Students’ Frequently Asked Questions about Disabilities

Q. Do I have to tell every professor what my disability is?

A. No. You don’t have to tell your professors anything you don’t want to about your personal life, including any learning disability, mental health issue, chronic health concern, physical limitation, etc. Instead register with the office of Services for Students with Disabilities through the Academic Support Center.

1. Go to http://www.fresno.edu/disability-services/forms to download necessary forms.
2. Contact Melinda Gunning at 453-2247, melinda.gunning@fresno.edu, Marpeck 114.
3. Once your accommodations are agreed upon, an email will be sent to each of your professors telling them what your accommodations are but not what your disability is.

Q. My professor says he/she never got my accommodation memo. What should I do?

A. That email may be buried in the professor’s inbox or maybe the professor wasn’t assigned to the course when we sent your accommodation memo. You should have gotten a copy of your accommodation memo via email. Feel free to show your professor your copy of the email. Or contact the disabilities office and ask to have your memo sent again.

OR—if you never replied to the email from the disabilities office asking if you wanted your accommodations to continue next semester, your accommodation memo was never sent this semester. Please contact the disabilities office and tell us that you do want your accommodations this semester, and we will be happy to send your memo to all your professors.

Q. My professor doesn’t remember that I get accommodations, and I don’t want to make a big deal about it. What do I do?

A. If you think about how many students your professor has, you’ll realize there is no way he/she could remember which students need accommodations and what those accommodations are. The best thing to do is to remind your professor by email in advance* what accommodations you’re going to need.

1. Email your professor on or before a due date if you need to use extended due dates on an assignment. You don’t have to explain WHY you can't finish the work on time due to your disability. Just remind the professor that you have the accommodation and need to use it.
2. Email your professor at least a week before an exam that you need testing accommodations. Remind the professor to send the exam to the Academic Support Center on the main campus or the front desk of the regional center. Be sure you make
arrangements with the ASC or the front desk for when and where you will take your exam.

* If you wait until after a due date has passed, you may have sacrificed your right to the accommodation.

Q. I get testing accommodations (extra time, distraction-reduced setting), but my professor said that this is just a short easy, quiz and I should just take it in class. What should I do?

A. If you feel you can take a quiz/test in class, that’s your decision to make. If you feel that you need your accommodations even for a “short, easy quiz,” you have every right to insist upon your accommodations. Approved accommodations MUST be allowed according to federal law.

Q. I get testing accommodations, but my professor wants me to take my test in his/her office. But I’m worried that will be too noisy and distracting for me to concentrate.

A. If one of your accommodations is a distraction-reduced setting, you have every right to say that you need your test proctored in a different location. The Academic Support Center on the main campus or the front desk of each regional center can provide you with a quiet place and a proctor. Approved accommodations MUST be allowed according to federal law.

Q. My professor says I have to take my test in the Academic Support Center at the same time as the rest of the class. But with my time and a half accommodation, am I supposed to miss my next class?

A. No. If your professor doesn’t understand that it is physically impossible to take your test at the same time as the rest of the class because of your accommodations, have Melinda help you explain to the professor that using accommodations doesn’t mean that you have to miss another class.

Q. My professor says there is no such thing as an excused absence unless I have a doctor’s note. But sometimes because of my health issue I just can’t go to class. Do I have to go to the doctor’s office every time?

A. Chronic health issues are also considered disabilities. Register with Services for Students with Disabilities and provide verification of your chronic health condition. Request leniency with attendance as one of your accommodations.

1. You need to notify your professors and/or Melinda Gunning if you are missing class due to your registered disability. Notification should be as close as possible to the missed class date.*
2. Remember that you still have to make up all the work that you missed, and your professor has the right to assign additional work to make up for in-class participation.
3. If you know a test is scheduled for a day when you can’t make it to class, call or email your professor immediately to schedule a make-up date.
4. If you miss class for a reason other than your disability, that absence will not be excused.
5. Even with leniency with attendance as an accommodation, there is still a limit to how many classes you can miss. This limit will be different for each class and for each program. Performance and lab classes and Degree Completion courses don’t allow for many absences. Melinda can help you figure this out.

*Waiting too long to notify professors may jeopardize your excused absence.

Q. One of my accommodations is extended due dates. Can I turn in work after the last day of class?
A. No. The last day of class is the absolute last day you can turn in work, even with accommodations. If you can't finish your work by that time, you will need to request an incomplete grade. The last day of class is also the last day on which you may request an incomplete. Your request for an incomplete should indicate that you are registered as a student with disabilities and your disability is contributing to your need for extended time.

Q. I am allowed testing accommodations, but I don't think I always need them. Is it OK to take my test in class with everyone else?
A. Yes. You always have the option if you want to use your accommodations or not. It's a good idea to have accommodations in place in case you need them. You can always decide not to use them until they are necessary.

Q. I am allowed audio text or electronic text, but I haven't received my text books from the disabilities office yet, and I'm falling behind in class. What do I do?
A. Keep in mind that it is a lengthy process to get text books in electronic format. The sooner you get your book list to the disabilities office, the sooner you will get your texts. But if you can't wait any longer, bring in a physical copy of your textbook to the disabilities office so they can cut and scan it.