

# Accommodations Services at SUNY Maritime College

The mission of the Accommodations Services office at SUNY Maritime is to provide students with disabilities equal educational opportunity by ensuring full access to all programs, activities and facilities of the College. The staff in the office works in conjunction with faculty and administrative staff to guarantee that all qualified students are afforded the same collegiate opportunities available to the general student population, that no students be denied the benefits of any college program or activity, and that no student be subjected to discrimination. The staff also strives to maintain the quality and integrity of Maritime's academic standards and programs while providing reasonable accommodations in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. As defined under these provisions, a student with a disability is a person who has a physical or mental impairment, a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment that significantly impacts one or major life activity, which may include walking, seeing, hearing, breathing, learning or the ability to care for oneself.

## Legislative Overview

### **Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

This Act was the forerunner of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. This legislation prohibits federal agencies from discriminating against individuals based on their disabilities. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act requires federal grantees to make their programs accessible to the disabled.

### **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation act of 1973**

This section states that "No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

### **Section 504-Ammended 1992**

The section was amended in 1992 to reflect the change in identifying an individual as handicapped to state: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States..." Although this change in wording may appear insignificant, it did reflect growing awareness of the need to focus on the individual's disability status as a secondary importance. This use of "people first language" reflects a growing societal awareness that people with disabilities are people first and not defined or limited to their disability category.

### **Sub-Part E Post-Secondary Institutions**

This segment applies to post-secondary education programs and activities, including post-secondary vocational education programs and activities that receive or benefit from federal financial assistance.

## **Overview of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law on July 26, 1990. This law provides comprehensive civil rights protections for individuals with disabilities. This law guarantees equal rights and access in the areas of employment, governmental services, public transportation, public accommodations, and telecommunications to individuals with disabilities. The ADA seeks to provide individuals with disabilities with an equal opportunity to live independently, be economically self-sufficient, and to participate fully in all aspects of community life. The title seeks to remove barriers, both physical and mental, to the meaningful participation of all individuals in the fabric of the nation.

### **The ADA has five Titles:**

**Title I** prohibits discrimination in employment and prevents employers from discriminating against qualified applicants who are, have been, or are perceived to be disabled. The title prohibits discrimination in employment, including hiring practices, advancement and salary, benefits and employment sponsored social activities.

**Title II** prohibits state and local government from discriminating against individuals with disabilities in regard to their programs and services. This provision further states that public transportation must be made accessible to individuals with disabilities

**Title III** prohibits private entities that provide goods or services from discriminating against individuals with disabilities. These entities must make their services accessible and must change their policy or practice to enable disabled individuals to benefit from their services unless such changes would impose an undue burden.

**Title IV** requires telephone companies to provide individuals with hearing and/or speech disabilities with TDD services (continuous voice relay services). The title also requires that federally funded television service messages be closed-Captioned

**Title V** covers miscellaneous provisions and describes enforcement and information grievance procedures.

The ADA did not replace the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; rather, they overlap, and the ADA provides more stringent guidelines for the full and meaningful integration of individuals with disabilities. The major difference between the two statutes is that the rehabilitation Act covers discrimination against individuals with disabilities by agencies receiving federal monies. The ADA provides more comprehensive civil rights coverage for individuals with disabilities and that impact is not limited to entities receiving federal funds.

The College must comply with section 504 of the rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 when determining services or accommodations. The college must follow whichever statute is more stringent.

### **What are the implications of Section 504 and the ADA for SUNY Maritime College?**

Colleges and Universities, like SUNY Maritime College, that receive federal assistance may not discriminate against individuals with disabilities. Therefore, SUNY Maritime College must ensure equal access for students with disabilities to the same education programs and services that are made available to the general student population.

The college must provide equal access in the areas of physical education, counseling services, extracurricular activities, research, academics and occupational training. SUNY Maritime College must ensure that qualified students be provided with reasonable accommodations (such as notetakers, interpreters etc.) if their disability impacts their ability to function effectively in the classroom or college environment without such assistance.

SUNY Maritime College is not required to provide individually prescribed devices, personal attendants, readers, or study devices for courses not offered by SUNY Maritime College or for personal use. SUNY Maritime College is not required to provide tutorial services to students with disabilities beyond the College's standard offerings to non-disabled students.

SUNY Maritime College may not limit the number of qualified disabled applicants accepted into the College, make pre-admission inquiries regarding a student's disability status, use testing instruments which would unfairly discriminate against an individual due to his/her disability, excluding an otherwise qualified applicant from any course or program of study based on the individual's disability, provide less financial aid, or limit scholarship eligibility based on a student's disability.

### **Reasonable Accommodations**

#### **Definition of Reasonable Accommodations**

An Accommodation is a physical or academic provision established by the College to enable students with disabilities to attain equal access to a course, program, service, activity or facility. In accordance with Federal legislation, SUNY Maritime College seeks to provide students with disabilities equal opportunity to achieve equal academic results as non-disabled students by providing a range of accommodations. All academic accommodations are assessed and provided on an individual basis and must be grounded in the documentation submitted by or on behalf of the student. While students can request a particular type of accommodation, it is SUNY Maritime College that determines how to meet a particular need. Therefore, alternative accommodations may be offered above those requested by the student. Accommodations will be denied only if the request is not reasonably grounded in the documentation or the resulting accommodation has the effect of lowering academic standards of a course or program, or presents an undue financial or administrative burden to the College.

#### **Procedures for Obtaining Reasonable Accommodations**

Students who call or report to the Accommodations Services Office to request accommodations will receive a Student Handbook or will be directed to the Maritime

website, which outlines the legislative intent of the ADA and section 504, policies and procedures for obtaining accommodations, documentation requirements, student rights and responsibilities and descriptions of common accommodations. Students will also receive a registration form requesting identifying and demographic information and specifying the accommodations they wish to seek. Students may also be asked to sign an informational release and consent to collect information form enabling the Office to verify that the student is seeking accommodation based on a disability and to request supporting documentation of the student's disability status from a variety of sources including other college officials, high schools, sponsoring agencies, physicians and psychotherapists. Following the reception of these forms, students will be required to take the following steps:

- Students must read the student handbook and return their release and registration forms accompanied by supporting documentation to the Accommodations Services Office. We will assist with the collection of documentation as necessary.
- Once these documents are submitted, students are asked to schedule an accommodation review meeting with the Assistant Director of Learning Support Services.
- Prior to this meeting, the Assistant Director will review the student's documentation and attempt to:
  - Verify the existence of a disability and identify barriers that may result from interaction between the student and the college environment as a result of the disability;
  - Determine whether or not the student has equal access to courses, programs, services, activities or facilities without accommodations;
  - Identify possible accommodations that may provide equal access to courses, programs, services, activities or facilities;
  - Ensure that recommended or suggested accommodations will not lower academic standards of a course, program, or present an undue financial or administrative burden to the College.
- During the accommodation review meeting, the Assistant Director will discuss the finding and recommendations with the student. If accommodations are appropriate, the student will be provided with the policies and procedures for obtaining specific accommodations as described below:

### **Documentation Requirements**

Under Section 504, a post-secondary student with a disability who needs academic accommodations or auxiliary aids is required to notify the College of the nature of the disability and to provide appropriate documentation which supports the request for reasonable accommodations or auxiliary aids.

Students who request accommodations through the Accommodations Services Office must submit documentation verifying a disability and the need for the accommodations.

Students making reasonable accommodation requests should follow these three steps:

1. Students who seek “reasonable accommodations” under the ADA or section 504 are responsible for notifying SUNY Maritime College of their disability. This is done by self-identifying on the Admissions application or by registering with the Office of Accommodations Services located in A and B Battalion 1<sup>st</sup> floor or at the satellite office located in Baylis as soon as possible. This may be done during the admission process or after admission.
2. The person with the disability must make a formal request for a reasonable accommodation. This request can be discussed with the Assistant Director of Learning Support Services in person or can be made in writing. While students can request a particular type of accommodation, it is SUNY Maritime College that determines how to meet a particular need. Therefore, alternative accommodations may be recommended which are more cost-effective or efficient than those requested by the student.
3. Documentation of disability must be furnished and kept on file. The documentation must support the accommodation request, and the specific request must relate to the legal definition of the disability. Documentation must be valid is generally expected to not be older than three years from the time of first enrollment as described below.

***All student disability information is confidential.***

The guidelines outlined below are provided to students in the interest of assuring that documentation is appropriate and verifies eligibility for services, and that it supports request for reasonable accommodations and academic adjustments on the basis that the disability substantially limits one or more major life activity. A student’s documentation should validate the need for services based on the individual’s current level of functioning in the educational setting and generally falls under one of three categories:

### **Learning Disabilities**

In isolation, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a 504 plan is insufficient documentation, but may be included as part of a more comprehensive assessment battery.

The Office of Accommodations Services, provides services to students with disabilities, working with each individually. Students with learning disabilities must establish eligibility for services and/or reasonable accommodations by providing disability documentation from a professional licensed or certified to diagnose and treat their disability.

Disability documentation for students with LD must be provided by one of the following:

- Licensed psychologist
- Licensed neuropsychologist

Such documentation should be the result of comprehensive adult-level testing completed no earlier than the student’s 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade of high school.

Documentation must include the following:

- Diagnosis and DSM code
- History
- Observations
- Comprehensive standardized adult IQ test, recommended, the WAIS –III, with results and interpretation of all sub-tests included

- Comprehensive test of achievement, recommended, the Woodcock-Johnson, with results and interpretation of all sub-tests included.
- Conclusions
- Summary
- Recommendation of accommodations

Additional evaluations are the professional call of the diagnostician, and will help insure the credibility of the eligibility criteria, as well as providing our staff with valuable insight into the student's disability-related accommodation requests and abilities.

### **Psychological, Medical or Physical disabilities**

Request for reasonable accommodations, auxiliary aids and academic adjustments on the basis of a psychological, medical or physical disability that substantially limits one or more major life activities which might include but are not limited to: learning, concentrating, seeing, hearing, speaking, walking, breathing, sleeping and/or working must meet the following guidelines.

Comprehensive and detailed information documenting a psychological, medical or physical disability and the need for services must be certified by a licensed physician, psychologist, psychiatrist, social worker, neurologist, speech pathologist or other appropriate professional. SUNY Maritime College reserves the right to determine the nature and extent of reasonable accommodations, thus additional documentation may be requested to assist in identifying appropriate reasonable accommodations.

Documentation should include:

- A clear diagnostic statement including a description of the duration and severity of condition and the current impact of (or limitation imposed by) the disability within the college setting.
- A statement regarding treatments or services used to minimize the impact of a disabling condition.
- Currently prescribed medications if the side effects of such medications create barriers to learning.
- Recommendations for accommodations that is reasonable and validated by current documentation.
- The name, title, address and phone number of certifying professional(s) including date of diagnosis and/or evaluation.
- Test results of auditory functioning or impairment and aids used (hearing aids, FM systems, cochlear implants, etc.)
- Visual acuity and aids used

### **Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)**

The Office of Accommodations Services at SUNY Maritime provides services to students with disabilities, working with each individually. Students with ADD or ADHD must establish eligibility for services and/or reasonable accommodations by providing disability documentation from a professional licensed or certified to diagnose and treat their disability.

Disability documentation for students with ADD or ADHD must be provided by one of the following:

- Licensed psychologist

- Licensed neuropsychologist

Such documentation should be the result of a comprehensive adult-level testing completed no earlier than the student's 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade of high school.

Documentation must include the following:

- Diagnosis and DSM code
- History
- Observations
- Comprehensive standardized adult IQ test, recommended, the WAIS-III, with results and interpretation of all sub-tests included
- Comprehensive test of achievement, recommended, the Woodcock-Johnson, with results and interpretation of all sub-tests included.
- Comprehensive attentional assessments such as the TOVA (Test of Variable Attention), PASAT (paced auditory serial test), Trail Making Tests (parts A & B) of the Halstead-Reitan, are recommended.
- Conclusions
- Summary
- Recommendation of accommodations

Additional evaluations are the professional call of the diagnostician, and will help insure the credibility of the eligibility criteria, as well as providing our staff with valuable insight into the student's disability-related accommodation requests and abilities.

If requested accommodations are not clearly identified in the diagnostic report, the College will seek clarification, and if necessary, more information.

### **Aspergers/Atusim Spectrum Diagnosis**

The Office of Accommodations Services at SUNY Maritime College provides services and reasonable accommodations to students, working with each individually. In order to establish eligibility for services and/or reasonable accommodations, students with non- visible disabilities must provide documentation from a professional licensed or certified to diagnose and treat their disability.

The request for cognitively-based accommodations (e.g., testing modifications, notetakers) must be accompanied by disability documentation completed by a licensed psychologist or a licensed neuropsychologist and must include the following items completed no earlier than the student's 10<sup>th</sup> grade in high school:

- Diagnosis and DSM code
- History
- Observations
- Social, behavioral, emotional evaluation
- Reports of psychological or neuropsychological testing in the form of either:
  - Complete neuropsychological report
  - OR
  - Comprehensive standardized adult IQ test and a comprehensive test of achievement (recommended are the WAIS-III and the Woodcock- Johnson)

- Results and interpretation of all sub-tests must be included

Conclusions, summary and recommendations of accommodations for courses, as well as for on-campus residence living should be included

### **Common Accommodations**

#### **Reduced Course Load**

Under the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, students with disabilities whose disabling condition is such that a course load in excess of 11 credit hours is not possible may maintain status as a full-time student (12 or more credits) while being enrolled with a part time schedule (1 to 11 credits) requests for a reduced course load will be evaluated in terms of impact of the disability and the demands of a proposed course schedule. In order for a reduced course load to be approved students must provide appropriate documentation to the Accommodations Services office verifying a disability that significantly impacts one or more major life activity and an explanation regarding how the disability creates a barrier significant enough to prevent pursuit of a full-time schedule. Additionally, students must specifically request a reduced course load no later than the first day of class for each semester. Students who register for a full-time course load and, in order to accommodate a disability, adjust their schedule during the drop/ add period below 12 credits must provide appropriate documentation to the Accommodations Services Office verifying their disability and request a reduced course load no later than the last day of the drop/add period for each semester.

Once disability status and the accommodation request are verified, the Accommodations Services Office will notify the Registrar and appropriate letters for and external benefits that require full-time enrollment will be mailed. A standard Certification letter can be provided by the Registrar's Office verifying the student's enrollment, but it may also be necessary for the Assistant Registrar to issue an additional letter verifying that the college considers the student as a full-time student.

In all cases, students must be aware that a reduced course load may affect the amount and application of federal and state financial aid grants. Therefore, it is extremely important that students consult with the Financial Aid office prior to committing to a reduced course load. Equally as important, students should discuss the implications of a reduced load on their overall educational goals with their academic advisor.

Students playing on varsity sports at SUNY Maritime College are subject to the National College Athletic Association (NCAA) requirements and should consult with the Director of the athletic department for these rules and regulations prior to committing to a reduced course load.

#### **Testing**

There are a number of appropriate testing accommodations, depending on the specific disability-related needs of the student. Typical testing accommodations may include, but are not limited to the following:

- *Extended Time*

Extended time is determined on a case-by-case basis and is calculated based on the documentation provided by the student and the standard amount of time allowed for the exam. It generally results in time and a half and does not mean unlimited time. Students should arrive at the office of Accommodations Services at or before their scheduled time.



As in the classroom, no breaks should be taken without previously establishing such breaks as an accommodation and checking with the proctor of the exam.

- *Reader Service*  
A Reader reads test material to the student, or the test may be recorded onto a cassette tape and provided to the student. The reader may not provide the student with any information about the material being tested, clarify test questions or provide additional examples and the student should not ask that they do so.
- *Scribe Service*  
A Scribe writes exactly what the student dictates. The Scribe may not provide the student with any information about the material being tested, clarify test questions or provide additional examples and the student should not ask that they do.
- *Separate Location*  
This is a location where outside distractions are reduced. No space may be entirely distraction free, but we will work together to make it as quiet as possible.
- *Computer Access*  
The use of word processing programs may be preferred over a scribe by a student and may allow that student to complete essay exams independently. Some students may be eligible for the use of enlargement, voice recognition software, or a spell checker.
- *Converted Format*  
This may include large print, Braille, or audio-taped exam material. In order to make these arrangements, the test must be delivered to the Accommodations Services at least two weeks in advance.

### **College Policy and Procedure for Testing Accommodations**

The student must identify with a disability and provide appropriate documentation of that disability to Accommodations Services as early in the semester as possible to discuss possible accommodations for each course. All testing accommodations are based on documentation that is reviewed by and discussed with the Assistant Director of Learning Support Services. It is strongly recommended that this meeting take place early in the semester.

The signed Accommodation Form and a Proctor Sheet provided by the Assistant Director of Learning Support Services are to be brought to the instructor, signed by him/her, and returned to the Assistant Director of Learning Support Services promptly. (It is recommended that this be taken care of during the faculty member's office hours.) These forms need to be returned to the office before a testing accommodation may be administered.

As soon as a test is announced, it is the student's responsibility to remind the instructor after class that they will be taking it in the Assistant Director of Learning Support Services office (located in the Student Learning Center). A minimum of 72 hours' notice is requested to obtain the test and to schedule it in a timely manner. (For those students who wish to request accommodations for their final exams, this appointment must be scheduled no later than the designated date prior to finals week). Tests will be scheduled at or as close to the actual time of the test as possible. Any change

to this policy will take place after consultation with the instructor.

The faculty should work with the student and the Assistant Director of Learning Support Services to provide the tests in a timely manner. Under special circumstances (instructor responds to student questions during a test, has extensive verbal instructions about a test, converted format, etc.), the instructor may provide the testing accommodation in cooperation with the Assistant Director of Learning Support Services.

Testing arrangements for students taking late afternoon or evening classes may be coordinated between the Assistant Director of Learning Support Services and individual faculty members. The faculty member may choose to provide testing accommodations to the individual student or they may be provided by the Assistant Director of Learning Support Services during normal daytime hours.

The student must arrive for their appointment on time or a little early, and failure to show for an appointment or late arrival may jeopardize the receipt of services. If it is necessary to reschedule a previously-scheduled exam because of illness or other extenuating circumstances, the student must obtain approval from the instructor prior to missing the scheduled appointment/test. If prior approval is not obtained and communicated to Assistant Director of Learning Support Services, the student is expected to take the exam as originally scheduled. The student should also notify the Assistant Director of Learning Support Services immediately in person or by email/phone of any change in the date the test is being administered in class so that they can reschedule accordingly.

The student should bring only authorized materials needed for use during the test. All book bags, coats, and other unauthorized material should be left in an appropriate location.

The standards of Academic Honesty described in the college catalog apply to every SUNY Maritime College student and will be enforced.

### **Books on Tape**

Students with visual impairments, learning disabilities or other physical disabilities that result in the inability to effectively read standard print may be eligible to receive books on tape. Recording for the blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D) is a non-profit volunteer organization that maintains the world's largest audio library and loans books on tape to students across a wide range of subject areas. This organization serves as the primary source for taped text books, fiction, drama, poetry, research manuals and computer manuals. Students who would like to contact RFB&D for an application form may do so by calling 1-800-221-4792. Students who are interested in books on tape should meet with the Assistant Dean for Student Development and Retention to review eligibility and procedures for obtaining services through RFB&D as soon as they are registered for classes. Prior to the meeting, students should also find out from the bookstore what textbooks are used for each course including each book's title, author, publisher, edition and ISBN number.

With approval from the Accommodations Services office, books in alternate format, such as e-test, may also be available to students directly from the publisher or internet sources such as bookshare.org. E-Text is generally delivered in a compressed e-mail file and uploaded onto a micro-computer disk. Students can access the material through computers available on campus or a home computer and may also access the material using a screen reader. Students who are interested in receiving books in alternate format should meet with the Assistant Dean for Student Development and to review eligibility and procedures for obtaining text materials as soon as they

are registered for classes.

### **Accommodative Furniture**

Students with physical disabilities or ailments that make it difficult for them to sit in traditional classroom desks or those utilizing wheel chairs may request the placement of accommodative furniture in their class rooms. Students should inform the Assistant Dean for Student Development and Retention as soon as possible, preferably prior to the start of classes, and clarify what their needs are.

### ***Equipment and Technology***

SUNY Maritime College has a variety of equipment and technology that can be accessed on campus to assist students with disabilities, including:

- LiveScribe pens
- Exam reader pens
- Audio recorders
- Calculators
- Timers
- FM/DM systems
- Text-to-speech application software

Students who loan out adaptive equipment must take the responsibility for the items and agree to have the equipment returned to the Accommodations Services Office as indicated at the time of the loan. Students must also agree to make resituating for any and all damages to and/or loss of equipment. A hold may be put on the student's academic records if the equipment or restitution is not made in a timely manner.

### ***The Chafee Amendment***

Use of e-text requires compliance with the Chafee Amendment which allows the translation or conversation of printed text as a method of reproducing work protected by copyright law. Section 121 of the United States Copyright law allows conversation of protected material into specialized formats in order to make them accessible to students based on disability status. Students must understand that any reproduction or re-distribution of e-text materials is an infringement of the Copyright Act.

### **Notetakers**

Notetakers can be provided to students when a disability presets significant difficulty in academic performance skills such as writing, verbal comprehension or concentration.

Students who receive notetakers as an accommodation are asked to take the primary responsibility in identifying and hiring other students willing to provide the service. If necessary, the Accommodations Services Office will assist in this process. Students pursuing notetaker services are encouraged to take the following steps:

- Complete accommodation forms with the Associate Dean and get note-taking services approved;
- Observe classmates and identify those that seem to follow along well. (If you have difficulty finding a notetaker, approach your instructor and ask for assistance).
- Approach a classmate you feel may provide good service, and ask if he/she would be

- interested in receiving compensation for assisting you with notes during the semester;
- Ask your classmate to complete a notetaker information card and return it to the Accommodations Services Office. At this time we will provide the notetaker with all other necessary information and paperwork;

Once a notetaker is hired, the student should discuss with the notetaker the best method for receiving notes. The student receiving services may choose to photocopy the notes at his/her own expense.

Students who are serving as notetakers will be paid for the length of time they spend in class with the student(s) registered in our office. Students receiving notetaker services must also monitor and approve time sheets that must be submitted to the Accommodations Services Office for processing. Note takers will not be paid and will not be required to provide notes to students on days when the student who is receiving services does not report to class.

### **Course Substitutions**

Faculty and administrators at SUNY Maritime College understand that at times traditional accommodations may not be sufficient to achieve the goal of providing students with disabilities with equal access to degree programs. In recognition of this, the College may approve course substitutions that do not compromise essential components or standards of academic programs. Requests for course substitutions will be evaluated based on section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. No student may be allowed to substitute or waive course requirements, pre-requisites or other degree requirements unless approved by SUNY Maritime College. It should be noted that federal regulation prohibits the college from waiving or substituting essential course requirements or components of programs leading to licensure or certification. Course substitutions will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis according to the following procedures

Students who wish to pursue a course substitution due to disability status must submit a written request to the Associate Dean of Students. The submission must identify the specific request include a statement identifying the reason for the request, and the student must submit documentation that verifies prior experiences with the subject matter pertaining to the request including the names of courses taken, grades received and steps taken to supplement efforts in the subject area. The student must also submit documentation that clearly substantiates the student's disability and its specific impact on the student's ability to perform in the academic area in question. This documentation must be on file in the Accommodations Services office or provided at the time of the request. Disability related documentation must be current, relevant and comprehensive and provided by an appropriate certified professional as detailed in the documentation guidelines available through the Accommodations Services office.

Requests for course substitutions will be handled on an as needed basis as timely as possible. It is important that the appropriate party has sufficient time to review and evaluate course substitution requests. Generally, students should submit requests and all supporting documentation at least six weeks prior to the start of the semester for which the substitution would take effect. At all times, course adaptation and /or accommodations will be considered before a substitution is offered. Approved substitutions will not relieve students of the responsibilities or transcript outcome of courses for which they are enrolled in at the time of the request, and will not affect the status of previously transcribed grades. Course substitutions will also be rendered exempt if the student

changes programs prior to graduation.

At the time of the request the student must consent to the release of disability related information as it pertains to the request to the appropriate division Chair. The Associate Dean of Students will consult with the Chair to help determine the appropriate course of action, and reserves the right to consult with diagnosticians in the areas of special education and/or learning disabilities as needed. After a thorough review of each request and all supporting documentation, a written decision will be provided to the student by the division Chair. If the request is approved, the Chair will identify at least one course that may be used as a substitute and reserves the right to consult with other academic divisions to identify appropriate options/ A copy of the decision will be forwarded to the Accommodations Services office and, if appropriate, the Registrar will be informed so that necessary adjustments can be made to the student's transcript

Students who wish to appeal the decision of a division Chair must submit a letter of appeal to the Accommodations Services office. The letter of appeal and all supporting documentation related to the request, including the written decision provided by the division Chair, will be forwarded to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs for review. The Vice President will consult with the Dean of Academic Affairs and the Division Chairperson as necessary and will issue a final written decision to the student. A copy of this decision will also be filed with the Accommodations Services office.

### **Interpreter Services**

SUNY Maritime College is committed to serving students who are deaf, hearing impaired or hard of hearing while enrolled in the college. For many students who are deaf or have profound hearing loss, interpreters provide a communication link to interact in classes and make it possible for students to gain access to all other college activities and programs. Students may also be eligible for other accommodations including, but not limited to, notetakers, FM systems and transcriptionist. The need of each student requesting accommodations due to hearing loss will be evaluated on an individual basis and, if appropriate, interpreter services will be offered. In all cases, the wishes and preferences of the student will be strongly considered

Currently, the college maintains relationships with New York State's office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) and Northeast Career Planning which are the primary resources for interpreter services for our students. Students should be aware, however, that the responsibility to request support services, to provide appropriate documentation and to inform the College about their communication needs rest with the student. When planning for enrollment at SUNY Maritime College, students should consider these issues and should consult with the Accommodations Services office prior to or at the time of registration, but no less than three weeks before the start of classes. Early notice is essential for the Accommodations Services office to coordinate appropriate and meaningful services. Students in need of interpreter services must also adhere to the procedures outlined below:

1. Students requesting accommodations on the basis of deafness or profound hearing loss must provide documentation that is not older than three years from the time of admission consisting of:
  - An audio logical evaluation and/or audiogram.
  - An interpretation of the functional implications of the diagnostic data and hearing aid

- evaluation, when appropriate.
- Suggestions as to how the functionally limiting manifestations of the disabling condition(s) may be accommodated
- A historical summary of previous accommodations applied in academic settings and their effectiveness on the student's learning.

The role of an interpreter is to provide students who are deaf or hearing impaired with equal access to college sponsored programs and activities by facilitating communication between the student and the instructor and other students during class sessions, and between the student and the instructor during formal meetings or consultations.

Interpreters may also be available for campus sponsored activities such as social events, lectures and presentations as needed. Interpreters do not function as tutors, notetakers, counselors or advisors and are not required to facilitate personal conversations. At times, interpreters may function in teams to avoid fatigue and to provide appropriate service.

The following guidelines also apply to the provision of interpreter services at SUNY Maritime College.

2. Student participation and feedback is an important part of ensuring the success of interpreting services. Interpreters may be able to adjust their signing speed and/or style to fit student's needs and students should work directly with their interpreter to develop signs that may be course specific. Students should also provide interpreters with copies of each class syllabus, relevant hand-outs, and vocabulary lists as necessary.
3. Students who are provided with interpreter services must maintain appropriate communication with their interpreters regarding class attendance and schedules. Students should also be aware that most interpreters do not live locally and travel up to 1.5 hours to get to campus. Based on this, students should make sure to directly contact their interpreters as soon as possible if changes in their schedule occur, they will miss or be late to a scheduled class for any reason, or the class is canceled by the instructor or due to weather conditions. In the event that a student cannot contact his/her interpreters the Accommodations Services office should be notified immediately. In the event of unplanned absence or lateness, the following guidelines will apply:
  - a. Interpreters will wait in or outside of the classroom ten (10) minutes for a fifty-five minute class, fifteen (15) minutes for an hour-and-twenty minute class and twenty-five (25) minutes for a three hour class. If the student does not arrive by the designated time, services will not be offered for that course
  - a. Persistent lateness or absences may result in the suspension or cancellation of interpreter services until a consultation with the Assistant Director of Learning Support Services and the interpreter takes place.
4. Generally, students should discuss any interpreting related problems or concerns directly with the interpreter for the class. If additional assistance is needed, the student should schedule an appointment with the A.D. of Accommodations Services to discuss the situation further. In addition:
  - a. If an interpreter does not report to or is late for a scheduled class, the student should

- inform the faculty member and ask him/her to help identify someone to take notes for you and/or, if possible, tape record the class for later transcription or interpretation. The Accommodations Services office should be informed as soon as possible if the interpreter does not report to class or if repeated lateness occurs
- b. Interpreters are expected to maintain a neutral and professional role with college faculty and adhere to the Code of Ethics of the national Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID). Generally, the code requires interpreters to maintain confidentiality and to interpret messages and information without bias or interjection of personal opinion. Interpreters are also required to follow the guidelines for providing service to college students outlined by Northeast Career Planning. Copies of these guidelines and the RID Code of Ethics can be obtained from the Accommodations Services office upon request. Any misconduct should be reported to our office as soon as possible
5. SUNY Maritime College will also seek to provide students with interpreter services for any campus sponsored event or activity and for presentations or lectures required as a component of a scheduled class. Out of class interpreter service requests should be made to the Accommodations Services office as early as possible, or at least three (3) business days prior to the actual activity or event. If there is no interpreter available at the requested time, the Assistant Dean for Student Development and Retention will seek to provide the student(s) with alternative accommodations such as a notetaker or transcriptionist.

### **Recording Lectures**

Students with disabilities that result in difficulties with memory, auditory processing or related issues may be enabled to record class lectures as an accommodation.

Students must first complete accommodation forms with the Accessibility services Assistant Director of Learning Support Services and get recording lectures approved as a special service. At this point, students can choose to purchase and use their own recorders or to borrow one from the Accommodations Services Office. If the latter option is used, students must purchase their own tape/cassettes. In either instance, students are required to notify their instructors prior to implementing the accommodation and must agree to erase or destroy the recordings at the conclusion of the semester in which they were made. At times, recordings may be restricted to lectures only, in order to protect the confidentiality of other students who share personal information in the classroom setting.

### **Tutoring**

SUNY Maritime College provides selected tutorial services that are available to all students enrolled in the College. Section 503 and the ADA require that students with disabilities have equal access to these services. The law does not require the College to provide tutoring as a distinct accommodation to students with disabilities. Students registered in the Accommodations Services office may utilize existing tutorial services on campus to help them with their individual academic needs. Students whose disabilities present deficits in processing speed or specific academic subjects may receive extended tutorial sessions up to time plus 50%. When possible, the Accommodations Services office will assist students in establishing individual tutorials as necessary.

Some students may receive funding for tutorials through the New York State Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) or other sponsoring

organizations. In these situations, the Accommodations Services Office will coordinate and process the required paperwork to issue payment to tutors and, if possible, may assist students in locating a tutor.

### **Assisted Priority Registration**

Each semester, the college provides a one-week period of time for students who have already accumulated credits at SUNY Maritime College to register for classes for the following semester prior to opening registration to new or non-matriculated students. During this week, the day a particular student may register for the following semester is dependent on the number of credits earned, such that students with 54+ may register on the first day and students with 46-54 credits may register on the second day and so on. Students with disabilities that may impact their ability to stand in line, report to campus or those who need a specific schedule to accommodate their disability should inform the Assistant Director of Learning Support Services at least one week before the priority registration period. Students should also meet with their academic advisor, complete a registration form, ensure that there are no holds on their accounts, and provide the registration form to the Accommodations Services Office. The Assistant Dean for Student Development and Retention will submit the registration form to the Registrar on the day in which the student was originally assigned clearance to register. In some cases the Assistant Director of Learning Support Services will request that a student's registration be entered early if the individual situation warrants the action.

### **Parking**

Students who do not have handicap authorization through the Police or Motor Vehicle Department but feel they need the ability to utilize handicap parking spaces on campus may request a parking permit through the Accommodations Services Office. Each request will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and authorization will be provided when appropriate. Parking stickers will be issued by the Facilities Department and must be placed in the appropriate location on the vehicle according to their policies and procedures.

### **Scheduling an Exam with Accommodations Services**

Students seeking a distraction free location for an exam, or who are seeking additional time on an examination. Students can request that the exam be taken with the Office of Accommodations Services. Students should complete the form located on the main Accommodations Services webpage to make such a request and submit it no later than three business days in advance of the examination.

### **Campus Counseling Services**

Students who are registered in the Accommodations Services Office may be referred to or may request counseling services that are available on campus. The Counseling Office is part of Student Life. Services are provided by professionally trained counselors who believe that education is a developmental process integrating educational, personal and social development.

Counseling takes the form of individual personal counseling, group counseling, crisis intervention and/or referral. The outcome of counseling is movement toward understanding one's thoughts and feelings, interests and aspirations; increasing autonomy; relating meaningfully with others; and integrating one's personal and social responsibility.



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Counseling is working on personal growth and understanding, problem solving, decision making, and goal setting. Most of us are struggling or have struggled with *something*, and it is often helpful to talk with someone about it. Sometimes, these personal issues block us from reaching our full potential. Counseling is an opportunity to benefit from working on issues with an experienced, professional helper. The counseling relationship is one that is objective, non-judgmental, understanding and confidential. It is always focused on the individual's concerns.

Some of the concerns counseling may address are: developing life, career and educational plans, including college transfer; problems in personal and family relationships; academic issues including developing study skills and dealing with stress in school; referral to outside agencies; issues relating to anxiety and depression, alcohol and drug abuse, spousal or partner abuse, or HIV/AIDS. The counselors see students, potential students, alumni, faculty and staff.

Counselors teach, conduct workshops and give classroom presentations, both on and off the campus. They schedule all new full-time students, provide English and math course placement services, and administer the Strong Interest Inventor and the Myers Briggs Type Indicator.

The Counseling Office is located in the Student Affairs suite in Baylis Hall and is available by appointment or walk-in service.

If students are uncertain whether counseling is what they would like, introductory appointments may help them decide. The decision to seek counseling is always up to the individual. Counseling sessions and their content are confidential, consistent with the legal and ethical obligations of the counselor.

Consultation with other counselors or faculty will occur only with permission of the student. At all times the student should be both at the center of the process and in control of the flow of information from the counseling sessions.

The counselors adhere to the American Counseling Association's definition of confidentiality, which states "confidentiality is an ethical responsibility and a professional duty that demands that information learned in private interaction with a client not be revealed to others. Professional ethics standards mandate this behavior except when the counselor's commitment to uphold confidences must be set aside due to special or compelling circumstances."

### **Accommodations Services Office Policies and Procedures**

#### **Collection and Release of Information**

SUNY Maritime College understands that maintaining security of student records is essential to maintaining student trust. We also understand the sensitive nature or the comprehensive documentation required to verify the existence of a student's disability and to determine the need for accommodation consideration. All disability related information is kept in secure files accessible only to the Assistant Director of Learning Support Services. The following policies and

procedures are designed to control disability information as related to specific students:

Upon registering with Accommodations Services Office, students may be asked to sign a form informing them about our policy regarding the release and collection of disability related information. The consent statement enables the Office to verify that the student is seeking accommodation based on a disability and to request supporting information and documentation of the student's disability status from a variety of sources including, but not limited to, other college offices, high schools, sponsoring agencies, physicians and psychotherapists.

The release statement is intended to inform students of our office's right to share information with other College faculty and staff who has a legitimate educational interest in understanding the functional limitations presented to a student by virtue of hi/her disability. Sharing of such information is limited to the purpose of assisting students to achieve their educational goals and to assure the effective implementation of assigned accommodations. Disability related information may be shared in the event of an investigation of a discrimination complaint, medical emergency or potential situation of harm to students themselves or to others. Disability related information may also be shared with other college officials in attempt to determine the student's otherwise qualified status for a degree program or course or for the purpose of assessing a student's documentation to determine eligibility for Accommodations Services under the ADA or section 504.

With the above policies and procedures in mind, it should be noted that service delivery and the goal of providing appropriate academic accommodations to students with disabilities is best handled as an interactive process. Our policy is designed to protect students from discrimination and to guarantee each student's entitlement to equal access. Under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) SUNY Maritime College faculty are entitle to consult with the Associate Dean of Students regarding the particular learning or operational limitations a student's disability presents if there is a legitimate educational interest. This type of consultation enables faculty members to develop individualized strategies for addressing student's needs. At no time will faculty or any other member of the college be provided with access to students' disability documentation unless approved by the student.

### **Emergency Alert**

Each semester, the Special Service Office will submit a confidential Emergency Medical Alert list to the campus Crisis Intervention Team. This team is responsible for responding to medical and personal emergencies and for taking the appropriate action necessary to ensure that students receive the medical attention or psychological support needed. Based on the documentation received by the Accommodations Services Office or the information gathered during the accommodation interview, students will be asked if they would like to be included on the Emergency Alert list. Students may also request to be placed on the list by speaking to the Associate Dean of Students. Students who may consider being placed on this list may include, but are not limited to, those who with seizure disorder, heart conditions, anxiety disorders or panic disorders.

### **Emergency Evacuation**

Each semester, the Special Service Office will submit a confidential Emergency Evacuation list to the Associate Dean of Students. In the event of a campus emergency, natural disaster, fire or any other event that requires the evacuation of classrooms or building, the Associate Dean of Students is responsible to ensure the safe and efficient evacuation of all students including those with disabilities that may prevent adherence to standard evacuation procedures. Students placed on this

list may include but are not limited to, those with mobility issues, or those who request to be placed on the list due to other medical or psychiatric issues

### **Service/Assistance Animals**

Some individuals with disabilities utilize the services of trained animals to directly assist them in activities of daily living. The Americans with Disabilities Act defines a service animal as any "...animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals who are hearing impaired to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheel chair or fetching dropped items." Service animals are permitted to accompany a person with a disability anywhere on campus and are not required to be certified by New York State or a training program.

Requirements of service animals and their owners at SUNY Maritime College include:

- Dogs must be licensed in accordance with city regulations and wear a valid vaccination tag
- Any other animals that are trained for service to persons with a disability must have vaccinations appropriate for that animal.
- Animals must be in good health.
- The owner of the service animal must be in full control of the animal at all times.
- The owner is responsible for appropriate waste clean-up and overall cleanliness of the animal.

The service animal owner is responsible for the appropriate management of his or her animal in all college facilities. Disruptive and/or aggressive behavior on the part of the animal may result in the owner being asked to remove the animal from College facilities.

### **Companion/Therapy Animals**

Although they may provide valuable service and companionship, a therapy/companion animal does not assist an individual with a disability in activities of daily living and generally does not accompany a person with a disability all the time wherever they go. Thus, a therapy animal is not covered by laws protecting and giving rights to service animals. At times, however, students with disabilities that significantly limit their ability to function in the academic setting without a therapy/companion animal may request as an accommodation, the on campus presence of such an animal to the Accommodations Services Office as a student with a disability, specifically state what animal's function is, explain why s/he cannot perform this function themselves and provide evidence that the animal has been trained to perform this function themselves and provide evidence that the animal has been trained to perform the specified function. In the event that a therapy/companion animal is approved, the owner and animal must meet the same behavioral and vaccination requirements as service animals.

### **Appeal & Grievance Procedures**

#### **Accommodation Appeal Procedure**

At all times the Accommodations Services Office will make every effort to appropriately accommodate students based on individual strengths, needs and personal preferences. Approved accommodations will be rooted in disability documentation, and may often extend beyond compliance. In cooperation with students, the Accommodations Services will assist in gathering

documentation necessary to grant accommodation requests and will maintain communication with students regarding the interpretation and direction of documentation results in relation to specific requests. At times students may request accommodations that do not meet the definition of reasonable, as described above, or cannot be justified via the documentation submitted on the student's behalf and therefore, may be denied. In the event that accommodations are denied, the Accommodations Services Office will seek to establish alternative accommodations or services.

In the instances that accommodations requests are denied by the Accommodations Services Office in opposition to students understanding or wishes, students may appeal the decision by submitting a Letter of Appeal to the Dean of Students. The letter should identify the specific accommodations request, a justification as to why the request should be considered reasonable and an explanation of extenuating circumstances. The Dean may consult with the student and/or the Associate Dean and may review disability documentation as necessary. The Dean also reserves the right to consult with the Vice President of Academic Affairs and/or convene an ad-hoc committee to review the accommodation request, the decision by the Associate Dean of Students and the Letter of Appeal. In either event, a final decision will rest with the Dean of Students Services who will submit a written decision to the student. If the original request is approved the Accommodations Services Office will implement the accommodation. If the appeal is denied, the Accommodations Services Office will work with the student to establish alternative accommodations or services.

### **Grievance Procedure**

SUNY Maritime College is committed to the ideal that all students should be free from discrimination, whether intentional or unintentional, throughout their educational pursuit at the College. If, at any time, students feel that they have been subject to discriminatory actions or denied entitled rights, redress can be sought by filing a grievance with the Associate Dean of Students. The grievance should be in writing and should address any concerns regarding an activity of the College or the behavior of another student or college employee. If the Associate Dean of Students agrees that discrimination has taken place, or has the potential of taking place, steps will be taken to remedy the situation and may include cooperation and input from the student and consultation with the Office of Human Resources, the Dean of Student Services and/or the Vice President of Academic Affairs. If the Associate Dean of Students does not, or cannot, conclude that discrimination has taken place, or has the potential of taking place, the complaint will be forwarded to the Dean of Students for review. The Dean may choose to consult with the student, the Associate Dean of Students, the Office of Human Resources, and/or the Vice President of Academic Affairs to determine a course of action. The student will be informed of the findings and actions regarding the grievance in a timely fashion.

### **Civil Rights Bureau**

SUNY Maritime College will, in good faith, comply with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and will provide students with disabilities with equal access to all facilities, programs and activities of the college. This Student Handbook is designed to identify the rights and responsibilities of the students and of the college and to clarify the procedures by which equal access is provided to the students with disabilities. In the event that students perceive that the policies and procedures of the College do not provide access compliant with federal law, the New York State Office of Advocates for Persons with Disabilities may be contacted for consultation and direction. This office is administered by the Civil Rights bureau within the Office of the New York State Attorney General and can be contacted at (212) 416-8250.

## **SUNY Maritime College Rights and Responsibilities**

SUNY Maritime has the right to:

- Request professional documentation verifying the nature of a student's disability, the academic or physical limitations the disability presents, and the need for specific accommodations;
- Consult with college officials in attempt to determine the student's qualifications for a degree program or course;
- Discuss a student documentation submitted on the student's behalf with the professional source or additional experts (omitting identifying information) as needed to determine eligibility for Accommodations Services under the ADA or section 504;
- Deny a request for accommodation if the student's documentation does not verify the need for the request;
- Deny a request for accommodation if it is deemed unreasonable as measured by whether or not it poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others, compromises the essential elements of the course or program, or poses an undue financial or administrative burden on the College.

SUNY Maritime College and the office of Accommodations Services has the responsibility to:

- Ensure that, with or without accommodations, students with disabilities can obtain equal access to the College's programs, activities, service and facilities;
- Inform students with disabilities about the availability and range of accommodations, and provide the policies and procedures necessary to obtain accommodations upon request and in accessible formats;
- Determine each student's eligibility for accommodations under the ADA and/or section 504 by reviewing appropriate documentation;
- Provide individualized assessments and evaluate students based on their abilities;
- Protect and maintain the integrity of the academic standards of individual courses or programs;
- Coordinate the efforts of the Accommodations Services office, , and the Faculty to ensure that eligible students are provided with approved accommodations and support services in a fair and timely manner;
- Establish, through the appropriate faculty members, the abilities, skills and knowledge fundamental to the requesting student's academic programs and courses and evaluate each student's performance on this basis;(These fundamental program and course standard/goals are not subject to accommodation.)
- Maintain confidentiality of documentation and communication concerning students with disabilities except when otherwise specified by law or consent to release disability related information is provided by the student.

## **Student Rights and Responsibilities**

Every student registered in the Accommodations Services Office has the right to;

- Equal access to SUNY Maritime College courses, programs, activities and facilities;
- Individual assessment of his/her disability and skills;
- Reasonable Accommodations or auxiliary aids as appropriate;
- Confidentiality of all disability related information;

- Control the release of disability related information except as otherwise required by law;
- Appeal the College's decisions concerning reasonable accommodations by following the grievance procedures outlined in the SUNY Maritime College Student Handbook.

Every Student with a disability has the responsibility to:

- Meet the qualifications essential for participation in academic courses and programs;
- Identify himself or herself as a student with a disability and participate actively in the process of seeking an establishing accommodations;
- Provide professional documentation verifying the nature of a disability, the academic or physical limitations the disability presents, and the need for specific accommodations;
- Adhere to the College's policies and procedures for obtaining reasonable accommodations;
- Contact the Accommodations Services office at the beginning of each semester so that accommodations can be established in timely manner;
- Notify their instructors that they will be using accommodations by submitting an accommodation form and acquiring the instructor's signature.

### **Faculty Rights and Responsibilities**

Every faculty member who has a student with a disability in one or more of his/her classes has the right to:

- Establish abilities, skills and knowledge that are fundamental to academic programs and courses and which are not subject to accommodation;
- Verify a student's eligibility for accommodations with the Accommodations Services Office;
- Expect students to participate actively in the process of establishing and acquiring accommodations;
- Expect students to abide by all College policies and procedures related to obtaining reasonable accommodations

Every faculty member who has a student with a disability in one or more of his/her classes has the responsibility to:

- Work in conjunction with the Accommodations Services Office to ensure that eligible students are provided with approved accommodations in an efficient and timely manner;
- Consider equal access issues for students with disabilities when establishing academic courses, course requirements and teaching methods;
- Discuss any concerns related to the provision of accommodations with the Associate Dean.
- Assure the confidentiality of all disability related information;
- Refer students who identify themselves as, or those suspected as, having a disability to the Accommodations Services office.