

Disability Services Policy

I. Policy Statement

Northwest Tech is committed to providing equal educational opportunities for all students to receive a successful and positive college experience. The college acknowledges that at times standard student services are inadequate to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities, and as such, the college is committed to supporting these students as well as complying with federal and state laws, regulations and guidelines, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 as amended.

II. Purpose

This policy is enacted to allow the college to comply with relevant law, the colleges educational standards, and sound ethical practice in disability services, which require reasonable accommodations be made for qualified students with disabilities in order to give such students the opportunity to participate in and benefit from the college's programs and activities. This policy prohibits the college from excluding such students from, or denying them the benefits of, its programs and activities. No college board member, employee, or contractor shall retaliate against any person because of his or her exercise of rights under Section 504.

III. Definitions

The following terms are applied by the college in accordance with and by using the definitions supplied by federal law and regulations.

- A. Disability: a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity, which may include, but is not limited to, seeing, hearing, speaking, walking, learning, reading, thinking, communicating, concentrating, and performing manual tasks. Major life activities also include the functions of major bodily systems.
- B. Reasonable Accommodations: modifications that allow a student with a disability equal access to and opportunity to participate in and benefit from an academic program or offering at the college, unless such modifications would impose an undue burden on the operation of the particular program or activity or would fundamentally alter the nature or purpose of the program or activity. Accommodations include, but are not limited to, the provision of interpreters, extended testing time, note takers, recorded lectures, and distraction free environments. Accommodations are not considered reasonable if they change the essential elements of the curriculum or result in undue hardship, considering the nature, cost, and impact of the accommodation. Academic requirements that can be demonstrated as essential to the instruction being pursued by a

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student or to any directly related licensing requirement will not be regarded as discriminatory.

- C. **Qualified student with a disability:** a student with a disability who meets the academic and technical standards requisite to admission or to participation in the educational program or activity.

IV. Procedures

Students may always choose whether or not to identify themselves as having a disability, but students who want the college to provide an accommodation need to follow these procedures.

A student seeking accommodations for a disability is requested to provide documentation about the disability to the Academic Office and meet with the Dean of Academic Advancement or an academic staff member to discuss the disability and requested accommodations. On the basis of any documentation and the interview, staff determines whether a student is a qualified student with a disability and which accommodations are reasonable.

Requests for accommodations should be made in a timely manner and as far in advance of the relevant course, exam, activity or program as possible to allow for appropriate consideration and planning. Failure to do so may result in a delay of services.

College staff will identify approved accommodations in an Accommodations Form, a copy of which will be shared with the student. For academic accommodations, staff will notify faculty members via email correspondence summarizing the approved accommodations. Faculty and other college officials are then expected to provide the accommodations in accordance with the instructions provided by Dean of Academic Advancement. If the faculty member or other college official does not agree to an accommodation request, the faculty member, college official, or student should contact the Dean of Academic Advancement.

Academic staff will work with faculty and staff as appropriate to assist with how accommodations might be implemented in the classroom as well as to respond to any questions or concerns of faculty or staff regarding the appropriateness of an accommodation.



V. **Confidentiality**

Any disclosure of information will be in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).