

# **Student Accessibility Center Policies and Procedures Manual**

## **Hinds Community College**

[www.hindscc.edu](http://www.hindscc.edu)

### **RAYMOND CAMPUS**

P.O. Box 1100 • Raymond, Mississippi 39154-1100

### **UTICA CAMPUS**

34175 Hwy. 18 • Utica, Mississippi 39175-9599

### **JACKSON CAMPUS**

#### **Academic/Technical Center**

3925 Sunset Drive • Jackson, Mississippi 39213-5899

### **NURSING CAMPUS**

1750 Chadwick Drive • Jackson, Mississippi 39204-3490

### **RANKIN CAMPUS**

3805 Highway 80 East • Pearl, Mississippi 39208-4295

### **VICKSBURG-WARREN CAMPUS**

755 Highway 27 South • Vicksburg, Mississippi 39180-8699

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## **Introduction**

The contents of this Policies and Procedures Guide serves as a reference, designed for use by Hinds Community College Student Accessibility Center (SAC) Coordinators, students, faculty and administrators. Therefore, in an effort to assure that students have access to equal educational opportunities, this manual describes the method of administration and/or the process, policies and procedures necessary for providing reasonable accommodations and to ensure equal access for students with disabilities. The policies and procedures contained in this manual may be revised at any time, with or without notice.

## **Notice of Non-Discrimination Statement**

In compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972 of the Higher Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and other applicable Federal and State Acts, Hinds Community College offers equal education and employment opportunities and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability or veteran status in its educational programs and activities. We recognize our responsibility to provide an open and welcoming environment that fosters a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion for employees and students to collaboratively learn, work and serve our communities. The following have been designated to handle inquiries regarding these policies:

EEOC Compliance: Office of Human Resources, P.O. Box 1100, Raymond, MS 39154; Phone: 601-857-3396 or Email: [EEOC@Hindscc.edu](mailto:EEOC@Hindscc.edu)

Title IX: Associate Vice President Student Services, Title IX Coordinator P.O. Box 1100, Raymond, MS 39154; Phone: 601-857-3353 or Email: [TitleIX@hindscc.edu](mailto:TitleIX@hindscc.edu).

## Designated Student Accessibility Center (ADA/504) Counselors

Hinds Community College seeks to comply with the letter, intent and spirit of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Section 504 and ADA require institutions not to discriminate against students with disabilities and to make all offerings and programs of the college accessible. Hinds Community College provides reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities through the Student Accessibility Center (SAC). SAC verifies eligibility for accommodations and works with eligible students who have self-identified and provided current documentation. Students should schedule an appointment with the designated SAC staff member on their respective campus to establish a plan for reasonable accommodations and services.

Raymond Campus & Online Courses	Mark Palmer	<a href="mailto:MAPalmer@hindsc.edu">MAPalmer@hindsc.edu</a>	601-857-3646
Jackson Academic-Technical Center	Pamela Flowers-Magee	<a href="mailto:Pamela.Flowers-Magee@hindsc.edu">Pamela.Flowers-Magee@hindsc.edu</a>	601.987.8148
Jackson–Nursing/Allied Health	Tiffany Moore	<a href="mailto:Tiffany.Moore2@hindsc.edu">Tiffany.Moore2@hindsc.edu</a>	601.376.4803
Rankin Campus	Kendra Neal	<a href="mailto:Kendra.Neal@hindsc.edu">Kendra.Neal@hindsc.edu</a>	601-936-5544
Utica Campus Academic/Career-Technical	Terrenell Galtney	<a href="mailto:Terrenell.Galtney@hindsc.edu">Terrenell.Galtney@hindsc.edu</a>	601-885-7128
Vicksburg-Warren Campus	Raina Deer	<a href="mailto:Raina.Deer@hindsc.edu">Raina.Deer@hindsc.edu</a>	601-629-6807

## Higher Education Disability Laws

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on race, color, sex, religion and national origin in employment, public accommodations and state and local government services. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states that “No otherwise qualified person with a disability in the United States...shall, solely by reason of...disability, be denied the benefits of, be excluded from participation in, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Both laws provided a foundation for the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). The ADA is the civil rights guarantee for people with disabilities in the United States. The law protects individuals from discrimination on the basis of disability. The civil rights protections under the ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment in the public and private sector, State and local government, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation, and telecommunications relay services.

## **Privacy Protection and Confidentiality of Records**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) helps to provide the strongest privacy protection for the educational records of students, and it helps to make sure records are official and kept confidential. It also gives both parents (custodial and noncustodial), equal access to student information unless the student has otherwise opted not to sign the FERPA form.

For this reason, SAC respects the right of the student to confidentiality and strives to keep information provided to SAC confidential. Therefore, student's records are kept in locked file cabinets where only authorized SAC personnel have access. In fact, communication with other campus offices or instructors are limited to providing guidance only on how to implement approved accommodations. Students registering with SAC must sign a Consent Form. Students 18 years of age and older are considered adults and must act on their own accord, unless otherwise noted. With a student's permission or a FERPA request form, SAC will consult with parents, faculty, staff, and relevant professionals concerning their academic progress. SAC does not however; disclose any information about a student's disability or the nature of the disability unless the student specifically requests in writing for SAC to do so and signs a Release of Information form. However, please note that students' records maybe disclosed when permitted or required by law.

Hinds Community College Student Accessibility Center is committed to ensuring that all information regarding a student with a disability is maintained as confidential as required or permitted by law. Any information collected is used for the benefit of the student. This information may include test data, grades, biographical history, disability information, performance reviews and case notes. During a student's tenure at Hinds Community College, academic transcripts will contain no information regarding disabilities.

Students with disabilities are protected from discrimination under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Recognizing that discrimination often occurs as a result of attitudinal barriers and misconceptions regarding the potential of persons with disabilities, the government mandates that the right to privacy applies to the confidential treatment of disability related information.

Disability related information should be treated as medical information and handled under the same strict rules of confidentiality as is other medical information. This includes the comprehensive documentation from an appropriate source that persons with disabilities must provide to SAC personnel to establish the existence of their disability and their need for accommodations(s) or consideration.

The information regarding a student's disability should be shared by those who hold the documentation on a limited basis, and then only when there is compelling reason for such disclosure. This may mean sharing with faculty only the information that a student has a documented disability and need for accommodation(s). The United States Department of Justice has indicated that a faculty member generally does not have a need to know what the disability is, only that it has been appropriately verified

by the Student Accessibility Center on behalf of the institution. Thus, faculty would have no legal right to demand access to the actual documentation, including test scores, dates or names of professionals providing such documentation.

The need to share disability information may change with time and circumstances. If a student with a disability resulting from a health-related condition moves into housing, the residence hall staff may need to know about the condition in order to provide emergency accommodations. If a student files a grievance regarding treatment by a faculty member, the administrator charged with handling the concern may need to know the specifics of the individual's disability and history within the institution.

**Guidelines for treatment of disability related information are as follows:**

1. No one has immediate access to student files in the Student Accessibility Center except the SAC counselor and/or staff of the Student Accessibility Center. Any information regarding a disability gained from medical examinations or appropriate post-admissions inquiry shall be considered confidential and shall be shared with others within the institution when there is a compelling reason. Disability related information is to be treated as medical information. For example, Hinds Community College faculty and staff do not have a right or need to access diagnostic or other information regarding a student's disability; they only need to know what accommodations are necessary or appropriate to meet the student's disability-related needs. If a student has requested an accommodation, the student will be informed as to what information is being provided to the faculty or staff regarding the request. To protect confidentiality by assuring limited access, all disability-related information must be filed with the Student Accessibility Center.
2. A student's file may be released pursuant to a court order or subpoena.
3. A student may give written authorization to the Student Accessibility Center for the release of information when he or she wishes to share it with others. Before giving such authorization, the student should understand the information being released, the purpose of the release, and to whom the information is being released. Information will not be released without consent unless it is required by federal or state law.
4. The Student Accessibility Center will retain a copy of all information provided. If a student wishes to have a record expunged, he or she must make a written request to the Director of Student Accessibility Center and Interpreter Services who will decide whether it is necessary for the office to retain the record.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Student Role**

- Self-identify with a student accessibility center counselor by providing medical and/or psychological documentation.
- Actively participate, in conjunction with SAC and faculty, in the process of determining reasonable accommodations.
- Provide feedback on the accommodations and if they are working, need to be modified and/or if symptoms change.

### **Faculty Role**

- Participate in the process to determine and implement reasonable accommodations.
- Request assistance from SAC with accommodation implementation or consultation.
- Maintain confidentiality if the student discloses disability information.

### **SAC (ADA/504) Counselor Role**

- Maintain confidentiality of medical/psychological documentation.
- Determine if the condition(s) are a disability in accordance with state and federal laws.
- Identify and assist with implementation of reasonable accommodations.
- Request updated documentation if systems change to determine if accommodations need to be modified.
- Provide information and referral to campus and community resources to resolve disability related issues.

### **Student Responsibilities**

Good self-responsibility skills are important to help students make the transition to post-secondary education and to have a successful college experience. It is the student's responsibility to use the approved accommodations, access other types of College assistance as needed and work towards academic success.

### **Students with disabilities have the responsibility to:**

1. Self-identify disability status to SAC in a timely manner (prior to or during the first 25% of each semester or term)
2. Provide documentation of a disability from an appropriately certified or licensed professional. The documentation must be within the last three years.

3. Request accommodations that are appropriate to the documented disability in a timely manner.
4. Meet with each faculty member each semester to discuss accommodations after accommodation letters have been sent by the SAC counselor.
5. Maintain contact with SAC counselor to assess accommodations. If a student's approved accommodations are not implemented in a satisfactory manner, it is the student's responsibility to inform SAC as soon as possible. Delays in reporting problems with accommodations may result in loss of opportunity to correct the situation.
6. While enrolled at the college discuss accommodations with the SAC counselor, prior to the upcoming semester or term, to ensure that faculty members are notified of accommodations in a timely manner.
7. Students are responsible for their conduct. Inappropriate behavior toward persons providing accommodations, instructors, and/or other students or staff will not be tolerated. Such behavior may result in the loss of privileges or services. The College's discipline policy will be adhered to as outlined in the Student Handbook.
8. Read and follow the policies and procedures outlined by the College and SAC.

## **Faculty Responsibilities**

### **If notified in writing**

Faculty members have the responsibility to cooperate with the SAC counselor/staff in providing authorized accommodations in a reasonable and timely manner. Faculty should meet with students who provide a letter of request for accommodations to establish a means of providing accommodations.

### **If not notified in writing**

If a student requests accommodation(s) and the faculty has not been notified of the student's need for the accommodation, the faculty should refer the student to the Student Accessibility Center/counselor. If the disability is visible and the accommodation appears appropriate, the faculty member may provide the accommodation while awaiting official notification.

### **If there is a question of appropriateness of accommodation**

If a faculty member has questions about the appropriateness of an accommodation, the SAC office/counselor should be contacted for further clarification. The faculty should continue to provide the accommodations until the issue has been resolved.

### **Notes:**

- Faculty/staff DO have the right to appropriately ask the student to sign an agreement not to release recordings or otherwise obstruct the copyright of video or audio recording devices when student use these devices in the classroom.
- Faculty/staff DO have the right to request the specific reasonable accommodations.
- Faculty/staff DO NOT have the right to access the students' diagnostic information.

- Faculty/staff DO NOT have the right to fail to provide the authorized accommodation.

### **SAC (ADA/504) Counselor Responsibilities**

Student Accessibility Center Counselors are designated for each campus and are responsible to their respective deans for implementation of ADA/504 regulations. SAC administratively falls under the Vice President of Student Services. Staff coordinate reasonable accommodations for students in accordance with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Student Accessibility Center counselors are committed to promoting a positive campus environment in which students with disabilities are encouraged to actively participate in fields of study related to their personal interests and abilities. SAC counselors support students with disabilities in their career and educational pursuits by providing accessibility to programs and course offerings. Some of the major responsibilities of SAC counselors include:

1. Advocate to ensure equal access for students with disabilities.
2. Provide representation for disability services on college committees.
3. Disseminate information through publications regarding disability awareness and access to services.
4. Provide students with campus and community referral resources for students with disabilities based on the college's mission.
5. Implement guidelines for student rights and responsibilities related to determining eligibility and appropriate disability documentation.
6. Implement policies and procedures regarding confidentiality of information.
7. Implement policies and procedures for determining and accessing reasonable accommodations for qualified students with a disability.
8. Implement policies and guidelines for formal complaints regarding reasonable accommodations.
9. Provide general assistance and coordinate with faculty on services to students with disabilities.
10. Assist in the student accessibility center training programs for faculty, staff and students.
11. Provide consultation with faculty regarding academic and curriculum accommodations, compliance with legal responsibilities, as well as classroom and other physical modifications. Determine accommodations that do not fundamentally alter the program of study.
12. Determine with the student, the appropriate accommodations consistent with the student's documentation. Send letters to instructors requesting accommodations such as the use of a note taker, recording device, extended test time, alternative test format, enlarged print, minimal distraction test environment and preferential seating.
13. Assist in the collection of student feedback to measure student accessibility center services.

## **Shared Responsibilities**

Students with disabilities have the responsibility to report their needs to the faculty in a timely manner as faculty are not required to anticipate the student needs. Faculty/staff members should keep students in mind when making special class arrangements such as labs and on/off campus field trips. Faculty/staff should state on the syllabus that students will need to inform the SAC office/counselor of any specific needs or any additional accommodations as soon as possible to ensure that those needs are met in a timely manner. Students must make the accommodations request in a timely manner. If a student waits until the day of an exam to ask for extended time or a separate testing environment, he/she has failed to make the request in a timely manner. Requests for accommodations are not retroactive. If the student asks for an accommodation later in the semester, the faculty is only required to provide accommodations for exams after that time. In this case the faculty does not need to offer make-up exams.

When a student discloses a disability, the faculty/staff member should ask what they can do to help facilitate learning. This may be as simple as allowing the student to sit in the front of the classroom, so that they may be more attentive and focused. Also, faculty/staff may not discourage students from specific fields of study if the student meets the admission requirements and maintains appropriate grades and is otherwise qualified. Faculty/staff members are responsible for providing an education, and the student is responsible for maintaining academic requirements.

## **General Eligibility Requirements**

Eligible students include those enrolled in degree and non-degree programs offered by Hinds Community College and those who are considered qualified to meet all college program requirements despite their disability. These students must also meet the definition of disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA in order to receive services.

### **Who is protected under the Law?**

A person with a disability includes “any person who has 1) a physical, emotional, or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of life’s major activities; 2) has a record of such an impairment; 3) and is regarded as having such an impairment.”

A “qualified person with a disability” is defined as one who meets the requisite academic and technical standards required for admission or participation in the postsecondary institution’s programs and activities.

### **What defines a “Disability”?**

- Physical, emotional or mental impairment
- Substantial limitations (unable to perform or significantly restricts the major life activity)

- Limitations in major life activity

**When regarded as disabled an individual must show:**

- An impairment exists
- Extent of the actual impairment's limitations
- Institution considered impairment to substantially limit major life activity

**Major Life Activities include but are not limited to:**

- Seeing
- Hearing
- Speaking
- Walking
- Breathing
- Caring for oneself
- Performing manual tasks
- Working
- Learning

**Section 504 protects the civil rights of individuals who are qualified to participate and who have disabilities such as, but not limited to, the following:**

- Blindness or visual impairment
- Cerebral palsy
- Chronic illnesses, such as: AIDS, cancer, diabetes, muscular dystrophy, arthritis, cardiac disease, multiple sclerosis, psychiatric disabilities
- Deafness or hearing impairment
- Former drug and alcohol addiction (Section 504 covers former users and those in recovery program and not currently using drugs or alcohol).
- Epilepsy or seizure disorders
- Mental retardation
- Orthopedic impairment
- Specific learning disability
- Speech disorder
- Spinal cord or traumatic brain injury

**Postsecondary institutions can make modifications for students with disabilities such as:**

- Removing architectural barriers
- Providing services such as:

- screen readers for the blind or learning-disabled individuals,
- qualified interpreters and note takers for deaf and hard of hearing students or
- note-takers for students with learning disabilities or mobility impairments

\*Colleges are not required to provide aids, devices or services of a personal nature such as personal assistants, wheelchairs or special certified tutors.

- Providing modifications, substitutions or waivers of courses, programs of study or degree requirements on a case-by-case basis. Such accommodations need not be made if the institution can demonstrate that the changes would substantially alter essential elements of the course or program.
- Allowing extra time to complete exams.
- Permitting examinations to be individually proctored, read orally, dictated or typed.
- Using alternative forms for students to demonstrate course mastery (i.e. narrative tape instead of written journal).
- Permitting the use of computer software programs or other assistive technological devices to assist in test-taking and study skills.

### **Registering with a Student Accessibility Center Counselor**

Documentation of a disability must substantiate significant limitations in a major life activity in order to determine how that limitation impacts living, working or learning at Hinds Community College. Having a medical condition or disability does not automatically ensure that the student is eligible to receive services under the ADA. **Students with disabilities who choose not to register with the Student Accessibility Center are not covered by the ADA and may not receive academic accommodations.** In determining if a student is qualified to meet all program requirements, Hinds Community College must base its decision on the skills, interests and aptitudes of a student and not on presumptions that would arbitrarily exclude a student from participation in a program or activity.

Documentation submitted to SAC must be official, and be from an appropriate licensed and certified professional with expertise related to a student's disability. It must include a statement explaining how the disability, with or without mitigating circumstances, limits a major life area and participation in courses, programs, services or activities. Documentation must be current and contain a clear statement of the diagnosis and disability's impact as it relates to the requested accommodations. SAC does not assist students in obtaining documentation, nor does SAC refer students for eligibility evaluations. Once the application and documentation are approved, SAC will proceed with the student's plan for accommodations and services.

## Requesting and Receiving Accommodations

### Reasonable Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations, under the Provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and ADA, states that a college may not discriminate in the recruitment, admission, educational process, or treatment of students. Reasonable accommodations are modifications or adjustments to a course, program, service, job, facility or activity that enables a qualified person with a disability to have an equal opportunity to participate. Students who have self-identified, provided documentation of disability, and requested reasonable accommodations related to their specific disability are entitled to receive appropriate academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids. This will enable them to participate in and benefit from all educational programs and activities in the most integrated and appropriate settings. Section 504 does not compel educational institutions to disregard the disabilities of individuals or to make substantial modifications in programs to allow individuals with disabilities to participate. Academic requirements which are essential to the program of instruction being pursued by a student or any directly related licensing requirements are not regarded as discriminatory, even if they have an adverse effect on individuals with disabilities. Thus, academic requirements may not serve as barriers to equal opportunity, unless they are deemed essential to a degree program or licensing process.

Auxiliary aids include, but are not limited to typed texts, lecture notes, film transcriptions, interpreters, screen readers or taped texts, and adapted classroom equipment. **Institutions are not required, however, to provide services of a personal nature such as personal attendants, individually prescribed devices, transportation, or readers/tutors for personal use or study.** Students requesting disability accommodations must self-identify, complete a SAC application and provide documentation of their disability. An appointment for an in-take meeting will be scheduled with the appropriate SAC staff member, and reasonable accommodations will then be made. Individuals are only obligated to make reasonable accommodations only to known limitations of an otherwise qualified individual.

### Accommodations are determined by examining:

- Is the individual a person with a disability?
- Is the individual otherwise qualified?
- What are the barriers resulting from the interaction between the documented disability and the campus environment?
- What are possible accommodations, modifications or adjustments that might remove the barriers?
- Without these accommodations would the individual still have meaningful access to the program, service or activity?
- Would these accommodations compromise the essential elements of the curriculum?
- Would these accommodations require a fundamental alteration of the program, service or activity?

**Accommodations are unreasonable when they:**

- Fundamentally alter the nature of the program or training.
- Compromise the essential elements of the program.
- Cause an undue financial or administrative hardship.
- Endanger the safety of the students, faculty, staff, self or community.

**Defining Undue Hardship**

**Undue hardship is defined as the unduly suffering or difficulty in light of the circumstances.**

Factors to consider:

- The cost, including the financial burden it would place on the college and department within the college.
- The nature of the accommodation and its impact on the college and the department.
- The number of employees and their function at the college and the department. Tools to use in determining undue hardship:
  - Academic standards ○ Test scores, GPA, required courses
  - Technical standards ○ Nonacademic criteria that are essential to participate in the program (skills, attitudes, experiences and physical requirements)
  - Essential Requirements/Components ○ The expected or desired outcomes of the program or course, including skills, knowledge, judgements and attitudes, demonstrated with or without reasonable accommodation.

Barriers to overcome:

- Time and effort
- Attitudes
- Trust
- Lack of “good” examples

Incentives to use:

- Accreditation
- Planning for accommodating students in clinical settings
- Encourages updating of course objectives
- Assistance with committee formation and gathering material

## **Process for Requesting Accommodations**

Students with a disability who desire to register with Disability Support Services for accommodations must first be admitted to Hinds Community College. The student must then self-identify, complete the application requesting accommodations and provide documentation of their disability to the SAC counselor. After review of the student's application and documentation the counselor will notify the student and faculty of the approved accommodations. Both the student and faculty members, will receive confidential emails from the SAC counselor explaining the approved accommodations in accordance with the ADA laws.

Accommodations are provided to ensure equal access to postsecondary education. Students with disabilities are expected to fulfill all academic and course requirements and evaluation standards, as is expected of all students. Accommodations are considered to be classroom supplements. They are **NOT** intended to replace regular classroom attendance or participation. Accommodations are approved on a case-by-case basis. They are assigned depending on the documentation that each student submits and the impact of each student's disability. Accommodations are also provided on a class-by-class basis. An accommodation which is reasonable in one class may not be reasonable in another. No accommodation will be provided if it compromises or alters essential elements or evaluation standards of a course.

### **Services and reasonable accommodations may include, but are not limited to:**

- Notes
- Exam modifications (extended time, minimal distraction environment, test proctors, screen readers, and scribes)
- Enlarged print
- Preferential seating
- Alternative test formats
- Liaison services between Hinds CC faculty/staff and students
- Liaison services with rehabilitation agencies
- Liaison services with Hinds CC departments
- Sign Language Interpreters
- Accessible classroom locations and furniture
- Alternative formats of print material

Accommodations are not provided retroactively. SAC is unable to provide accommodations for academic work completed before the student is verified as eligible for accommodations or before the student requests accommodations each semester. It is imperative that the student request accommodations as early in the semester as possible.

## **Alternative Testing**

Student Accessibility Center provides proctoring of exams for students with properly documented disabilities. The proctoring service is designed to ensure that appropriate accommodations are provided and to assist the faculty in administering required examinations and quizzes.

Accommodations involving alternative testing include, but are not limited to, extended testing time, use of assistive technology, minimal distraction testing environment, oral examinations, use of screen readers and use of scribes.

### **Request for Testing**

The student is responsible for making arrangements for taking their test in the SAC Office.

Arrangements should be made in SAC and with the Instructor a minimum of five (5) business days (not including weekends) prior to when the test is scheduled to be given. If testing in the SAC office, the student should register to take the test at the specific date and time that the test would have been given in the actual classroom; any exceptions would have to be approved in writing by the instructor and sent to the SAC Office.

### **Course Substitution/Waiver**

Course substitutions/waivers may be reasonable accommodations for some students with qualified disabilities, provided that 1) documentation of disability clearly supports any request for substitution/waiver and 2) the essential requirements of a student's program are not compromised. Student petitions for course substitutions/waivers are evaluated on a case-by-case basis using the following procedure.

1. A student seeking course substitution/waiver must be registered with SAC as having a qualified disability.
2. A student should initiate the course substitution/waiver petition process as soon as there is strong objective evidence that a curricular modification or course substitution may be needed.
3. A student must provide SAC with current, relevant, comprehensive documentation and assessment data from certified professionals substantiating impact of the student's disability on completing specific curricular requirements.
4. A detailed explanation or case history is required to document the student's history of problems in this area. A student seeking course substitution/waiver must submit documentation regarding the student's prior experiences with the subject matter (i.e. courses, grades) and any accommodations or support services used.

5. Upon completion of these steps, the student's SAC counselor will review the documentation and supporting evidence. If there is appropriate evidence that course substitution/waiver is warranted because of the disability, SAC will forward a recommendation for course substitution/waiver to the Academic Dean. If SAC finds there is insufficient evidence to verify the appropriateness of the request, the student has the option of filing an appeal using SAC appeal procedures.
6. Forwarded recommendations, however; will be evaluated by the Academic Dean in terms of the impact of any course substitution/waiver on the program's essential requirements and any other possible constraints. The Dean will render a decision supporting or denying the SAC recommendation.

## **Options**

As needed, the College will identify courses for which substitutes may be offered and courses that may substitute. The request process for course substitution and implementation is stated below.

With the student's concurrence, SAC will forward a request for course substitution to the Academic Dean for approval. The Academic Dean, following consultation with program faculty, will make a decision regarding the request.

The Academic Dean will be responsible for communicating to the student and SAC in a timely manner whether course substitution is allowed for the requested course and, if so, the courses that may be substituted and the process to be followed for implementing the substitution. The process for implementation will include formal notification to the department chairperson and the Registrar of the approved substitution.

Student appeals of denial of requests must follow the College process established for denial by the Academic or the SAC grievance process for denial by SAC.

### **Requesting Sign Language Interpreting Services**

Students who are Deaf /Hard of Hearing may request Sign Language Interpreting services. To make this request, please contact the Lead Interpreter or the Director of Student Accessibility Center and Interpreter Services on the Raymond Campus. Acceptable mode of contact with the Lead Interpreter via email at [Veronica.Turner@hindsc.edu](mailto:Veronica.Turner@hindsc.edu) or 601-857-3483. And the Director of Student Accessibility Center and Interpreter Services can be contacted via email at [LAWillingham@hindsc.edu](mailto:LAWillingham@hindsc.edu) or 601-857-3386.

There will be occasions when additional interpreting services are needed. These occasions include but are not limited to residence hall meetings, conferences with instructors, registration and advising, business office meetings or other school activities. To obtain interpreting services for these occasions you must request interpreting services 3 days in advance if possible utilizing one of the methods below:

1. E-mailing or calling the Lead Interpreter or the Director of Student Accessibility Center and Interpreter Services.

### **Requesting a Note-taker**

Once the student who has been approved for the Student Accessibility Center (SAC) accommodations has registered for classes, the student should discuss the accommodation of note-taking services with the SAC counselor.

### **Alternate Print Services**

Students requiring an alternate format to access books, literature and information must inform SAC in advance of their need, as the College requires a reasonable amount of time to obtain or convert the information into a requested form. To ensure the availability of the following accommodations for the first day of class, students must provide qualifying disability documentation to the SAC Specialist, meet the accommodation request deadlines and follow specific procedures to facilitate the approved accommodations in consultation with the faculty:

- Large print
- E-books
- Audio books
- JAWS
- Peer reader lab assistance
- Topaz

Many textbooks are available on tape or other alternative formats through Learning Ally, Bookshare.org or textbook publishers. Some textbook publishers are making textbooks available in ebook format. The College's bookstore has information on the availability of e-books.

### **Attendance Policy**

Hinds Community College instructors are allowed to set attendance policies, which are usually stated in course syllabi. Instructors have the right to follow their policies and respond to absences accordingly. Students with chronic illnesses can request flexibility in attendance. However, SAC cannot demand that instructors excuse illness related absences. When attendance is considered an essential part of a course, flexibility of the attendance policy can be denied. To determine if attendance is necessary, the following may be considered:

- Is the class participatory or interactive?
- Is participation part of the grade?

Is in-class work assigned and due before the end of the class period?

Is group work integral to the class?

Requests for absences are **handled on a case by case basis** and students may be asked to provide written information from a qualified health care provider explaining the absence. In considering the request for absences, SAC may seek input from the instructor or head of the academic department. **When flexibility is granted, it is done for only a reasonable number of absences.** If absences occur on days of quizzes or exams, the exam make-up policy stated in the syllabus will apply.

Students likely to have disability related absences can ask SAC to include a statement in their accommodation letters alerting instructors of this possibility. By doing this at the start of a semester or before an absence, instructors are advised that a legitimate, disability-related reason may cause the student to miss class.

### **Service Animals**

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a service animal is defined as “any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items.” If an animal meets this definition, it is considered a service animal regardless of whether it has been licensed or certified by a state or local government or a training program. Service animals must be permitted to accompany a person with a disability everywhere on campus or off campus as the activity (i.e. internship, field work, etc.) pertains to the curriculum except in situations where safety may be compromised.

Student Accessibility Center (SAC) serves as the campus authority for the approval for students to house service animals. Students planning to bring a service animal to any Hinds Community College Residence Hall facility should notify the Housing Department and SAC well in advance to moving into the Residence Hall, and comply with any local, state or federal requirements for service animals. Service animals must have vaccinations appropriate for the type of animal. The owner/handler must provide proof of vaccination upon request. Services animals should be in good health. The owner/handler should be in full control of the service animal at all times. Reasonable behavior is expected from service animals while on campus. Owners/handlers of aggressive or repeatedly disruptive service animals may be asked to remove them from college facilities. Cleanliness of the service animal is mandatory. Consideration of others should be taken into account when providing maintenance and hygiene of service animals.

### **Guidelines for Professionals Completing Documentation for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)**

The guidelines describe information to validate: (1) the existence of ADHD and that the limitations imposed by it rises to the level of being disabling, (2) the impact of the ADHD on the individual's educational performance and (3) the need for accommodations for students registering with the Student

Accessibility Center at Hinds Community College. Accommodations are provided based on the impact of the disorder, not only on the diagnosis of a condition. The intent of using documentation guidelines is not to exclude students from use of services, but to ensure that those with legitimate disabilities who have current functional limitations receive appropriate accommodations. Recommendations for students' disability documentation include:

1. A legible report or letter, typed or printed on professional letterhead, dated and signed by a qualified professional.
2. Name, title, professional credentials and license or certification number of professional who is qualified to evaluate and diagnose attention deficit disorders. Qualified professionals usually include psychiatrists, psychologists, neuropsychologists and medical doctors with training and experience in the assessment of ADHD. The qualified professional must be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.
3. Current information, usually written within last three (3) years, because reasonable accommodations are based on ADHD's current impact.
4. Clear statements of the diagnosis, associated symptoms, frequency of symptoms, prognosis and functional limitations with specific information on how it impacts the student in an educational setting. Relevant historical information may be helpful in determining accommodations.
5. If medication is used, adverse effects or problems associated with the treatment.
6. Specific recommendations for accommodations in the educational environment. If it is not evident why an accommodation is suggested then a supporting rationale is necessary.

Once SAC receives a student's disability documentation and a completed SAC application, the student will be contacted. All documentation will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. If the documentation is incomplete or inadequate to determine the extent of the disability or reasonable accommodations, then SAC may require additional documentation. For more information or clarification on documentation requirements or procedures for registering with SAC, please contact the SAC Office on your respective Hinds Community College campus. Students may physically submit documentation or if documentation must be submitted electronically please contact the Student Accessibility Center counselor to obtain a secure email and/or fax number.

### **Guidelines for Professionals Completing Documentation for Learning Disabilities (LD)**

The guidelines describe information to validate: (1) the existence of LD and that the limitations imposed by it rises to the level of being disabling, (2) the impact of the LD on the individual's educational performance and (3) the need for accommodations for students registering with the Student Accessibility Center at Hinds Community College. Accommodations are provided based on the impact of the disorder, not only on the diagnosis. The intent of using documentation guidelines is not to exclude students from use of services, but to ensure that those with legitimate disabilities who have current functional limitations receive appropriate accommodations. Recommendations for students' disability documentation include:

1. A legible report or letter, typed or printed on professional letterhead, dated and signed by a qualified professional.
2. Name, title, professional credentials and license or certification number of professional who is qualified to evaluate and diagnose learning disabilities. Qualified professionals usually include psychologists, educational and school psychologists, neuropsychologists and medical doctors with training and experience in the assessment of LD. The qualified professional must be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.
3. Current information, preferably, within last three (3) years for a student leaving high school or within past five (5) years for an adult because reasonable accommodations are based on LD's current impact.
4. Summary of diagnostic interview to provide an understanding of the student's current learning problems. Information should be gathered about student's academic history, relevant psychosocial history, and relevant employment history, and relevant developmental and medical history, current adjustment to student life. If applicable, social supports and study habits should be addressed.
5. A statement of diagnosis of a learning disability or learning disabilities, which are supported by test data from comprehensive testing.
6. Comprehensive testing report on the student's ability/aptitude, achievement and information processing. All standard test scores and subtest scores with the evaluator's interpretive narrative supporting the learning disability diagnosis is requested. Recommendations for specific assessment tools include:
  - Ability/Aptitude: Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale III (WAIS III) (or latest version)
  - Achievement: Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery, Wechsler Individual Achievement Test.
  - *Note: the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) does not provide helpful data.*
  - Information Processing: Woodcock-Johnson Test of Cognitive Ability, Detroit Test of Learning Aptitude-3,
  - Or WAIS III subtest information.
7. Specific recommendations for accommodations in the educational environment. If it is not evident why an accommodation is suggested, then a supporting rationale is necessary. Relevant historical information may be helpful in determining accommodations.

Once SAC receives a student's accessibility documentation and a completed SAC application, the student will be contacted. All documentation will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. If the documentation is incomplete or inadequate to determine the extent of the disability or reasonable accommodations, then SAC may require additional documentation. For more information or clarification on documentation requirements or procedures for registering with SAC, please contact SAC on your respective Hinds Community College campus.

Students may physical submit documentation or if documentation must be submitted electronically please contact the Student Accessibility Center Counselor to obtain a secure email and/or fax number.

**Guidelines for Professionals Completing Documentation for Disabilities including, but not limited to, mobility or physical impairments, systemic or chronic illnesses, hearing impairments, visual impairments, psychiatric disorders**

The guidelines describe information to validate: (1) the existence of a disability and that the limitations imposed by it rises to the level of being disabling, (2) the impact of the disorder on the individual's educational performance and (3) the need for accommodations for students registering with the Student Accessibility Center at Hinds Community College. Accommodations are provided based on the impact of the disorder, not only on the diagnosis of a condition. The need for the accommodation must be linked to the diagnosed disability. The intent of using documentation guidelines is not to exclude students from use of services, but to ensure that those with legitimate disabilities who have current functional limitations receive appropriate accommodations.

**Recommendations for students' accessibility documentation include:**

1. A legible report or letter, typed or printed on professional letterhead, dated and signed by a qualified professional.
2. Names, titles, certifications or licenses of all professional evaluators, clinicians, etc.  
Professionals providing the documentation should have appropriate training and expertise in the area for which accommodations are being requested. Further, the qualified professional must be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.
3. Current information is needed because reasonable accommodations are based on current impact of the condition or disorder. The acceptable age of documentation depends on the disabling condition.
4. Clear statements of the diagnosis, associated symptoms, frequency of symptoms, prognosis and functional limitations with specific information on how it impacts the student in an educational setting. Relevant historical information may be helpful in determining accommodations.
5. If medication is used, adverse effects or problems associated with the treatment.
6. Specific recommendations for accommodations in the educational environment. If it is not evident why an accommodation is suggested, then a supporting rationale is necessary.

Once SAC receives a student's accessibility documentation and a completed SAC application, the student will be contacted. If the documentation is incomplete or inadequate to determine the extent of the disability or reasonable accommodations, then SAC may require additional documentation. For more information or clarification on documentation requirements or procedures for registering with SAC, please contact the SAC Office on your respective Hinds Community College campus. Students may physically submit documentation or if documentation must be submitted electronically, please contact the Student Accessibility Center counselor to obtain a secure email and/or fax number.

## **Grievance Procedure**

Questions and concerns regarding accommodations and services for students with disabilities should be directed initially to the Student Accessibility Center. If SAC staff members cannot provide information or suggestions that resolve issues involving disability rights, a meeting with the student, the faculty member (if applicable), SAC staff members and the appropriate administrator will be the second step in resolving grievance.

It is important that concerns are addressed promptly so that the student's participation in the course or activity is not affected. The appeal should be written and should clearly state the nature of the alleged discrimination, the date(s) of occurrence and the desired result. It should be signed and dated by the student filing the grievance and should be transmitted as a confidential document to the appropriate administrator.

Hinds Community College is committed to providing prompt and effective resolution of alleged incidents of discrimination and harassment. The College encourages informal resolution of discrimination complaints as close to the source as possible. Students who believe they have been subjected to discrimination or harassment may file formal grievances in accordance with the policies and procedures of Hinds Community College. Please note, however; that the college may deny a student's request for accommodations and/or auxiliary aids when it imposes an undue hardship on the campus or when it would substantially modify academic standards, programs or course work. The College also provides a Review Committee of professionals who review questionable documentation to assure that such documentation meets Section 504 and ADA disability criteria.

When a student's request for accessibility accommodations and/or auxiliary aids is denied and the student wishes to appeal, it is recommended that the decision be appealed first verbally or in writing to the administrator of the respective campus. If grievances are not resolved at this level, the student may appeal to the Director of Student Accessibility Center and Interpreter Services. Grievances should be directed to:

Loretta Sutton  
Director of Student Accessibility Center and Interpreter Services  
Hinds Community College Raymond Campus  
601-857-3386  
[LAWillingham@hindsc.edu](mailto:LAWillingham@hindsc.edu)

The Director of Student Accessibility Center and Interpreter Services will confer with student and appropriate staff and render a final decision, which will be communicated to all parties.