229-5822 or barbaras@uwm.edu.