

Averett University

Disability Services Handbook

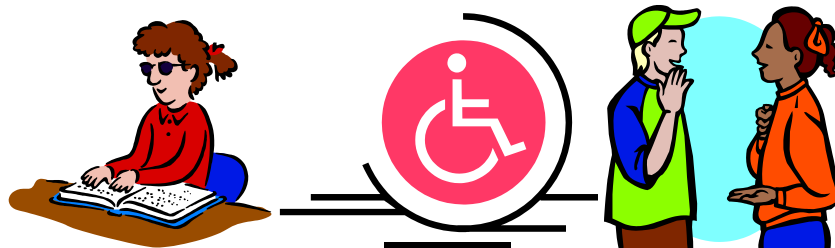


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Averett University

Disability Mission Statement

Averett University is committed to creating an inclusive environment in which all students have an equal opportunity to achieve academic success and to enjoy campus life without discrimination. Averett University is devoted to ensuring that all students who submit appropriate documentation of a disability receive reasonable accommodations in accordance with the submitted documentation. It is our belief that accommodations will provide equal access to opportunities provided by Averett.

Students with disabilities should contact Student Success at 434-791-5754 so the University can evaluate each student's needs and create a plan for academic success.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 is a comprehensive civil rights law that disallows discrimination based on disability in all national, state, and local activities. The ADA broadened and strengthened Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which is the first civil-rights statute for disabled persons.

Provisions of the ADA:

Title I: Nondiscrimination in Employment

Title II: Nondiscrimination in Public Entities and Transportation

Title III: Nondiscrimination in Public Accommodations and Services by Private Entities

Title IV: Accessibility via Telecommunications

Title V: Miscellaneous Provisions

Definition of Disability:

According to the ADA, an individual with a disability:

- Has a physical or mental impairment that “substantially limits a major life activity,” or
- Has a record of an impairment, or
- Is regarded as having an impairment

Averett University must comply with the ADA as we are a private institution whose students are eligible to receive federal monies to attend (Title III).

Certifying Eligibility for Services

Under federal law, discrimination against persons with disabilities is prohibited in private institutions that receive federal funding. Equal access to educational opportunities must be provided in order to ensure a scholastic environment free of inequity. Individuals are entitled to reasonable and appropriate accommodations when sufficient documentation has been submitted to the appropriate office (Student Success).

Required Documentation:

Adequate documentation for Averett University must meet the following standards:

- Current (no more than 5 years old)
- Official (typed; letterhead)
- Documentation from a licensed clinician and/or authorized medical professional qualified to diagnose. (Diagnosing professionals should not be family members or others with a personal relationship to the client.) Documentation must include:
 - A clear diagnostic statement identifying the disability
 - Date of the most current diagnostic evaluation
 - A description of the diagnostic assessment(s), method(s), and/or certifying criteria utilized to determine disability, along with examiner's narrative interpretation.
- Assessments administered for learning disabilities must be adult-normed.
- IEPs and 504 Plans from high school are beneficial to have on file as they help to establish a history of the disability. Further documentation may be required.

Accommodations Process

Accommodations are modifications to ensure the student can demonstrate abilities without the interference of a disability. Accommodations are designed for each individual student on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the documentation submitted.

In order to receive accommodations, the student must:

1. Disclose disability to the Director of Student Success, Dr. Sherill Anderson.
2. Submit appropriate documentation of disability.

It is ideal for documentation to be received by Student Success before the start of an academic year, but documentation may be submitted at any time.

Upon submission, the Director will review documentation and draft accommodations based thereon.

3. Meet with the Director of Student Success to review accommodations drafted.

The Director and student will review protocols for enacting each accommodation. Some accommodations may require advance notice prior to enacting (testing accommodations; peer note-taker)

4. Sign an accommodations agreement allowing the Director to notify professors/appropriate officials of the accommodations.

By signing an agreement, the student acknowledges that the accommodations are sufficient and that the faculty/staff members listed by the student may be informed of the accommodations. The Director may encourage the student to consider listing both the Assistant Director of Student Success and the Coordinator for Academic Support, as both professionals typically assist with academic accommodation needs.

5. Meet with the Director at the beginning of every semester/summer session to review accommodations and sign an accommodations agreement.

Professors are not expected to provide accommodations without notification from Student Success.

Provisional accommodations may be provided for the first semester if insufficient documentation has been submitted. This allows for time to obtain the necessary documentation and undergo any needed assessments.

Student Responsibilities

It is the student's responsibility to identify and disclose of his/her disability.

Students are responsible for bearing the full costs of diagnostic evaluations.

Students are accountable for submitting documentation to Student Success.

While Student Success oversees student accommodations, it is the responsibility of the student to enact accommodations.

Students who enact accommodations are responsible for using accommodations appropriately. Proper use of accommodations include notifying instructors and the Director in advance when appropriate (testing in the Galesi Family Student Success Center; requesting a reader) and using accommodations for personal use only. (Tape recordings of class lectures are for personal use only.)

The Director will provide guidance on proper protocol for all accommodations a student receives.

Students may choose not to use accommodations despite having up-to-date accommodations on file with Student Success. Please communicate in advance with professors and other appropriate parties as to your current needs.

Distance-Learning Students

In an effort to serve all students fairly, distance-learning students must meet the same criteria for certifying eligibility of a disability as traditional students.

Documentation should be submitted to the Director of Student Success and an Accommodations Agreement must be signed before professors may be notified of accommodations. If documentation is lacking, provisional accommodations will be provided for a set time, comparable to one semester in the traditional program.

The accommodations process is similar for distance-learners as it is for traditional students. The Director serves as the keeper of the records and is responsible for determining accommodations; however, the distance-learning student's advisor is responsible for notifying professors of accommodations in distance-learning programs.

For distance-learners who have submitted appropriate documentation of a disability and who are accessing the classroom environment online, appropriate and reasonable accommodations will be provided to ensure equal access.

Below is a sample of standard accommodations used in the online-learning environment to accommodate various disabilities:

- Pictures and graphics should have text descriptions
- Recorded lectures should be accessible
- PowerPoint presentations should have high/low contrasts for easy viewing
- Extended testing time for exams and quizzes

Accommodations are provided on a **case-by-case basis** and the above are only samples of accommodations that may be offered, depending on the disability.

Distance-learning programs are subject to the requirements imposed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504/508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Faculty Reminders

Confidentiality

Students with disabilities do not have to inform professors of the disability, only of the need for accommodations. The Director of Student Success cannot provide details of a disability to a professor without the written consent of the student. If a student does share disability information with a professor, confidentiality must be maintained.

Accommodations vs. “Special Privileges”

Providing appropriate and reasonable accommodations should not be regarded as granting a student special privileges. Rather, providing accommodations minimizes the impact of the disability so the student with a disability has the same opportunities as those without disabilities.

International Students?

International students with disabilities are entitled to the same protections as American students with disabilities.

Does a student with a disability need to ask for accommodations in advance (once documentation has been submitted to Student Success and Notification of Accommodations has been sent)?

Yes. It is the student’s responsibility to enact accommodations. Specifically, testing accommodations require a three-day advance notice.

Students testing in the Galesi Family Student Success Center must obtain a testing agreement through Academic Support at least three days prior to an exam or quiz.

Faculty Reminders

Please include in your syllabi the following statement:

Students with Special Needs

Student Success coordinates and provides a variety of services for students with physical and learning disabilities. Students with a documented disability are eligible for reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and /or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Students who require accommodations should contact Dr. Sherill Anderson, Director of Student Success, at 434-791-5754 or sanderson@averett.edu. Dr. Anderson's office is located in the Galesi Family Student Success Center. All information is confidential.

Students with special medical concerns or needs should inform their professors. Please let them know how to best assist you in case of emergency. All information is confidential.

Galesi Family Student Success Center

The Galesi Family Student Success Center is located in the heart of the main campus. The mission of the Center is to provide students with resources for academic success and beyond. Students with disabilities are encouraged to utilize the many services provided, which include:

The Office of Student Success:

Dr. Sherill Anderson, Director of Student Success / 434-791-5754

Email: sanderson@averett.edu

Location: Student Success Center, Room 111

- Enhances students' academic performance
- Helps increase student satisfaction with scholarly and co-curricular activities
- Assists students as they persist through their college careers
- Works to increase Averett's retention and graduation rates
- Coordinates accommodations for students with special needs

Ms. Aries Wilson, Assistant Director of Student Success / 434-791-5761

Email: awilson@averett.edu

Location: Student Success Center, Room 112

- Oversees the University's Quality Enhancement Plan (Growth-Mindset)
- Advises and provides guidance to Averett students
- Assists with the retention of and success of Averett students
- Assesses first-year student success and determines appropriate programs
- Assists with coordinating accommodations for students with special needs

Mrs. Holly Kilby, Coordinator for Academic Support / 434-791-5788

Email: hkilby@averett.edu

Location: Student Success Center, Room 114

- Assists students with general learning skills, including study skills, time management, and research
- Coordinates tutoring services for most of Averett's classes
- Coordinates writing support services with trained consultants
- Coordinates testing services, including make-ups and standard testing
- Assists with coordinating accommodations for students with special needs

Differences between High School and College

	<u>High School</u>	<u>College / University</u>
<u>Applicable Laws</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I.D.E.A. <input type="checkbox"/> Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> ADA <input type="checkbox"/> Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
<u>Documentation</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> 504 Plan <input type="checkbox"/> School provides assessments expense-free 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Varies (see p. 4) <input type="checkbox"/> IEPs and 504 Plans are often only supplementary <input type="checkbox"/> Student undergoes evaluations at own expense
<u>Student Role</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Student disability identified by teachers and/or parents <input type="checkbox"/> Primary responsibility for enacting accommodations belongs to the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Student self-identifies <input type="checkbox"/> Primary responsibility for enacting accommodations belongs to the student
<u>Parental Role</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Parent has access to records <input type="checkbox"/> Parent serves as advocate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Parent does not have access to records unless student signs a release form <input type="checkbox"/> Student self-advocates
<u>Instructors</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May modify curriculum and/or alter pace of course <input type="checkbox"/> May use multi-sensory approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Not required to modify curriculum or alter pace of course <input type="checkbox"/> May or may not use multi-sensory approaches
<u>Grades</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May adjust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reflect the quality of submitted work

Campus Access

Service Animals: The University can request documentation verifying that the support animal is properly trained as a service animal. The agency supplying the documentation must be an organization that trains service animals, and a certificate of health from a veterinarian may also be requested by the University. Disability documentation clearly stating why a service animal is needed for the student must be on file with the University. The student should discuss designated relief areas for the service animal with the Director of Student Success.

Parking: All student, faculty, and staff vehicles that are parked on campus must have an Averett University parking decal. Parking decals may be obtained from security. The University provides designated parking to accommodate handicapped students. Please speak with the Director of Student Success to determine where you should park should you need handicapped parking.

Student Records

Student records related to disability documentation are kept in a confidential file to which only the Director of Student Success has access to. Records are retained throughout the student's enrollment and for seven years following graduation or leave from the University. Students must sign a release form before confidential information is shared.

Confidentiality

Students must read and sign an Academic Accommodations Agreement that would allow the Director of Student Success to notify professors of the accommodations. Only in rare circumstances or in emergencies are professors or other university officials notified of the diagnosis as ADA allows for only narrow exceptions for the disclosure of confidential information. Should the student desire for professors or other university officials to know of the disability (and not just the accommodations), the student may self-identify or sign a release allowing the Director of Student Success to inform the designated persons.