# Faculty Dos and Don’ts

## How to Support Students with Approved Accommodations

issued by GW’s Disability Support Services Office (DSS)

Generally, under federal and local laws (e.g., the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act, the District of Columbia Human Relations Act, collectively referred to as the “ADA”) and university policy, the university must provide reasonable accommodations to a qualified student with a known disability if needed in order to afford the student an equal opportunity to participate in university programs, activities, and services. If a student approaches you to discuss issues relating to a disability or to request an accommodation, you should refer the student to DSS to acquire appropriate documentation. Below are some “do’s and don’ts” on how best to support students who have approved accommodations due to a disability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DO</th>
<th>DON’T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACCESS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Incorporate principles of Universal Design for Learning. <a href="http://go.gwu.edu/universaldesign">go.gwu.edu/universaldesign</a></td>
<td>• Refuse to provide reasonable accommodations, or the academic adjustments that have been approved by DSS. Eligibility for services and accommodations under the ADA is the job of DSS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Include the DSS Statement of Information in your syllabus. <a href="http://disabilitysupport.gwu.edu/faculty-support">disabilitysupport.gwu.edu/faculty-support</a></td>
<td>• Make assumptions about a student’s ability to participate in the class or work in a particular field. Concerns that students may not be able to succeed are usually based on assumptions, not facts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assist students in following the university’s policies. All requests for accommodations should be made through the Disability Support Services Office. Individual faculty should avoid making informal short-term or long-term arrangements, under any circumstances. This protects students, faculty, and the institution by ensuring consistency and takes much of the burden off individual faculty members, who are often ill-equipped to determine whether an accommodation is appropriate or how to provide it.</td>
<td>• Refuse to provide copies of handouts, or orally describe information written on the chalkboard, or face the class when referring to something written on the chalkboard, etc., if these accommodations have been determined to be appropriate for a student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Communicate with TAs or coordinators to ensure accommodations are properly implemented.</td>
<td>• Refuse to provide copies of handouts, or orally describe information written on the chalkboard, or face the class when referring to something written on the chalkboard, etc., if these accommodations have been determined to be appropriate for a student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Be rude or share negative judgments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## CONFIDENTIALITY
- Respect the privacy of students with disabilities.
- Confer with the student privately about how DSS-approved in-class accommodation(s) will be implemented. If students approach you in class to discuss their in-class accommodation(s), ask to speak privately. For programs utilizing anonymous grading for exams or timed assessments (e.g., law school), faculty should refer to program-specific guidance about discussing academic accommodations for testing and timed assessments with students.
- Treat disability information which has been disclosed to you as confidential.

## DEVICES, EQUIPMENT & SERVICE ANIMALS
- Support our students’ use of devices and equipment as an approved accommodation.
- Touch a student’s device, equipment, or service animal or allow other students in your class to do so. If you have a question or concern about the use of the above items, don’t approach a student in class, contact DSS instead.

## RECORDINGS
- Recognize that some students are eligible to record your lectures as an accommodation. GW Lecture Recording Guidance is located at go.gwu.edu/lecturerecording.
- Refuse to permit students to tape record lectures as an accommodation, when DSS approved recording as an accommodation.

## TESTING & TIMED ASSESSMENTS
- Administer exams with accommodations directly when at all possible. If not, visit DSS’s test accommodations guidelines go.gwu.edu/accommodations.
- Make every effort to provide DSS with the final copy of your exam 48 hours prior to the date and time when the student will take your exam (in circumstances where DSS is handling test proctoring for you). Failure to do so can negatively impact the testing experience for multiple students.
- **LAW SCHOOL FACULTY:** Notwithstanding the information above relating to testing and timed assessments, in order to maintain anonymous grading, law school faculty should adhere to guidance issued by the Law School Dean of Students Office regarding the implementation of academic accommodations to timed assessments and exams. This includes making every effort to provide the Law School Records Office with the final copy of your exam one week prior to the scheduled administration of your exam or timed assessment. Inquiries regarding this policy should be directed to deanofstudents@law.gwu.edu.
- Refuse to provide approved extended time for tests or assignments for students with an approved accommodation on the mistaken assumption that doing so would require that all students be given additional time.

Visit disabilitysupport.gwu.edu/faculty-support or contact DSS if you have any questions or concerns about a student or an accommodation:

**Caroline Laguerre-Brown, JD**  
Vice Provost for Diversity, Equity, and Community Engagement  
 ShoppingCartEmail  202-994-7297

**Alisa Major, Interim Director**  
Disability Support Services (DSS)  
Office for Diversity, Equity, and Community Engagement  
 ShoppingCartEmail  202-994-3214  
disabilitysupport.gwu.edu