

Table 5-1. Commonly Requested Accommodations (1 of 4)

Request	Comments
Reduced course load	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be a very appropriate accommodation, especially in students' first semester; it can help in the overall adjustment to the academic demands and new living environment. • Might be offered as a "more appropriate" accommodation to students who request extended deadlines for assignments. • If students with disabilities can't maintain their student insurance plan on a part-time schedule, Michelle's Law (2008) allows them to stay on their family's health insurance policy (a big concern for most families). • Students concerned about graduating on time can take classes during winter or summer breaks to maintain progress.
Notetaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colleges may be particular about who gets this if they believe that the ability to decide what information in a lecture is the most salient and get it down on paper or in electronic form is a lifelong skill that students need to acquire. • Might only be offered to students with a significant disability or more than one disability that interferes with notetaking. • Many notetakers are student volunteers, not professionals or teachers, so note quality may vary. • Possible substitutions: digitally recording classes/lectures, notetaking workshops for students with disabilities. • If colleges are providing transcription for a student with a hearing impairment in the same class, they might also provide the transcript to other students with disabilities.
Private dorm room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burden of proof that a single room is necessary to provide access is often a heavy one; many colleges hold that sharing a room during freshman year is an integral part of the college educational experience. • A number of schools consistently experience housing shortages, which can affect the availability of single rooms. • Students with serious physical disabilities might be accommodated with a double room for which they are not charged the single room premium if they need noisy, bulky medical equipment or frequent visits from an aide. • Students who ask for a single room so they can study in peace will likely instead be directed to the library or dorm quiet room. • Colleges might refuse single rooms for students with social difficulties because they want to prevent them from being at risk for further isolation.
Priority registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate for students with medications that have peak effectiveness at certain points during the day or whose meds may interfere with sleep if they take them late in the day in order to focus in night classes. • Also appropriate for students who need some time between classes because their disability or medications cause fatigue.
Copies of professors' notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DS cannot demand that professors turn over copies of their notes, which are considered intellectual property. • Some professors post their notes on the Internet. When they do, students are welcome to download them, but DS will not do it for them (though DS will show them how to do this the first time if they do not know how).

Table 5-1. Commonly Requested Accommodations (2 of 4)

Request	Comments
Flexibility in attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be appropriate for students who experience severe, acute episodes as a result of their psychological or medical disability. • If approved, students may have to follow some sort of protocol as a way of letting DS—and, by extension, their professors—know that they are experiencing a severe episode and are unable to attend classes. • Attendance policy is generally dictated by the professor and/or the department; even when students have very legitimate reasons for missing classes, the requirements for class attendance may be flexible only to a point. • Students unable to attend the required number of classes may have to withdraw or take an incomplete grade and retake the course in a subsequent semester.
Study guides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not likely to be approved. • Students are expected to know how to go through their notes and readings, think about what their professors discussed in class, and figure out what they should study. • Although tutoring center staff might help students organize their notes, they are not responsible for putting together study guides. • Students may find it helpful to organize or join a study group to find out what other students think is likely to be on the exam, and they may get some information about topics to be covered on their exams by attending professors' office hours and asking questions.
Extended deadlines on assignments, projects, or papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlikely to be approved. • Reduced course load may be offered as an alternative accommodation (students should consider asking for this instead of extensions). • Colleges will offer extensions to any student in a crisis (e.g., death of a parent), but many will refuse this as a blanket accommodation for disability. • Students with difficulty meeting deadlines should utilize technology, tutoring, and other relevant services to keep on top of deadlines. • Reason often cited for refusing this accommodation is that students then end up behind in their classes, and when new papers are assigned before the old ones are done students get overwhelmed and anxious. • DS may suggest that students seek help from the campus tutoring center to learn to manage time and deadlines.
Alternative assignments, reduced assignment length, reduced reading load	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlikely to be approved. • Likely to be viewed as fundamentally altering college programs. • Students with difficulty completing assignments should utilize technology, tutoring and other relevant services to keep themselves performing at the level expected of them at college.

Table 5-1. Commonly Requested Accommodations (3 of 4)

Request	Comments
Assistance with assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help with editing, proofreading, and organizing is considered a personal service, which colleges don't have to offer. • Such help is typically offered through college tutoring centers—open to all students—but colleges don't have to go beyond this for students with disabilities. • Some schools may provide this sort of support outside of the usual tutorial supports—for a fee.
Alternative testing methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requests for multiple choice test instead of an essay or an essay instead of multiple choice test, open-book tests, word banks, oral instead of paper exams, and completing a project instead of an exam are likely to be viewed as fundamental alterations (<i>Wynne v. Tufts University</i>, 1991, 1992). • Colleges may reject because of concerns over fairness (e.g., student granted an essay exam instead of a multiple-choice exam later complains that his exam was harder than the one his classmates took).
Extended time on exams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time and a half for exams is a commonly approved accommodation (although there's no science behind this timeframe). • Students should be specific in how much time they are requesting. (i.e., time and a half or double time); they should keep in mind what their requests will mean: for example, a 3-hour exam now becomes a 6-hour exam. Do they need/want this much time? • Students should not request "untimed" exams, as this is not reasonable (e.g., a student could demand a week for each exam). • If students need short breaks during testing instead of extended time actually working on exams, they should specify this in their request. • Students approved for this may have to take their exams in a separate location from their class, which means access to professors to ask questions may be sacrificed; they should ask about this on a case-by-case basis if they are concerned.
Reader for exams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many colleges are moving toward using technology rather than human readers to accommodate students with print-related disabilities; students may be accommodated by taking exams on a computer that reads tests aloud to them. Using technology for exams promotes students' independence, cuts down on DS's personnel costs, and eliminates the worries associated with proctoring (i.e., answering more questions than the professor wants). • Students should ask for training on DS's scanners and text-to-speech software before their exams in order to be ready for their tests. • Students approved for this may have to take their exams in a separate location from their class, which means access to professors to ask questions may be sacrificed; they should ask about this on a case-by-case basis if they are concerned. • Students who want to demonstrate their knowledge of the college environment can ask for "a reader for exams or, if available, use of speech-to-text technology for exams."

Table 5-1. Commonly Requested Accommodations (4 of 4)

Request	Comments
Using a laptop for exams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It may be difficult to prove that this is necessary to provide access, especially in classes where students take essay exams; colleges may require students to have a significant disability or a number of relevant disabilities. • Even when a laptop has been approved, students will likely have to use one supplied by DS (rather than their own), and it will be disconnected from the Internet. • Students who have specially adapted laptops because of their physical disabilities generally will be allowed to use their own laptops because it eliminates the need for accommodations such as a human scribe. • Students may instead be accommodated with a small keyboard that has an LCD screen that allows them to view a few words at a time as they type (e.g., Alphasmart). • Students who just need a spelling or grammar checker for exams should ask for this (and extended time to use it) instead of a laptop, as the less complicated request is more likely to be approved. • Students approved for this may have to take their exams in a separate location from their class, which means access to professors to ask questions may be sacrificed; they should ask about this on a case-by-case basis if they are concerned.
Using a calculator for exams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not likely to be approved on tests or in classes evaluating calculation skill as it would represent a fundamental alteration. • May be allowed for all students—with or without disabilities—in certain math and science fields because the emphasis is on choosing and utilizing the correct formula, not calculation skill.
Reduced-distraction environment for exams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A commonly approved accommodation. • Students should avoid asking for a distraction-free testing site, as this is impossible to create. • It is likely that another student may also be in the testing room, as well as a proctor (unless the testing room has cameras to check for cheating). • Students approved for this may have to take their exams in a separate location from their class, which means access to professors to ask questions may be sacrificed; they should ask about this on a case-by-case basis if they are concerned.
Scribes/speech-to-text technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most likely to be approved for students with physical impairments that limit use of their hands. • Speech-to-text technology may be appropriate substitution for a human scribe (except for students whose voices cannot be understood by such technology, as may happen with students with a severe stutter). • Students should ask for training on DS's speech-to-text software before their exams in order to be ready for their tests. • Proctors or scribes only record students' responses; they do not rephrase or change students' answers in any way. • Students who want to demonstrate their knowledge of the college environment can ask for "a scribe for exams" or, if available, use of text-to-speech technology for exams. • Students approved for this may have to take their exams in a separate location from their class, which means access to professors to ask questions may be sacrificed; they should ask about this on a case-by-case basis if they are concerned.