

# Policies and Procedures for Services for Students with Disabilities

## Notice of Non-discrimination Policy

Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College admits students of any race, religion, age, sex, color, disability, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights and privileges, programs and activities made available to students of the college.

## Mission

Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College is committed to providing all students with opportunities to take full advantage of the college's educational programs and extracurricular activities. We recognize that students with documented disabilities may need assistance or accommodations in order to achieve this objective.

## Confidentiality

Student information will be kept in a secured file in the office of the Coordinator of CTE Student Support Services. A list of approved accommodations will be shared with the student's instructor(s). All other information in the student's file, especially records regarding documentation of disability, will be held in confidence and will not be released without the student's written consent as per the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

## Program Accessibility

All students who meet the academic standards requisite to admissions and are otherwise qualified are admitted into Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College programs and activities and are provided services upon request.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

If a student believes college personnel has discriminated against him/her because of a disability, he/she has the right to seek a review of such concerns.

Students may choose to submit an informal complaint or a formal grievance. If a student makes an informal complaint, he/she may later pursue a formal grievance if not satisfied with the resolution of the informal process.

### **Informal Procedure**

It is recommended, but not required, that the student speak first about the concerns to his/ her department chair, Coordinator of CTE Student Support Services, or the appropriate dean. That person will review the grievance immediately and act quickly to facilitate satisfactory resolution for all concerned parties.

### **Formal Procedure**

A student who wishes to file a general grievance must provide a written statement explaining the basis of the complaint to the immediate supervisor of the employee within thirty working days of the incident. If the issue is not resolved with the area supervisor, the student may then appeal to the appropriate dean. Within ten working days, the dean will arrange a meeting with appropriate college personnel or committee to hear the student grievance. The student will present his/her position and supporting facts.

If the subject of the grievance is the actions of the dean, or if the dean has previously advised the student informally on the matter, the grievance would be filed with the appropriate vice president. Within ten working days after the hearing, the dean will make a decision on the merits of the student complaint and will provide a written response to the student. In the event the student is not satisfied with this decision, he/she may appeal his/her case, first to the appropriate vice president and then to the college president.

A student who makes use of the grievance procedure shall not be retaliated against for doing so.

# GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Welcome to Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College. It is our goal to provide students with disabilities the opportunity to complete a chosen curriculum by providing accessibility to program offerings. This information is a guide to your rights, responsibilities and procedures for obtaining and using the support services for students with disabilities. If you feel unsure about what you should do, contact the CTE Student Support Services office or the Dean of Enrollment Services at the campus or center nearest you.

## The ADA Law and You

### **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a comprehensive national mandate that ensures basic civil rights for individuals with disabilities. The ADA provides assurance of access to education programs and employment opportunities for adults with special learning needs. The ADA defines an individual with a disability as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. These major life activities include seeing, hearing, speaking, walking, breathing, performing manual tasks, learning, caring for oneself and working.

### **SECTION 504**

Section 504: No otherwise qualified handicapped individual shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

**--Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

### **SECTION 504 AND POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION**

Specific provisions of Section 504 related to postsecondary education prohibit discrimination against handicapped persons in recruitment, admission and treatment after admission. According to the regulations, colleges and universities are required to make "reasonable adjustments" to permit handicapped students to fulfill academic requirements and to assure that disabled students are not effectively excluded from programs because of the absence of auxiliary aids.

Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College is an Equal Opportunity Employer and welcomes students and employees without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age or qualified disability in its programs and activities. For further information, contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer at a Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Campus, Center or the District Office. Compliance is coordinated by the Associate Vice President of Administration, P.O. Box 609, Perkinston, Mississippi 39573, telephone number 601-928-6672, email address [compliance@mgccc.edu](mailto:compliance@mgccc.edu).

## **WHO IS QUALIFIED?**

A person qualified for postsecondary education under Section 504 is “one who meets the academic and technical standards requisite to Admission or participation in the recipient’s education program or activity. A handicapped person is defined by the regulations as “any person who (I) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities,

(II) has a record of such impairment or (III) is regarded as having such impairment.” *Note: The definition of physical or mental impairment includes specific learning disabilities.)*

## **PROVISIONS OF SECTION 504**

*Subpart E* of the regulations describes ways of making postsecondary education accessible to disabled students. These include the following:

- a. Modifications “as are necessary” to ensure that academic requirements are not discriminatory. Modifications may include changes in the length of time required for completion of degree requirements, and adaptation of the manner in which specific courses are conducted. *(The regulations state that academic requirements that can be demonstrated as essential to a program of study or related to licensing are not considered discriminatory.)*
- b. The requirement that exams given to evaluate a students’ progress actually test the student’s achievement rather than reflect the students impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills.
- c. Auxiliary aids, including taped texts, interpreters for students with hearing impairments, readers for students with visual impairments, classroom equipment adapted for use by students with manual impairments, and other similar services.

# YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

## STUDENT RIGHTS

1. You have the right to confidentiality.
2. You have the right to equal access to programs, classes and facilities.
3. You have the right to have reasonable accommodations provided.
4. You have the same rights granted to every student enrolled at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College.

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. You must disclose your disability to receive services.
2. You must provide current, within the past three (3) years, documentation of your disability from a qualified professional.
3. You must request specific accommodations.
4. You must complete the required paperwork.
5. You must comply with all policies, codes and regulations of Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College. (*See Student Handbook*)

# STEPS TO OBTAIN ACCOMMODATIONS

1. Your first step is to identify yourself as a student with a disability and request specific accommodations to the CTE Student Support Services personnel on the campus or center nearest you. Accommodations include a range of services, equipment and modifications, designed to allow you to do your best. Accommodations vary according to the disability. You must request specific accommodations from the CTE Student Support Services personnel.
2. Your next step is to obtain documentation of your disability and provide this information to the CTE Student Support Services personnel. Because reasonable accommodations are based on the current impact of a disorder or impairment, it is necessary that all documentation and testing should be no more than three years old. The CTE Student Support Services personnel will consider your requests based on documentation submitted.
3. Once you have documentation, make an appointment with the appropriate CTE Student Support Services personnel to discuss your particular needs.

These first steps should be taken at least **three** weeks prior to registration. However, if you are already enrolled, please see the appropriate contact personnel as soon as possible. Remember that it is your responsibility to inform the college of your needs and to request accommodations from the appropriate personnel. Failure to notify the college means that you **will not** have accommodations for your classes.

Once your documentation has been received and the appropriate paperwork completed, your requests will be reviewed by the CTE Student Support Services personnel. Copies of approved accommodations will be given to your instructors and to you. During the term, if you realize that an accommodation is not working or that you need additional support, please bring that to the attention of the appropriate personnel as soon as possible. Feel free to discuss with your instructors any questions or concerns about your accommodations. It is recommended that you take a copy of your accommodations to your instructors for verification.

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR RECEIVING AUXILIARY AIDS AND SERVICES**

Once the accommodation, in the form of auxiliary aids and services, is formally approved, the Coordinator of CTE Student Support Services will send a letter to the student's instructor(s) listing the approved accommodation(s) for that particular student via the college email system.

The student is encouraged to make an initial contact with the instructor at the first of class and set up a time to discuss the accommodations. Accommodations are valid beginning on the date of the letter.

CTE Student Support Services will make arrangements for electronic textbooks, readers and scribes, software, sign language interpreters, electronic recording devices, adaptive listening devices, etc., as necessary. Instructors will coordinate all in-classroom accommodations, such as note takers and testing accommodations.

### **Auxiliary Aids and Services**

The following list of auxiliary aids and services is not meant to be an exhaustive list of possible options. Instead, the list represents common auxiliary aids and services students more frequently used by students with disabilities at MGCCC. This list can and will vary. All decisions regarding auxiliary aids and services are made on a case-by-case basis.

### **Types of Auxiliary Aids and Services Available**

#### **Interpreter Services**

**Policy**-Sign language interpreters for hearing impaired students can be provided for any instructional and/extracurricular event on campus. Generally, a minimum two week notice is required to ensure availability of an interpreter.

#### **Role of Interpreter**

The interpreter functions as a facilitator of communication between hearing impaired and hearing individuals. Interpreter conduct is governed by Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf Code of Ethics. Understanding the role of the interpreter will help avoid problems and conflicts during an assignment.

#### **Scheduling**

Request for interpreting services must be submitted to CTE Student Support Services personnel at least five full working days before the assignment; the more notice, the better. Returning students who

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request sign language interpreter services are expected to pre-register at the earliest possible date. Late requests are considered only if interpreters are available.

## **Cancelations**

If it is necessary for the student who has a scheduled sign language interpreter to be absent from a class and/or event, the student must give notice to the sign language interpreter and CTE Student Support Services personnel at least 24 hours in advance. Repeated last-minute cancellations or unplanned absences will result in the discontinuation of services.

## **Testing Accommodations**

Students requesting testing accommodations should meet with the instructor well in advance of the day of the test to make arrangements for these accommodations.

### **Extended time for testing**

**Policy-** The amount of extra time offered for testing determined by the student's documentation.

**Procedure-** The Coordinator of CTE Student Support Services will provide the instructor with the appropriate testing limits through the accommodation request letter. The instructor and the student will arrange the place and/or time for the testing.

The CTE Student Support Services personnel will support and assist as necessary.

### **Testing in a quiet environment outside the normal classroom**

**Policy-** Alternate testing outside of the normal classroom determined by the student's documentation.

**Procedure-** The CTE Student Support Services personnel, the instructor and the student will arrange testing in appropriate distraction-free location. Testing may occur in the proctoring center, the CTE Student Support Services area or other appropriate areas on campus.

### **Reader**

**Policy-** If indicated by the student's documentation, the Coordinator of CTE Student Support Services and the instructor is will arrange for a qualified person to read exams to the student.

**Procedure-** The reader will read the information directly from the exam. The reader will not be allowed to paraphrase the questions, define terms, explain the question, or offer any other type of assistance unless otherwise directed by the instructor.

### **Scribe**

**Policy-** If indicated by the student's documentation, the CTE Student Support Services arrange for a qualified person to write the student's verbal answers.

**Procedure-** The scribe will write verbatim the information presented by the student. The scribe will not be allowed to read questions or offer any type of assistance unless otherwise directed by the instructor.

### **Note takers**

**Policy-**MGCCC uses volunteer student note takers.

**Procedure-**The instructor will ask a student in the class to provide class notes either using note taking paper (available through the CTE Student Support Services office), or the instructor will provide a copy of notes for the student.

### **Alternate Formats**

**Policy-**Materials made available to qualified students in alternate formats upon request.

**Procedure-**Students requesting alternative formats for exams, syllabi, class handouts, test, etc. should contact the Coordinator of CT E Student Support Services at least 30 day prior to the semester to allow ample time to create the alternative formats.

### **Electronic Recording Devices**

**Policy-** If indicated by the student's documentation, an electronic recording device can be used to record classroom lectures.

**Procedure-**The CTE Student Support Services personnel will notify the instructor that the student will be using an electronic recording device in class to record lectures. It is the student's responsibility to provide the electronic recording device.

### **Service Animals**

**Policy-**Service animals are welcomed on all campuses of MGCCC. A service animal is any dog or miniature horse specially trained to perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a physical disability.

### **Tours**

Upon request, the Coordinator of CTE Student Support Services will provide campus tours for a student who needs to evaluate or determine his/her route in navigating between classes.

### **Course Substitutions**

**Policy-**With reasonable accommodations, students with disabilities must fulfill all requirements to participate in MGCCC programs. Therefore, students with disabilities are not excused from course prerequisites, GPA requirements, or degree requirements. In some limited circumstances, however, a substitution of course requirements may be appropriate. Such an accommodation is made only when the student's documentation clearly indicates that the student's disability makes completion of the requirement impossible AND the accommodation does not fundamentally alter the nature of the program.

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**Procedure-** A student requesting a course substitution on the basis of qualifying disability must present documentation of the disability which supports such a request to the appropriate dean. The final decision to substitute a course is made by the appropriate dean.

### **Flexible Attendance Policy**

**Policy-** Attendance is considered an essential requirement of the courses or programs of study at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College. A flexible attendance policy is available only in a very limited number of circumstances. However, individuals may request leniency in attendance when it is a medical emergency and/or absences are mandatory as a direct result of their disability. A doctor's excuse will be required for medical absences. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain and save all doctors' excuses for disability-related absences.

**Procedure-**The Coordinator of CTE Student Support Services and the instructor will approach excess absences on case-by-case basis. The accommodation request letter provided at the beginning of the semester will note this potential issue.

### **Assistive Software**

Dragon NaturallySpeaking and other types of assistive software are housed In This CTE Student Support Services area for the use of qualified students.

### **Other Assistive Devices**

Other assistive devices available for qualified students include the following:

Large screen monitor

Adapted Keyboards

Motorized Scooter

Document Camera

## **ADDITIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **Counseling**

Additional career, technical, and academic counseling provided through Enrollment Services.

### **Financial Support**

Financial assistance for those who qualify is available through the Financial Aid Office. There may be other financial assistance available for those who qualify.

## **Academic Support**

The college also offers a variety of classes, which may be of assistance to qualified students, such as developmental courses in mathematics, English and reading, and study skills.

The Learning Resource Centers (LRC) are available at multiple MGCCC locations and include the library, the media center, and the learning lab. The LRC provides services and resources that support the aims and objectives of the college, the individual needs of the students, and the courses and teaching methods of the faculty to all students.

## **Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College ADA Contact Personnel**

### **Jackson County Campus**

Darla Lyons, Coordinator, CTE Student Support Services

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### **Maritime Training Academy**

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**Keesler Center**

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**Naval Construction Battalion Center**

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