

# ACCOMMODATIONS & TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE IN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING POLICY

Des Moines University (DMU) is committed to an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Consistent with DMU's broader non-discrimination policy, DMU does not discriminate based on disability and prohibits discrimination based on disability during admission and in access to programs and activities. DMU is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities as recognized under the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA). An individualized assessment is completed for all accommodation requests.

This policy applies to all students and accepted candidates planning to matriculate in educational programs at DMU. For information relating to Service Animals, please see the Service Animals on Campus [policy](#).

## BACKGROUND

A person with a disability is someone who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, learning, walking, seeing, hearing, breathing, and working; has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment.

Although students with temporary health conditions may not be disabled, DMU will exercise reasonable efforts to accommodate their needs during the period of need.

Substantial information is necessary to allow University officials to understand the nature, extent, and limitations of an impairment, which affects a student's participation in educational programming and to develop reasonable accommodations for such a disability. Students have the responsibility to give supportive documentation regarding their disability during the interactive process and to identify which barriers to learning they experience at DMU.

All requests for accommodation are evaluated through an individualized assessment and decisions are made pursuant to an interactive process between the student and appropriate DMU personnel. This interactive process includes the review of clinical documentation, an assessment of the student's abilities, a consideration of possible reasonable accommodations, and a determination of approved accommodations. The University will not accommodate a student if it considers the request to be unreasonable. The University will not fundamentally alter its programs to accommodate a student. However, alternative accommodations may be offered by the University when it has denied a specific accommodation request.

## PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

DMU students are expected to be actively responsible for all aspects of their enrollment. Health professions training may include a variety of settings (classroom to clinical) and accommodations granted in one setting may not be reasonable for all settings to avoid compromising or fundamentally altering the technical standards of a course or program.

As such, it is an expectation that students will initiate the interactive process, comply with deadlines and agreements, supply all necessary documentation, and follow the procedures outlined below.

## 1. CONTACT THE CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL ENHANCEMENT

To allow for adequate processing time, requests for accommodations should be submitted at least three weeks before the start date for the academic year or term or immediately following an injury, illness, or onset of a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. Although requests will be accepted after that timeframe, the interactive process may not be completed in advance of the academic year or term start date. Newly enrolled students who indicate on their Technical Standards form that they will need accommodations to meet their program's technical standards will be contacted by an Accommodations Specialist before the start of the semester to initiate the interactive process.

Accommodations are not determined by a faculty member. Therefore, notification by the student of an impairment to a faculty member and not to CEE-Academic Support may delay the interactive process and accommodations determinations. DMU students requesting accommodations should contact an Accommodations Specialist in the CEE – Academic Support office. The office is located in the Edge of Advancement, 2nd floor, E4208; or can be reached by phone or email (515-271-1516 or [accommodations@dmu.edu](mailto:accommodations@dmu.edu)).

## 2. COMPLETE AN ACCOMMODATIONS REQUEST FORM

To initiate a new request for an accommodation, the student should complete a [Student Request for Accommodations](#) form. This application will start the formal interactive process. Students who already receive accommodations in their educational programming, but seek additional or modified accommodations, should contact their Accommodations Specialist for further instructions.

At the start of each Academic Year, students will need to complete a [Student Request for Renewal for Accommodations](#) form if they still need accommodations in educational programming. The Student Request for Renewal for Accommodations form must be completed and submitted to begin the interactive process for each new Academic Year. Updated documentation may be required depending on the disability.

## 3. PROVIDE CLINICAL DOCUMENTATION

During the interactive process, the student must submit current clinical documentation that demonstrates a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity of the student. With the student's written permission, the Accommodations Specialist may consult with the student's health care provider (as defined in the ADA – 29 CFR 825.125) for additional information. Collection, review and discussion of submitted documentation and student needs between the student and the Accommodations Specialist are critical elements of the interactive process.

Documentation from health care providers for all conditions or diagnoses related to the need for accommodations will be required. General guidelines are listed below and more specific guidelines can be found in the [Accommodations and Temporary Assistance in Educational Programming](#) policy regarding content of clinical documentation, to

include how current documentation must be. In all cases, DMU reserves the right to request additional or updated information.

**1. Physical Impairments:** Informative documentation for physical impairments includes a report from a health care professional describing the nature of the impairment, the expected duration of the impairment, and how the impairment limits the student's major life activities.

**2. Learning or Attentional Disabilities:** Informative clinical documentation for learning disabilities (LD) and attentional disabilities (e.g., attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder) includes a comprehensive diagnostic interview/consultation and neuropsychological, psychoeducational or psychological evaluation. Documentation should indicate student's level of functioning compared to the general population.

**3. Psychological Impairments:** Informative documentation for mental impairments includes a report from a health care professional describing the nature of the impairment, the expected duration of the impairment, and how the impairment limits the student's major life activities.

## 4. DECISION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCOMMODATIONS IN COURSES

The Accommodations Specialist will communicate the decision in writing to the student the approved accommodation(s) determined through the interactive process and provide the student with a course director letter (CDL). The CDL will identify the reasonable accommodation(s) to be provided. The student will be responsible for providing the course director letter to appropriate course instructors, administrative assistants, coordinators, and/or deans. The student has the responsibility to anticipate the need for such letters in his/her various courses/clerkships and to plan with the Accommodations Specialist the sequence of the communications which will be needed for the courses planned for the year. If any problem arises in the receipt of such communication by the course coordinators, the student must promptly notify their Accommodations Specialist for assistance.

Should the student's needs for accommodations change while at DMU, the student should contact their Accommodations Specialist to initiate an updated interactive process to consider the modified or new accommodations needs.

Accommodations must be requested in advance; they cannot be applied retroactively. Consequently, students are not permitted to redo assignments or retake exams with accommodations that were completed before the accommodation request and approval process.

At times, students may decide they do not want to use their accommodations for specific academic activities. Students must waive their accommodation(s) by submitting a completed Change of Accommodations form (available in CEE-Academic Support) no later than one business day prior to the event for which the student desires to waive his or her accommodations. Without this waiver, it is assumed students will use their accommodations.

## PROVISIONAL ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH A PREVIOUS HISTORY OF ACCOMMODATIONS WITH DOCUMENTATION

When a student has a history of receiving accommodations, yet their documentation does not meet the criteria set forth in the guidelines

(such as, the document is outdated) a student may be provided provisional accommodations based on the historical documentation provided. Students receiving provisional accommodations must acknowledge that they will take active steps to renew the needed documentation from a provider in a timely manner. The provisional accommodations will be granted for the time needed to have the appropriate appointments. In general, these provisional accommodations will not exceed one semester. At that time, new documentation will be reviewed, and a decision will be made regarding full accommodations. Provisional accommodations may be re-affirmed, ended, or modified, as appropriate for the DMU curriculum.

## TEMPORARY MEDICAL ASSISTANCE FOR NON-DISABLING INJURIES AND CONDITIONS

DMU may provide reasonable assistance to learning opportunities required for degree completion for students with temporary medical conditions who meet the program's technical standards, with or without temporary assistance. This may happen when a student experiences an illness, injury, or pregnancy that impairs their ability to complete the technical standards without assistance or it may happen at the onset of what may become a long-term disability. The process for Temporary Assistance is similar to the process for accommodations and decisions are made through the same evaluation process.

Temporary Assistance is processed in a similar way as accommodation requests.

1. Students applying for temporary assistance should complete the [Student Request for Temporary Assistance](#) form.
2. Students requesting assistance for a temporary injury or illness should submit documentation providing information regarding the condition.
3. Students may supply documentation from their provider or ask their provider to complete the Clinical Checklist for Temporary Assistance form and return to an Accommodations Specialist
4. To allow for adequate processing time, requests for temporary medical assistance should be submitted immediately following an injury, illness, or onset of a mental or physical condition.
5. The student is responsible for requesting reasonable temporary assistance through the Accommodations Specialist in the CEE-Academic Support office in person, by phone (515-271-1516) or by e-mail ([accommodations@dmu.edu](mailto:accommodations@dmu.edu)). Notifications through faculty are discouraged.

Some circumstances that fall under temporary assistance may not have a firm end-date. In these cases, a tentative end-date is provided, and the student is responsible for asking for the temporary assistance to be renewed if needed. When the student transitions to not having the Temporary Assistance in place, it is the student's responsibility in coordination with their healthcare provider to assure they can safely participate in each part of the curriculum, to include performing or receiving treatments as a "patient partner", or they must submit a new [Student Request for Temporary Assistance](#).

## RECONSIDERATION REQUESTS

If a student has a new disability or new documentation after a request for accommodations was denied, they can begin a new [Student Request for Accommodations](#) without seeking a Reconsideration. If the student, however, disagrees with a denied request, the student may request

a reconsideration for accommodations following a decision by CEE-Academic Support. To request a reconsideration, the student must submit a Reconsideration of Accommodations Decision Request form to CEE-Academic Support asking for further consideration and detailing the reasons the student believes the prior decision was not reasonable. The student may submit additional information to support the reconsideration request.

1. The student must submit a [Reconsideration of Accommodations Decision Request](#) form to CEE-Academic Support within thirty (30) calendar days of the denial decision. The form is available online by contacting CEE-Academic Support.
2. In most cases, the reconsideration decision will be made within ten (10) business days of the reconsideration request.

#### **PREVIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS IMPACT ON FUTURE ACCOMMODATIONS NEEDS**

Having a history of receiving accommodations helps in the evaluation for accommodations, but DMU cannot guarantee the same accommodations will be granted. Accommodations granted at DMU apply solely to coursework completed at DMU and are intended to alleviate any barrier to coursework or co-curricular activities created by format, delivery, or other means. It does not include personal study habits. Future accommodations for Clinical Rotations and future employment cannot be guaranteed and this may affect the students' ability to be successful in their chosen profession. Accommodations granted at DMU do not guarantee that the same or similar accommodations will be granted by: The agency overseeing Board or certifying examinations, or other academic or professional institutions (e.g. residency placements, employment).