

## Introduction

Educational access is the provision of classroom accommodations, auxiliary aids and services to ensure equal educational opportunities for all students regardless of disability. Creating equal educational opportunities is a collaborative effort between the student, the faculty member, and Disability Support Services (DSS). DSS can be reached at (616) 234-4140 or [www.grcc.edu/disability](http://www.grcc.edu/disability).

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 protect students with disabilities from discrimination that may occur as a result of misconceptions, attitudinal barriers, and/or failure of the institution to provide appropriate accommodations, auxiliary aids, or services. Examples of accommodations and auxiliary aids include, but are not limited to: qualified interpreters, note takers, extra time for exams, and educational materials in alternate format (i.e. Braille, audiotape, electronic format, enlarged print).

## Principles of ACCESS

- A – Accessibility:** Faculty members play a major role in making their classrooms accessible to all students.
- C – Communication:** It is imperative that students with disabilities, faculty members, and DSS communicate on a regular basis.
- C – Confidentiality:** All instructors and DSS staff must respect a student's right to confidentiality.
- E – Eligibility for Accommodations:** DSS is the office designated to determine eligibility for federally mandated academic accommodations and services.
- S – Student Responsibility:** Students have a responsibility to ensure they get necessary services.
- S – Support:** Both faculty and DSS work together to support students in their legal right to access education at GRCC.

## Definitions of Terms

**Alternative media**—Print material that has been converted to a format that enables a print impaired person to read the materials. This includes but is not limited to: taped materials, Braille, electronic text, and enlarged print.

**Auxiliary aids**—Services, equipment, and procedures that allow students with disabilities access to learning and activities in and out of the classroom. They include but are not limited to: sign language interpreters, real time captioning services, adaptive technology, alternative media, exam accommodations, etc.

**Exam accommodations**—Legally mandated services that allow students with disabilities to exhibit their knowledge on exams by using auxiliary aids which include but are not limited to: extra time, a reader/scribe, computers, large print, CCTV, distraction reduced environment, etc.

**Universal design**—An approach to designing course instruction, materials, and content to benefit people of all learning styles without adaptation or retrofitting. Universal design provides equal access to learning, not simply equal access to information. Universal design allows the student to control the method of accessing information while the instructor monitors the learning process and initiates multiple methods of instruction.

## Who Benefits

- **Students with disabilities.**

A disability includes any physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity.

- **All Faculty.**

Instructors are assisted in their responsibility to teach all students in their classes and to provide equal access to education.

- **Disability Support Services.**

The office provides a system for service coordination in order to better meet student needs.

- **Grand Rapids Community College.**

By providing educational access for all students, the College meets its mandated responsibilities and enhances campus diversity.

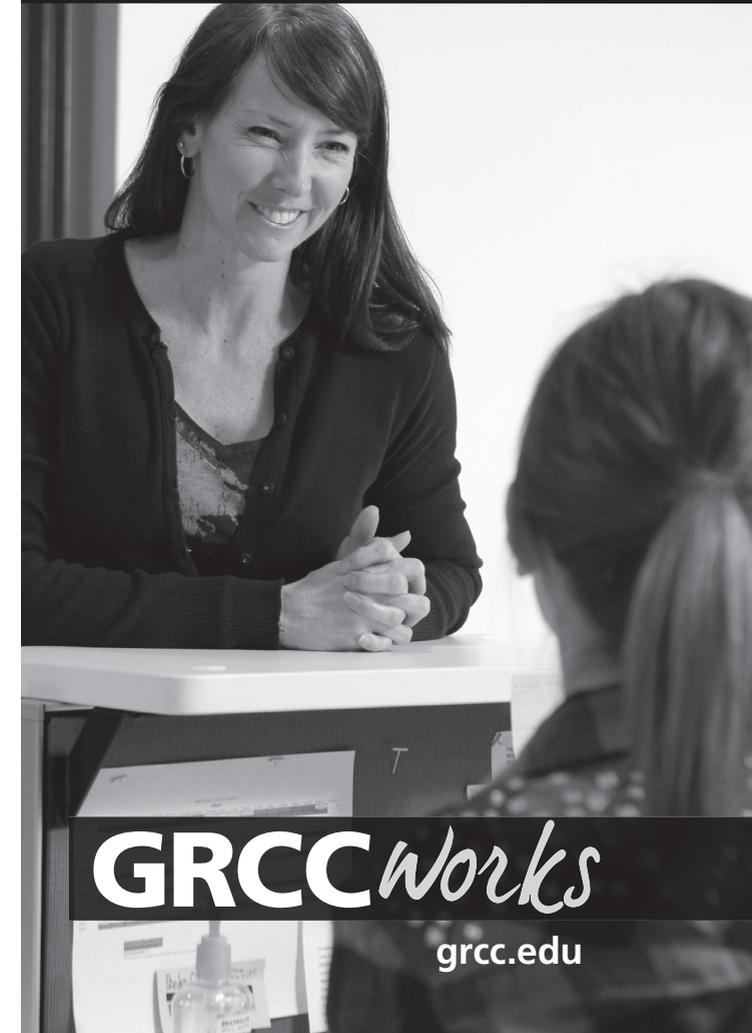
## Rights and Responsibilities

*To Assure Educational Access for Students with Disabilities*

Developed by Patricia Carlton, Jennifer Hertzfeld, and Ann Yurcisin  
The Ohio State University Partnership Grant  
Improving the Quality of Education for Students with Disabilities

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[www.ada.osu.edu/resources/fastfacts/](http://www.ada.osu.edu/resources/fastfacts/)

# Creating an Accessible Campus For All: *Rights and Responsibilities* *To Assure Educational Access for Students with Disabilities*



# GRCC

GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

143 Bostwick Avenue NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

For additional information or clarification, contact the Director of Equal Opportunity Compliance at (616) 234-2120.

Grand Rapids Community College is an equal opportunity institution.  
GRCC is a tobacco free campus. 1213-7995 3/16

# Fast Facts for Faculty

# GRCC Works

[grcc.edu](http://grcc.edu)

## Faculty

### Rights and Responsibilities

#### Faculty Have The Right To:

##### Documentation

- Request verification of a student's eligibility for any requested accommodations. Such verification will be in the form of a letter written by a DSS counselor/advisor and delivered by the student or via campus mail directly to you. DSS is the only office designated to review disability documentation and determine eligibility for appropriate accommodations. Faculty should not view disability documentation.

##### Accommodations

- Expect the student to initiate accommodation requests.
- If the student is taking a test at DSS, expect DSS to administer exams in a secure and monitored environment.

#### Faculty Have The Responsibility To:

##### Accommodations

- Identify and establish essential functions, abilities, skills, and knowledge required to successfully complete their courses and evaluate students on this basis. Students with disabilities should meet the same course expectations as their peers.
- Provide accommodations only to students who are registered with DSS. It is NOT your responsibility to provide accommodations to students who are not registered with DSS.
- Use a syllabus statement and class announcements to invite students to disclose their needs.
- Act immediately upon getting a student's request for accommodations by contacting DSS (if unsure about request), by providing the service or by meeting with students. For information on proctored exams see [www.grcc.edu/academic-testing-services/disability-testing](http://www.grcc.edu/academic-testing-services/disability-testing). A DSS Test Request is a form that facilitates exam accommodations and should be completed by the student. The student is responsible for returning the Test Request to DSS. If you have questions, contact DSS.

- If a student needs alternative media, please provide DSS with syllabi, textbooks, course packets etc, well before classes begin (5 weeks prior to the start of the semester is recommended) in order for students with disabilities to use alternative media when all other students have course materials. With such timely consideration, students with disabilities who have alternative media needs for accommodations and instructional access will be best served. Converting print materials is both labor and time intensive. Alternative media may be print material in Braille, audio, scanned onto discs, or enlarged. If you are using instructional software that is not accessible, you may be required to convert equivalent information into an accessible format, or discontinue use of the material.
- Work to ensure that all audio-visual materials used in class are accessible (e.g., that videos shown are captioned for students with hearing impairments, that videos shown have auditory descriptions for students with vision impairments and that written transcripts are available, etc.)

- Consider incorporating principles of Universal Design for Learning in your teaching. A fact sheet is available on Universal Design from DSS or online via [www.ada.osu.edu/resources/fastfacts/](http://www.ada.osu.edu/resources/fastfacts/)

##### Confidentiality

- Treat and protect all disability-related information as confidential medical information. For example, keep printed items, such as emails regarding student disability-related information in a protected location.

##### Communication

- Clearly communicate your testing procedures with the student and with DSS.
- Consult with students with disabilities and DSS in providing appropriate accommodations.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Faculty do **NOT** have the right to ask students if they have a disability. For those students with documented disabilities, faculty do **NOT** have the right to ask about the nature of the disability. However, if students choose to disclose their disability, this information should be treated confidentially.

## Student

### Rights and Responsibilities

#### Students Have The Right To:

##### Confidentiality

- Expect all disability-related information to be treated confidentially.

##### Accommodations

- Receive appropriate accommodations in a timely manner from faculty or DSS. Students should have the opportunity to meet privately with faculty to discuss needed accommodations and any other concerns. Please keep in mind that DSS is the only office designated to review disability documentation and determine eligibility for appropriate accommodations.
- Appeal decisions regarding accommodations and auxiliary aids. For more information, contact DSS, Program Director of Disability Support Services.

#### Students Have The Responsibility To:

##### Documentation

- Provide DSS with appropriate documentation of the disability.

##### Confidentiality

- Go to the instructor's office, during office hours, or make an appointment with the instructor to facilitate privacy when requesting accommodations.

##### Accommodations

- Initiate requests for specific accommodations in a timely manner, preferably early in the semester.

- Follow procedures with faculty and DSS in order to get the appropriate accommodations.
- Inform DSS of the materials you need in alternate format as soon as possible.
- Notify faculty/DSS immediately when an accommodation is not being provided completely or correctly.
- Notify faculty/DSS immediately when a decision has been made to not use an accommodation or the accommodation is no longer needed.

- Provide for their own personal independent living needs or other personal disability-related needs. For example, coordinating services of personal care attendants or acquiring homework assistance are student responsibilities and are not the responsibilities of DSS.

##### Communication

- Act as your own advocate. Work with counselors on developing advocacy skills and communicating your specific needs and accommodations to faculty.

## DSS

Disability Support Services

### Rights and Responsibilities

#### DSS Has The Right To:

##### Documentation

- Receive the appropriate documentation from the student prior to the services being initiated.

##### Accommodations

- Expect students and faculty to work cooperatively with DSS to facilitate academic accommodations.
- Deny unreasonable academic accommodations, adjustments, and/or auxiliary services. Accommodations can not impose undue hardship to, or fundamentally alter, a program or activity of the college.
- Deny academic accommodations/services if appropriate documentation has not been provided.

#### DSS Has The Responsibility To:

##### Documentation

- Collect, evaluate, securely house disability documentation and determine eligibility for services.

##### Confidentiality

- Treat and protect all disability-related information as confidential medical information.
- Meet with the student privately in an accessible location to discuss disability-related needs.

##### Accommodations

- Administer exams as directed in a secure and monitored environment.
- Provide appropriate accommodations in collaboration with the instructor and student.
- Provide print materials in accessible format once the faculty member and student identifies them.

##### Communication

- Communicate procedures clearly to the student and the faculty.

##### Advocacy

- Assist students with disabilities in understanding their strengths and functional limitations. Provide them with the skills to become self-advocates.

# Fast Facts for Faculty