

Student Disability Services Policy Landscape and Best Practices



The State University
of New York

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*Student Disability Services
Policies Across SUNY*

Most Common Policies

- Housing
- Academic Adjustments/Accommodations
- Parking and Transportation
- Testing
- Auxiliary Aids
- Note-taking
- Grievances

Less Common Policies

- Emotional Support Animal
- Service Animal
- Dining
- Attendant/Personal Care
- Course Modifications
- Course Substitutions/Waivers
- Foreign Language
- Evacuation Policy
- Calculator Usage
- Recorder
- Assistive Technology
- Web Accessibility
- Pre-Enrollment Planning
- Orientation
- Accessible Media and Technology
- Computer Lab
- Alternative Texts
- Computer Software
- Individualized Assistance

Unique Policies

- Pregnancy and Parenting
- Academic Advisement
- Certification Exam
- Foreign Language
- Campus Classroom Accessibility
- Counseling
- Attendance Modification Policy

Where do the policies live?

- Disability/Accessibility Services Website
- Residence Life Website
- Dining Services Website
- Student Handbook
- Not public facing



General Observations

Public versus Hidden Policies

What some campuses call Policies, others call Procedures

Generally speaking, fewer policies at Community Colleges

Differences in types of policies between 2-year and 4-year campuses

Examples:

- Accommodative furniture
- Tutors
- Calculator usage
- Reduced course load
- Individualized assistance

Student Perspective



Undergrad versus Grad

Accessing information

Usability

The slide features a decorative border at the top and bottom consisting of overlapping circles in various shades of blue, from light to dark. The central area is white and contains the following text:

*Student Disability Services
Policies Across the Nation*

Benchmarking Institutions

- ★ Ohio State University
- ★ Ball State University
- ★ California State University System
- ★ University of Connecticut
- ★ University of Michigan
- ★ University of Central Florida
- ★ Portland Community College

Distinct Practices

- Detailed policies
- Unique policies
- [System-Wide policy \(CSU\)](#)
- Policies encompass other offices on campus
- Universal Design Approach

AHEAD 1

Professional Standards

- Develops program policies and procedures
- Serves on campus committees to develop institutional policies and procedures regarding students with disabilities

Program Standards and Performance Indicators

- **Foster collaboration** between disability services and administration as it relates to policy implementation
- **Ensure key administrators remain informed** of emerging disability issues on campus that may warrant a new or revised policy

AHEAD 2

Professional Standards continued:

- **Work collaboratively** with academic affairs on policy regarding course substitutions
- **Distribute policy and procedure(s)** on availability of services via all relevant campus publications (catalogs, programmatic materials, websites, etc.)
- **Provide staff development** regarding understanding of policies and practices that apply to students with disabilities in postsecondary settings

AHEAD Policies and Procedures (6)

6.1 Develop, review and revise written policies and guidelines regarding procedures **for determining and accessing “reasonable accommodations.”**

6.2 Assist with the development, review, and revision of written policies and guidelines **for institutional rights and responsibilities with respect to service provision.**

6.3 Develop, review and revise written policies and guidelines for **student rights and responsibilities with respect to receiving services.**

6.4 Develop, review and revise written policies and guidelines regarding **confidentiality of disability information.**

6.5 Assist with the development, review, and revision of policies and guidelines **for settling a formal complaint regarding the determination of a "reasonable accommodation."**

CAS Standards 1

- DRS staff members must include disabled students in creating equitable and inclusive environments for the institution, including **policy**, procedure, and program development
- DRS must **regularly review policies**. The revision and creation of policies must be informed by best practices, available evidence, and policy issues in higher education
- DRS must have procedures and guidelines consistent with institutional policy for responding to threats, emergencies, and crises situations...

CAS Standards 2

- DRS must ensure that access is considered in institutional policy decisions either by participating on campus-wide committees or by ensuring that a disability perspective is represented
- In working with institutional partners, DRS must engage in an ongoing practice of identifying barriers in the curricular, co-curricular, physical, information, technology, and policy environments and work collaboratively to ensure equal access.
- DRS must have procedures and guidelines consistent with institutional policy for
 - communicating with the media
 - distributing information through print, broadcast, and online sources
 - contracting with external organizations for delivery of programs and services
 - cultivating, soliciting, and managing gifts
 - applying to and managing funds from grants

Best Practices

- Align with Professional Standards (AHEAD, CAS)
- Include ability-and-functionally diverse people in all policy considerations
 - Policies shaping the individual
 - Policies shaping the institution
- Use ability equity/principles of equity language
- Universal Design for Learning
- Student empowerment

Contact Information

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