

# **DISABILITY-RELATED ACCOMMODATION<sup>1</sup> POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

## **Disability-Related Accommodation Policy**

### Commitment to Students with Disabilities

The Medical University of South Carolina (“MUSC” or the “University”) is committed to ensuring that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability is excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination in University programs or activities due to his or her disability. The university is fully committed to complying with all requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and its amendments (the “ADA”) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”) and to providing equal educational opportunities to otherwise qualified students with disabilities. Disability support services are available to otherwise qualified students with disabilities to ensure equal access to the University’s programs and services. Services may include making academic and/or non-academic accommodations for students.

### Types of Accommodation Available

Academic accommodations are related to learning and evaluation in an academic program or particular class. Examples include but are not limited to extended time for tests, note taking support, using a computer to type an essay test, or using an interpreter in class. Non-academic accommodations relate to university activities, jobs, facilities, and services that are not otherwise considered academic. Examples are removal of physical barriers, use of a service animal, use of an interpreter, or other modifications for participation in University activities and services such as University meetings and judicial proceedings.

Decisions regarding accommodations are made on a case-by-case basis. There is no standard accommodation for any particular disability.

### Who Qualifies for Disability-Related Accommodation?

Subject to the procedure outlined below, an otherwise qualified student (meaning a student who meets the academic and technical standards required for admission or participation in the University’s education programs and activities) with a disability may be eligible for accommodation. As defined in the ADA and Section 504, a student has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities or has a record of such an impairment.

---

<sup>1</sup> The term “accommodation” is used throughout this document as synonymous with the modification of policies, practices, and procedures; the provision of auxiliary aids and services; academic adjustments; and modifications to the environment intended to remove barriers to equivalent access.

### Prohibition Against Retaliation

The University strictly prohibits retaliation for requesting disability accommodation and/or for submitting a disability-related grievance or participating in a grievance investigation. Retaliation includes threats, intimidation, reprisals, and adverse actions.

Any student who believes he or she has been retaliated against for requesting a disability accommodation, submitting a grievance, and/or participating in a grievance investigation should notify the Dean of the student's College. The Dean will promptly investigate the allegation of retaliation, notify the student in writing of the Dean's determination, and take appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action.

### Alteration of Essential Course or Program Requirements

In instances where the requested accommodation may alter an essential course or program requirement (a full list of which can be accessed here) the University's determination regarding the request will be made by a group of University employees who are trained, knowledgeable, and experienced in the area of study in question through a careful, thoughtful, and rational review of the academic program and its requirements, taking into account possible alternatives for the essential requirement, as well as whether the essential requirement in question can be modified for a specific student with a disability.

### University 504/ADA Coordinator

The University has designated Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Program Manager Mike Vanderhurst (the "Coordinator") to coordinate its efforts to comply with Section 504 and the ADA and to oversee the University's consideration and implementation of disability-related accommodations. The following is the Coordinator's contact information:

Mike Vanderhurst  
Program Manager  
Equal Employment Opportunity & Affirmative Action  
Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion  
Medical University of South Carolina  
173 Ashley Avenue, MSC 502  
Basic Science Building Room 104  
Charleston, South Carolina 29425-5020  
843-792-1282  
[vanderm@musc.edu](mailto:vanderm@musc.edu)

## Procedure for Students Requesting Disability-Related Accommodation

### Step 1:

Schedule a meeting with the Coordinator, whose contact information is provided above, to discuss your accommodation request.<sup>2</sup>

### Step 2:

Bring to the meeting with the Coordinator a ***filled out*** copy of the University's Disability Support Services Request for Accommodation form and any documentation (for example, education records or diagnoses from medical providers) that you believe is relevant to your disability and/or accommodation request—especially any documentation that describes the impact of the disability on you and how the requested accommodation(s) would address that impact.

***Because each person's situation is unique and documentation requirements vary by situation, the University's Coordinator will talk to you about documentation requirements during the initial meeting. No student should delay meeting with the Coordinator out of concern for not having the appropriate paperwork.***

### Step 3:

If the Coordinator determines that you are an otherwise qualified student with a disability, and thus eligible for accommodation, the Coordinator will engage in an interactive process with you and, as necessary, relevant University officials (e.g., course instructors, admissions staff, etc.) and others to determine the appropriate accommodation(s).

### Step 4:

If your request for accommodation is approved, the Coordinator will generate a Letter of Accommodation, which documents the accommodation(s) you have been granted. ***You are responsible for promptly collecting this letter and presenting it to faculty.***

If your request is not approved, the Coordinator will notify you in writing of the decision and related reasoning.

## Grievance Procedure / Appeal of Disability Accommodation-Related Decisions

You may appeal a denial of an accommodation request by following the process set forth in the University's Student Disability Grievance Procedure. (In addition to providing for appeals of disability accommodation denials and related issues, the University's Student

---

<sup>2</sup> If the Coordinator determines that an in person meeting is not necessary (as the Coordinator might do, for example, if you already have met in person with the Coordinator to discuss accommodations) or not feasible (for example, because of your current location or because of a semester break), the Coordinator will assist you with submitting the necessary information electronically.

Disability Grievance Procedure may be used by any student currently enrolled at the University who believes he or she has been discriminated against or harassed on the basis of disability by a University employee (e.g., administrator, faculty, staff, adjunct faculty, or other agent of the University); University student; or, in certain circumstances, by a visitor to the University.)

Modification of Existing Accommodations

If you believe that already-approved accommodations require modification, please contact the University's Coordinator to discuss the desired modification.