

The background of the page is split vertically. The left side is a solid dark red color, and the right side is a solid yellow color. The two colors meet at a jagged, torn-paper-like edge in the center. A white rectangular box with a thin blue border is centered on the page, containing the text.

Soka University of America

DISABILITY SERVICES *POLICIES & PROCEDURES*

***THIS BROCHURE IS AVAILABLE
IN LARGE PRINT, E-TEXT,
AND AUDIO UPON REQUEST***

Accommodation for Persons with a Disability

Soka University of America (SUA) is committed to ensuring equal treatment, educational opportunity and human dignity for students with learning, physical/medical, and psychological/psychiatric disabilities. SUA is committed to providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations to otherwise qualified students with disabilities. These accommodations include academic adjustment and auxiliary aides necessary to ensure access to the University's overall education program in accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and ADA Amendments Acts of 2008.

Whenever the need for a special accommodation or auxiliary aid is necessary, the department/area responsible for the program or service will work with the Office of Student Services to ensure that reasonable accommodations are made. Nevertheless, an academic unit is not required to fundamentally alter the nature of its academic program in order to accommodate students.

The student is presumed to have independent living skills sufficient to provide for his/her personal needs on campus. If this is not the case, the student must, at their own expense, employ a personal attendant or mobility aide. Students requiring specialized medical care beyond that ordinarily offered through the Student Health Center must be prepared to bear the expense of this care through a general hospital or a private physician/clinic of their choice.

It is the student's responsibility to provide diagnosis and supporting documentation to establish the severity of his/her condition and the implications on major life activities. Upon receipt of relevant documentation and assessment data, the student shall receive reasonable and necessary accommodation, including adjustments and aids.

The ADA defines an individual with a disability as a person who

- (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of that person,
- (2) has a record of such an impairment, or
- (3) is regarded as having such an impairment.

Major life activities include caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.

Requesting Services and Accommodations

Students requesting services or accommodations must self identify and make an appointment with the Office of Student Services. Students who request accommodations and/or services of other faculty and staff are to be referred to Student Services.

Office of Student Services will then evaluate all requested accommodation and services. Factors involved in the evaluation of the request include the nature of the person's disability, the impact of such condition upon various aspects of the student's life (academic, social, access issues, etc.), and the type and extent of the requested accommodation. Students requesting accommodations and services are responsible for providing appropriate documentation.

Student Services reserves the right to contact appropriate faculty and staff to discuss requests.

Procedures for requesting services and accommodations:

1. Students must make an appointment with the Office of Student Services and provide documentation of an eligible condition. The eligible condition must have been verified by an appropriate professional and/or physician within the last three years. Students applying specifically for Learning Disability services must provide an assessment conducted by a certified L.D. Specialist, qualifying the student for support services.
2. Students who are approved for academic accommodations, will receive professor notification letters from the Dean of Students to take to their professors. These letters will clearly state the recommended accommodations for each specific course. Clinical information about students will not appear in these letters.
3. Students responsible for presenting the accommodation letter to the faculty member, and are expected to discuss the implementation of the accommodations with their professor. For example, if a student is eligible for extended time on examinations in a separate distraction-reduced environment, the professor and student should discuss the arrangements for taking examinations under these conditions. Professors are encouraged to contact Student Services with any questions or concerns regarding accommodations.

Syllabi Notification (For Faculty)

Faculty are requested to include the following statement in their syllabi:

“Student desiring accommodations on the basis of physical, learning, or psychological disability for this class are to contact the Office of Student Services. Student Services is located in Student Affairs.”

Temporary Accommodations

Students may be approved for temporary accommodations at the discretion of the Office of Student Services. In most cases, students will have submitted some form of clinical documentation prior to receiving temporary accommodations. Temporary accommodations may also be implemented to assist students with short-term physical or psychological impairments (e.g. broken limb, Adjustment Disorder). Temporary accommodations will generally not exceed one academic semester.

Academic Accommodations and Support Services

Office of Student Services will identify and provide appropriate accommodations upon receiving appropriate documentation and meeting with the students on an individual basis, or as the case may be, make a request to the faculty to provide such accommodation for the student.

Accommodations may include:

- Alternative testing arrangements (additional time, oral responses, use of reader and/or scribe, enlarged print and etc.) for eligible students. If student needs the Office of Student Services to coordinate with the instructor on specific test administration, arrangements should be made with the Office of Student Services *at least three working days prior* to the scheduled test in order to ensure staff availability.
- Reader services to visually impaired students. Students who have a documented learning disability may also qualify for Reader services with proper documentation.
- Counseling services for personal situations which may impact the student's ability to succeed in college.
- Copy services for text in large print.
- An orientation to the campus prior to the start of classes.
- Priority registration before the general student population registers.

- Paid notetakers upon request when student's disability requires such a service. (Having a notetaker is NOT a substitute for attending class. Note taking services during a student absence will be provided only when the absence is directly related to the disability and has been arranged in advance with the faculty member and Student Services.)
- Transportation services during regularly scheduled shuttle hours by coordinating with the Director of Security and Safety.
- Maps clearly identifying elevators, parking for disabled and accessible restroom locations available in the Office of Student Services and Administrative offices.
- Ample and conveniently located parking spaces for disabled in each of its parking lots.

The university is not required to provide accommodations which are fundamental alterations of academic requirements. The student should understand that the accommodations approved at Soka University of America are considered reasonable for certain classes or educational settings at this university and may not apply to other institutions.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

To ensure appropriate accommodations are met, it's important for students to understand their rights and responsibilities.

Students have the right to:

- Voluntarily work with Student Services.
- Not be precluded from participating in any other course, program or activity offered by the university or from receiving basic accommodations required by state and federal law.
- Receive a copy of Disability Services Policies & Procedures.
- Privacy where all records maintained by Student Services personnel pertaining to the disability(s) be protected from disclosure and be subject to all other requirements for handling of student records.

Students have the responsibilities to:

- Provide Student Services with the necessary information, documentation and/or forms (medical, educational, etc.) to verify his/her disability.
- Make an appointment with the Office of Student Services each year to update any changes in accommodation needs.
- Assume personal responsibility for taking any medications.
- Notify instructors when unable to attend class.

- Provide attendant care if that is necessary. This service cannot be provided by Student Services staff.

Transitioning from High School to University

Students with disabilities often face greater transitional changes at the post-secondary level than their peers. The following are some key differences between high school and university that students with disability should know.

	High School	University
Primary Legislation	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
Assessment	School conducts assessment and provides student with documentations of disability	Students must provide current documentation of disability by a qualified professional
Services and Meetings	School initiates services and sets up meetings for student	Student initiates requests for services, accommodations, and meetings with university staff
Educational Goals	School often creates and monitors progress for students	Student develops and monitors own progress
Course Workload	May be modified	Will not be modified
Homework	May consist of one to two hours of study time per day, much of it done in class	Student can expect to study two to three times or more than the number of hours spent in class per week
Reading	Requirements for classes may be done with minimal outside work	College is a reading-intensive environment-analytical skills are required
Accommodations	Determined by broader educational and legal mandates	Determined by impact of disability, qualified individual, and essential components of course

Grievance Procedures

The purpose of a student grievance procedure is to provide a process by which student related issues may be resolved in a fair and efficient manner. The procedure is intended to achieve an equitable solution to an issue with due regard for the rights of the student, the faculty, the student body, and the University.

Students with disabilities are responsible for contacting the Office of Student Services if reasonable accommodations are not implemented in an effective or timely way. The Office of Student Services works with students with a disability to resolve disagreements regarding recommended accommodations.

Students with disabilities may file a grievance with the Dean of Students if they believe they have been discriminated against on the basis of their disability. Students may also appeal to the Dean of Students if an agreement between the faculty member, Student Services and the student cannot be reached.

How to Contact Us

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