TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY VICTORIA

Standard Administrative Procedure (SAP)

08.01.02.J0.02 Student Academic Accommodations

Approved XXX XX, 20XX
Next Scheduled Review: XXX XX, 20XX

Procedure Summary

Texas A&M University-Victoria (A&M-Victoria) is committed to providing all students with equal opportunity to fully access all programs and facilities. We strive to eliminate academic barriers that may prevent qualified students with disabilities from obtaining an academic or professional degree.

A&M-Victoria has developed this Student Academic Accommodations Procedure to set forth eligibility requirements, the process for students with disabilities to request and receive academic accommodations, and the processes for students and faculty to appeal accommodations decisions.

This procedure provides guidance in complying with local, state, and federal laws and regulations with regard to qualified individuals with disabilities, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504). This SAP details the requirements for students to request academic accommodations and engage in the interactive process.

Definitions

Definitions related to the ADA and reasonable accommodations are contained in System Regulation *08.01.02, Civil Rights Protections for Individuals with Disabilities and Certain Other Employees*

Fundamental Alteration – Any academic accommodation, adjustment/auxiliary aid, or service that would fundamentally affect or change the nature of a program or course being taught or that fundamentally alters the essential requirements of instruction or course requirements is not considered a reasonable academic accommodation. The university is not required to alter or modify a course or program to the extent that it changes the fundamental nature of that course or program.

Procedure

1. **GENERAL**

It is the responsibility of the student with a disability to self-identify and request accommodations as needed to mitigate the impact of the disability.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 **Students with a disability** must contact the Accessibility & Accommodations Office to request academic accommodations.

2.2 **Accessibility & Accommodations Office** - An office established to ensure that the institution provides access to students with disabilities while simultaneously protecting the integrity of the academic programs and services. This office receives requests for accommodations from current students, reviews, assesses, and determines student requests for accommodations.

2.3 **Accessibility & Accommodations Manager** – The person who serves as the institutional authority responsible for determining, approving, coordinating, and monitoring reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Responsibilities include engaging in an interactive process with students to determine a student's eligibility for services, approving reasonable accommodations, consulting with faculty, addressing accommodation-related concerns or disputes that may arise between students and instructors, and reviewing and approving any changes to approved accommodations.

2.4 **ADA/504 Coordinator** - oversees compliance with ADA, ADAAA, and Section 504 for the university. Assists the Accessibility & Accommodations Office with the review of accommodations and accommodation denials, as needed.

2.5 Civil Rights & Title IX Office – receives and investigates complaints of discrimination, harassment, or related retaliation based on applicable laws.

2.6 **Faculty and instructors at Texas A&M University-Victoria** - implement academic accommodations approved by the Accessibility & Accommodations Office and/or the ADA/504 coordinator.

3. PROCEDURE FOR STUDENTS TO REQUEST ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

3.1 **Apply and Enroll at Texas A&M University-Victoria -** Students must apply for admission, be accepted to Texas A&M University-Victoria, and register for classes before beginning the registration process with the Accessibility & Accommodations Office.

3.2 **Self-Identify with the Accessibility & Accommodations Office -** To receive accommodations, students must voluntarily identify themselves to the Accessibility & Accommodations Office. It is the student's responsibility to initiate this process. Under federal law, requests for disability-related services, accommodations, or other accessibility support ***must be initiated by the student.***

3.3 **Request Academic Accommodations** by contacting the Accessibility & Accommodations Office to begin the registration process for academic accommodations and services.

3.3.1 **Complete the New Student Application** located in the AIM Portal (Accommodation Information Management) – the online system used by A&M-Victoria to manage disability accommodation requests and services.

3.3.2 Students must **provide relevant supporting documentation** describing the impact of their disability. A&M-Victoria reserves the right to request additional third-party documentation.

Supporting documentation:

- must **be provided by an appropriately qualified or licensed professional** who is not a family member of the student. Examples include: healthcare providers, psychologists, psychiatrists, licensed professional counselor (LPC), licensed social worker (LMSW/LCSW), certified educational diagnostician, licensed specialist in school psychology (LSSP).

- must **clearly identify** the diagnosis, relevant history of the disability, and the impact of the disability in an educational setting.

- must **explain** the major life activities affected, and the functional limitations resulting from the disability.

- must **be the most current and relevant information available**.

- **Prior Accommodation Records:** Students may submit previous accommodation records as supplemental documentation, including copies of accommodations approved from other institutions, Section 504 Plans or IEPs from K-12 school, and/or standardized exams can be included as additional information but may not be independently sufficient.

- Student documentation may be:
  - Uploaded to the AIM Portal
  - Emailed to Accommodations@tamuv.edu

- Documentation letter should:
  - be typed on professional letterhead.
  - be dated and signed by a qualified professional.
  - be complete and provide sufficient information so that the request can be properly evaluated.

- Provider form option:
  - The Accessibility & Accommodations Office will provide a provider form upon request.
  - Providers should return the completed form directly via fax to 361-580-5504.

Students with questions regarding documentation guidelines should contact Accessibility & Accommodations at 361-570-4287 or Accommodations@tamuv.edu.

3.5 The Accessibility & Accommodations Manager will review the student's application and supporting documentation and will schedule an intake interview with the student to discuss reasonable accommodations and provide any aditional information. This **interactive process** is a dialogue between the student and the university to determine reasonable accommodations. The Accessibility & Accommodations Manager will engage in discussions with the student regarding the accommodation(s) requested, previous accommodations, and the functional limitations of the student. The intake interview may be conducted in person, by phone, or electronically. Additional documentation may be needed if documentation does not include enough information to determine limitations.

3.6 The following factors will be considered in determining whether to grant an accommodation:

- Is the student an individual with a disability as defined by System Regulation 08.01.02?
- Does the information submitted establish a link between the disability and the accommodation requested;
- What is the extent to which required completion of learning objectives are limited by the individual's disability;
- What are the learning objectives required of each course;
- What is the range of options available to accommodate the disability;
- Will the requested accommodation allow the student to perform the learning objectives of their course;
- Will alternate accommodation allow the student to perform the learning objectives of their course;
- Will the requested accommodation create an undue hardship for the university or pose a direct threat to the students, employees or others; and
- Any other factors relevant to the determination.

3.7 The Accessibility & Accommodations Manager will determine reasonable accommodations on a case-by-case basis, based on documentation and information provided by the student, and will review the approved accommodations with the student.

3.8 The student selects which instructors will be informed of the approved accommodations. An Accommodation Notification Letter will be generated for each course the student selects and delivered to both the course instructor and the student through AIM via tamuv.edu e-mail. The letter will contain all approved accommodations appropriate for the instructional mode of the course. Accommodations become effective on the date the letters are issued and remain in effect for the duration of the current semester. The student must request

Accommodation Notification Letters each semester that they wish to use accommodations.

3.9 Students are encouraged to communicate with each instructor either in person, by phone, or via email to discuss implementation of their approved accommodations. Any modification to the approved accommodations must be reviewed and authorized by the Accessibility & Accommodations Manager; instructors and students may not independently alter the approved accommodations.

4. NOTIFICATION OF ACCOMMODATIONS

4.1 Instructors will receive an Accommodation Notification Letter through AIM via tamuv.edu e-mail. The letter contains all approved accommodations. The accommodations become effective on the date the letters are issued and remain in effect for the duration of the current semester. The Instructor is responsible for implementing the approved accommodations right away.

4.2 Instructors who have questions or concerns about an approved academic accommodation and/or believe that the accommodation would result in a fundamental alteration or undue hardship must meet with the Accessibility & Accommodations Manager right away to discuss their concerns. The instructor must provide the approved accommodation in the interim.

4.3 Instructors do not have the right to change or refuse to provide an approved accommodation. Instructors may not review a student's assessment or medical documentation including diagnostic data.

4.4 Students are encouraged to meet with their instructors each semester to discuss the accommodations.

5. APPEALS

5.1 If the student disagrees with a decision made concerning accommodations, or eligibility, this is discussed with the Accessibility & Accommodations Manager right away. The Accessibility & Accommodations Manager will gather information from the student and attempt to resolve the student's concern.

5.2 If the concern is not resolved, the student can appeal to the Director of Student Services.

5.3 If the student is dissatisfied with a decision reached by the Director of Student Services, they may appeal to the Vice President for Student Affairs and a final decision will be rendered.

6. DENIALS

Accommodations may be denied under circumstances including, but not limited to the following:

- The requested accommodation poses and undue hardship on the operations of the

university.

- The requested accommodation is a fundamental alteration of the course or program.
- The student failed to follow the accommodations process – i.e. student failed to participate in the interactive process, student did not submit adequate documentation, did not submit an application or other information as needed by the university.
- The requested accommodation is not supported by the documentation.
- The requested accommodation is a personal item (masks, wheelchairs, scooter, hearing aids books, supplies, etc.) or responsibility (such as a personal care attendant).
- The requested accommodation will not enable the student to participate in the course or program.
- The requested accommodation or use by the student would result in a direct threat to the health and safety of the student or others.
- An alternate accommodation was appropriate or reasonable.

7. TIMELINE

It can take one to two weeks to finalize accommodations and send out the accommodation notification letters. New students are encouraged to apply at least two weeks prior to the start of a new semester so that the process can be completed by the time the term begins.

A student can register with the Accessibility & Accommodations Office before or during a semester.

Accommodations are not retroactive. Accommodations are in effect beginning the date the accommodation was approved and the Accommodation Notification Letter has been sent to instructors and student.

8. RETURNING STUDENTS

To receive accommodations each semester, returning students must access their **AIM (Accommodation Information Management)** account, select the approved accommodations they wish to use in each course, and request an Accommodation Notification Letter be sent only to the professors of courses in which they are requesting accommodations.

9. RECORD KEEPING AND REPORTING

Documentation, forms and all records related to any request for academic accommodation will be maintained in accordance with record retention requirements and held in the strictest confidence.

10. COMPLAINTS

Complaints alleging illegal discrimination, harassment or related retaliation will be handled in accordance with provisions of System Regulation *08.01.01, Civil Rights Compliance* and associated university rules and SAPs.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

System Policy *08.01, Civil Rights Protections and Compliance*

System Regulation *08.01.01, Civil Rights Compliance*

System Regulation *08.01.02, Civil Rights Protections for Individuals with Disabilities and Certain Other Employees*

University Rule *08.01.01.J1, Civil Rights Compliance (in-progress)*

University SAP *08.01.01.J1.01, Investigation and Resolution of Allegations of Discrimination, Harassment, Retaliation, and/or Complicity Against Students, Employees, and Third Parties*

Forms

New Student Application

Contact Office

Texas A&M University-Victoria
Accessibility and Accommodations
Student Services – University West, Suite 208
361-570-4287