

Faculty Liaison

Students are encouraged to be self-advocates and are provided guidance when necessary. Most faculty-student issues can be resolved between the two parties. In the event there is a communication problem or no resolution, the ODS Coordinator or Associate Coordinator may act as liaison. Students who believe their rights may have been compromised should refer to the grievance procedures as outlined in the "Student Rights" section of this handbook.

Assistive Technology (Auxiliary Aids)

When specified in the documentation, students are permitted to use assistive technology such as calculators, spell checkers, word processing, and other mechanical tools that provide an equal opportunity for participation in the academic environment. For specialized technology needs, students should contact the ODS at least two weeks in advance to assure the availability of such equipment.

Portable equipment may be checked out on loan from the ODS. However, to assure that equipment is returned and in the same condition it was in when borrowed, students will be asked to sign an Equipment Loan Agreement stating their understanding that their college account may be charged for repair/replacement costs if the equipment is damaged or not returned. Until these charges are paid, the students may be unable to register or obtain transcripts.

Instructors have been encouraged to purchase closed captioned videos when new purchases are made. Other arrangements will be made to provide equal access when closed captioning is unavailable on existing videos.

Calculator Usage on Exams

A student with a documented learning disability affecting math calculation may request the use of a calculator as an exam accommodation. The type of calculator allowed will vary depending on the course or module in question. If the instructor has compelling pedagogical arguments why calculator use should be prohibited, an acceptable alternative may be substituted such as a multiplication table or fact sheet.

ODS guidelines for determining if a calculator should be used are based on general legal interpretations from Office for Civil Rights (OCR) and the best practices of other postsecondary institutions:

- Is the accommodation request reasonable based on the documentation presented?
- Does the provision of a calculator fundamentally alter the nature of the exam?
- Is the test designed to measure skills that the calculator would eliminate?
- What is the relationship between the purpose/goals of the course and the test?

Due to the specific nature of some disabilities (e.g., visual impairments) a calculator may be the only way that students can have equal access. ODS staff will collaborate with the instructor to determine the appropriate use of such items. Anyone with questions or concerns about calculator usage on exams is encouraged to contact the ODS or the math department for additional information.

Spelling Accommodations

For homework assignments and out-of-class projects, the student with a learning disability affecting spelling is responsible for turning in papers free of spelling errors just like any other student. For in-class assignments and tests, that student may be eligible to receive spelling accommodations.

Spelling accommodations might be:

- Permission to use a spell-checking device (i.e. Franklin speller)
- Permission to use a word processor with spell checking
- No penalty for spelling errors
- Permission to use an instructor-approved "word list"

Deciding which accommodation to use is dependent upon the purpose of the test or in-class assignment and the student's ability to use the technology. Sometimes the situation dictates which accommodation is appropriate. For example, it will take longer for the student to use a dictionary and if extended time is not possible, another method of accommodating might be necessary. A discussion between the student and the instructor usually results in finding a workable solution. As always, ODS staff will evaluate requests for spelling accommodations on a case-by-case basis.