



Special Services Student Guidelines and Information

Galveston College is an equal opportunity institution in education and employment. It is the policy of Galveston College to provide equal opportunities without regard to age, race, color, religion, national origin, gender, disability, genetic information or veteran status.



STUDENT GUIDELINES

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Galveston College is accredited by the Southern Association of College and School Commission on Colleges to award the Associate Degree.

Contact: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges 1866 Southern Lane,
Decatur, Georgia 30333-4094 or call 404-679-4501 for questions about Galveston College

Galveston College, 4015 Avenue Q, Galveston TX, 77539 (phone) 409-944-4242 (fax) 409-944-1501



Welcome to Galveston College!

Thank you for joining us to accomplish both your short term and lifelong educational goals. Remember that a first-class education like the one you will receive is NOT something that just happens to you. Galveston College will provide the resources and support but you must bring the commitment. Commitment means attending classes, setting aside adequate study time, and utilizing support services.

While you are here on campus, take advantage of our Learning Resource Center (library), Computers Labs, Student Success Center (tutoring), Testing Center, Fitness Center and food services. Become a part of the campus community by joining student clubs and organizations, engaging in student activities, watching Whitecaps sporting events (baseball and softball) and devoting time to doing community services as part of the College's service and learning initiative.

The Galveston College catalog is the primary source for information about academic policies and regulations that govern students' academic life. The Special Services Guidelines answer questions specifically about special services. As a student of Galveston College you are responsible for knowing and abiding by the policies and regulations set forth in the college catalog. The catalog is accessible on-line at www.gc.edu/instructional.

All information contained in this Special Services Guidelines and Information packet is subject to change without notice.



Special Services Office Contact Information

Where do I go to request special services at Galveston College?

The Special Services Office is located in the Counseling and Advising Center in Moody Hall (M-150). The Special Services Advisor is available to students on a walk-in basis. Check-in at the Counseling desk and ask to visit with the Special Services Advisor.



Counseling & Advisement Center

Special Services Advisor

Moody Hall room M-150

Phone: (409) 944-1220

Fax (409) 944-1501



What Are Special Services At Galveston College?

The Special Services Office strives to coordinate services that provide a supportive environment and promote educational success for students with learning differences. A variety of programs, services and related activities are designed to provide educational support to students who self-identify as having a disability.

The Special Services Advisor works with Galveston College students, faculty, staff and administrators to comply with state and federal regulations. The Special Service Advisor assists students who learn differently with academic adjustments and axillary aids to provide equal access to the College.

The Galveston College Special Services Office provides students with assistance and information as required by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1972 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

What types of service are provided?

1. Pre-enrollment, advisement and course selection
2. Coordinate academic adjustments/auxiliary aids requests (with medical documentation)
3. Advocacy, support, crisis intervention, information and referral
4. Assist students with access to the following:
 - (a) Sign language interpreters, readers & scribes
 - (b) Alternative media and specialized programs such as JAWS, Magic, literacy and math software
 - (c) Assistive Technology (FM stereo systems, talking calculators, smart pens, etc.)

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5. Liaison activities to facilitate academic adjustments
6. Information and assistance about the differences in procedures and disability laws as students transition from high school to college. Transition information may be found at the following links or in M-150:

www.gc.edu Differences Between High School and College Special Services

www.gc.edu Requirements for College Success

www.gc.edu College Transition Information

What services cannot be provided by the Special Services Office?

1. Formal diagnostic evaluations.
2. Self-contained classes for students with disabilities.
3. Personal aids (ex: private tutor, private readers or caregiver).
4. Galveston College cannot compromise the quality of instruction or modify curriculum in a way that alters the essential skills that are required in a course.



Special Services Registration Process

May I receive academic adjustments by self-disclosing my diagnosis to my instructor?

No. Self-disclosure of a diagnosis to an instructor will not register a student with Special Services and does not allow the student to receive academic adjustments. Students must submit the necessary documentation to the Special Services Advisor and complete the registration process (listed below) before academic adjustments are provided.

What is the procedure for registering with the Special Services Office?

Services will be rendered when the following steps are completed:

1. **Complete and submit signed originals of the registration forms to the Special Services Advisor.** All forms are available at the links below or in the Special Services Office located in M-150.
 - 1) www.gc.edu **Academic Adjustment/Auxiliary Aid Registration Checklist**
Lists the steps required to register with the Special Services Office and answers commonly asked questions.
 - 2) www.gc.edu **Special Services Student Intake form**
Gathers important demographic information and lists the diagnoses and academic adjustments/auxiliary aids that the student is requesting.
 - 3) www.gc.edu **Agreement, Disclosure and Consent form**
Provides information and agreement and/or consent regarding Special Services procedures, confidentiality, record retention, etc.

- 2. Submit documentation of your diagnosis from a medical or disability-related licensed professional.** The ‘Required Documentation’ www.gc.edu section of this document details the information that is required in documentation of a disability. The Diagnosis Documentation and Guidelines form may be found on the GC website at www.gc.edu or in M-150.
- 3. Meet with the Special Services Advisor in order to create a customized Academic Adjustment/Auxiliary Aid Agreement letter.** You may be asked to complete additional forms needed for specific requests. A complete list of forms (with links) may be found in the “Academic Adjustment/Auxiliary Aid” www.gc.edu section of this document.
- 4. Take the Academic Adjustment/Auxiliary Aid Agreement letter to private meetings with each instructor to discuss the logistics of the academic adjustments.** To protect student confidentiality and to reduce distractions, it is recommended that meetings are scheduled during instructors’ office hours or another arranged time. All instructors for each course should sign the agreement after the discussion takes place.

NOTE: See the section of this document entitled “Interacting with Faculty Regarding Special Services” www.gc.edu for helpful hints and important questions to ask during meetings with instructors.
- 5. Return the instructor-signed Academic Adjustment/Auxiliary Aid Agreement letter to the Special Services Office.**
- 6. Renew the Academic Adjustment/Auxiliary Aid Agreement letter *each semester*** after registering for classes so that new instructors are notified about the adjustments.

What is the Special Services Registration Process for Dual-Credit Students?

The dual-credit program is offered in partnership with Galveston College. Enrolled students receive both high school and college credit simultaneously. **The procedures for receiving special services are decided by where the student's classes are held:**

1. Students who are enrolled in dual-credit courses held at a Galveston College campus will follow the normal procedures for registration with the Galveston College Special Services Office as described in this document.
2. Students who are enrolled in dual-credit classes held at the high school will receive their academic adjustments through the high school disability department.

The Academic Adjustment/Auxiliary Aid Agreement letter for dual-credit classes includes additional signature lines so that all parties on both campuses who are involved with academic adjustments have access to the same information about approved accommodations. If the student is a minor, a parent's signature is also required.

Because dual-credit students receive college credit for their courses, the Special Services Advisor must approve academic adjustments that are given at the high school.

What is the Special Services Registration Process for Continuing Education Students?

Continuing Education students who are taking classes while still in high school will follow the same procedures as outlined above for dual-credit.

Students who are not in high school who request academic adjustments/auxiliary aids in a continuing education course must follow the established procedures listed in the Student Checklist that is available on the Galveston College website www.gc.edu or in the

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Counseling Office (M-150). Continuing Education (CE) Academic Adjustment Agreement letters have additional signature lines that require the CE director's signature. When special services are being requested for a minor, parental signature is also required.



Required Documentation

What is documentation?

Documentation is paperwork from a health care professional that describes a diagnosis or disability, reports the tests that were used to make the diagnosis and other important information. Since the documentation must come from a health care provider, it also provides verification of an individual's disability. Medical documentation provides the information that is necessary for the Special Services Advisor and the student to make appropriate decisions when developing academic adjustments for the classroom.

What information must be in my medical documentation?

Documentation must be provided by a medical doctor or another professional in a field related to the student's diagnosis. High school ARD notes with the psychological report completed by a medical professional or school system will normally suffice. Acceptable professionals other than medical doctors may include psychologists, licensed counselors, physical therapists, rehabilitation counselors and other licensed professionals. Guidelines that describe required documentation are available on the Galveston College website (www.gc.edu) and through the Special Services Office located in M-150.

Documentation must meet Special Services requirements and provide sufficient information to assist the institution in determining what difficulties the student may encounter in an academic setting and which academic adjustments/auxiliary aids will provide equal access for the student.

Although formats may vary, the following critical data should be included in documentation that is provided by a healthcare professional:

1. The student's name, dates of examination and/or testing and the examiner's name and credentials
2. Diagnosis
3. Summary of the assessment process with at least a brief composite of the test results and possible impacts of the diagnosis and/or medications in an educational setting
4. Recommendations of strategies to provide equal access for the student

Must I provide new medical documentation each semester?

No. New documentation will not be required unless something changes medically. Students only need to renew and update their Academic Adjustment/Auxiliary Aid Agreement letter each semester to confirm active registration and so that new instructors receive information about the student's need for academic adjustments/auxiliary aids.

What if I only have limited medical documentation, but need academic adjustments in my current classes?

The Special Services Office may issue a "temporary" special services registration status for students who are requesting academic adjustments/auxiliary aids for the first time but do not have access to sufficient documentation. Students who request a temporary status must meet with the Special Services Advisor and complete the registration process and must provide enough information so that the Special Services Advisor can reasonably ascertain that a disability exists. Students with disabilities that are obvious (ex: blindness, deafness, mobility

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impairments and/or mental or psychological impairments) may be granted temporary status for one semester to enable the student to obtain written documentation. Examples of limited documentation for other disabilities may include ARD notes without a diagnosis, doctor's requests without a diagnosis or other documentation that indicate a disability exists, but do not provide a diagnosis or any supporting materials.

Temporary Special Services status is effective only during the first semester. The student will be required to provide the supporting required documentation before academic adjustments will be made in any future semesters. This provision does not have retroactive status. Grades posted prior to receiving temporary status will stand.



Academic Adjustments and Auxiliary Aids

What are academic adjustments/auxiliary aids?

Academic adjustments and auxiliary aids are interventions intended to create the same access to College that is offered to any student. Interventions, adjustments and auxiliary aids, according to ADA law, must be reasonable and cannot alter the essential skills that are required for any course. Auxiliary aids and academic adjustments are identified individually for each student based on:

1. The nature of the disability that is presented by the student and the impact(s) of the disability in an academic environment
2. Information that is self-reported by the student to the Special Services Advisor
3. Supplemental documentation from third-party agencies and medical professionals

Students may be required to provide additional documentation to obtain an adjustment. For example, if a student requests flexibility for absences or assignment due dates, the student may be asked to provide medical documentation for each occurrence to demonstrate that late assignment or absence were related to the student's disability and not some other factor.

In all cases, if students miss too much class or fall so far behind that they are not able to meet the essential skills required in the course, then students may need to withdraw when possible, or fail the course. The purpose of academic adjustments is to provide equal access to all aspects of the campus. Academic adjustments do not guarantee academic success. All

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students must follow the policies and procedures found in the Galveston College Catalog on the website www.gc.edu or M-150, and must meet the essential skills required for each course.

How do I request academic adjustments and auxiliary aids?

Below is a full list of forms (with links to printable forms) that are used for specific Special Services requests. All forms are also available at the Special Services Office located in M-150.

Specific Special Services Forms:

1. Alternative Format Agreement www.gc.edu
2. Alternative Format Request www.gc.edu
3. Classroom Recording Device Agreement www.gc.edu
4. Consent for Release of Confidentiality www.gc.edu
5. Equipment Loan Request www.gc.edu
6. Reader/Scribe Request www.gc.edu
7. Release to Download Programs to a Personal Computer www.gc.edu
8. Room Adjustment Request www.gc.edu
9. Schedule Information www.gc.edu
10. Sign Language/CART Request www.gc.edu

What types of academic adjustments and auxiliary aids are available to students?

The purpose of academic adjustments or use of auxiliary aids is to access students' knowledge rather than assessing their disability and to provide equal access to the College. Some examples of adjustments are listed below:

1. Extended time for testing.
2. Distraction-reduced setting for testing.

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3. Writing assistance software during essay tests for students with print disabilities.
4. Dictated or oral quizzes and tests.
5. Color overlays, enlargers and the JAWS reader for those with print disabilities.
6. Preferential seating in the classroom.

What are “essential skills” and what effect do they have on academic adjustments?

According to ADA law, interventions, adjustments and auxiliary aids, must be reasonable and cannot alter the essential skills that are required for any course. Therefore, Galveston College cannot provide academic adjustments that alter the required essential skills or the academic requirements in any course. For example, if a student is taking a class that requires familiarity with the use of specific math formulas, students with print disabilities may request that a formula sheet shows only one formula per page during testing. However, students would not be allowed to receive formula sheets that lists the formulas in a particular order or that helps students remember the use of each formula, unless the entire class also receives the same assistance.

When should I request academic adjustments/auxiliary aids?

All students (new and returning) *must request academic adjustments/auxiliary aids each semester.*

The length of time it takes to arrange academic adjustments varies depending on the request. Simple adjustments such as preferred seating may be arranged immediately. Extending time for tests requires at least 48 hours so the instructors have time to bring the test to the Testing Center or to adjust an online test to allow extra time. Sign language interpreters may require even more time because this adjustment requires coordination with outside agencies.

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It is recommended that all new and returning students who request special services utilize the pre-enrollment advising provided by the Special Services Advisor. Selection of classes during early registration provides plenty of time to coordinate the adjustments prior to the start of classes in the next semester.

What if I submitted work in class prior to registering with the Special Services Office?

Adjustments/auxiliary aids will not be provided until the registration process has been completed with the Special Services Office and adequate documentation has been provided to the Special Services Advisor (not a faculty member). Academic adjustments are not retroactive. Grades earned prior to the completion of an Academic Adjustment/Auxiliary Aid Agreement letter will stand.

What if I realize during a semester that I need to add or change my academic adjustments?

If you realize during a semester that you need to add or change the adjustments listed in your Academic Adjustment Agreement letter, contact the Special Services Advisor. The Advisor will work with you to revise your letter if the requested academic adjustments are related to your disability, are reasonable and if they do not compromise the essential skills required for the course.

What if I change my mind and choose not to use my academic adjustments?

Students who have academic adjustments/auxiliary aids in place are not required to use them. However, students are required to notify the instructor and the Special Services Advisor at least 48 hours in advance and in writing (email) if the student chooses not to use academic adjustments that have already been approved. Instructors may need time to change certain plans

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such as ordering furniture or placing quizzes and tests in the Testing Center. Also, written change requests protect both the student and the instructor because they document any changes.

What if some part of my course is not accessible to me?

Contact the Special Services Advisor immediately for assistance! The Student Services Advisor will work collaboratively with the student and instructor to develop a solution as quickly as possible.



Interacting with Faculty about Special Services

1. To protect your confidentiality, it is recommended that you attempt to arrange academic adjustments/auxiliary aids discussions with instructors outside of class times. Go to the instructor's office during the hours listed in the syllabus or ask the instructor when the best time to talk would be. Many instructors are preoccupied with other concerns immediately prior to and after class, and will be less available to you.
3. Be on time for the appointment.
4. Introduce yourself and tell the instructor which section of their course you attend.
5. A good approach is to say, "I have a form from the Special Services Advisor and I need to talk with you about my academic adjustments/auxiliary aids. I appreciate your time."
6. You do not have to share your diagnosis or the reason(s) for your academic adjustments. If you believe information about your diagnosis would be helpful to your instructor you are free to share as much or as little as you choose. However, the purpose of the instructor meeting is to talk about the logistics of how the academic adjustment will be provided.
7. **Ask questions!** On test days, should you come to class or go directly to the Testing Center? If you come to class first, how will you be released to the Testing Center without the rest of the class becoming aware that you are receiving academic adjustments? How will you get extended time for a pop quiz?
8. If you are unclear about anything that is said during your discussion, ask for clarification.
9. Take notes if needed.
10. At the end of your meeting, summarize what you have written to double-check your understanding of the procedures upon which you have agreed.
11. If the instructor has questions that you cannot answer, please refer him/her to the Special Services Advisor.
12. It may be helpful to remind professors of adjustment needs in the class prior to testing.



Specific Services, Academic Adjustments & Auxiliary Aids

Does the Special Services Office offer counseling?

Disability related crisis intervention is provided to students through the Special Services Office. If the issue(s) require longer-term counseling or therapy, the Special Services Advisor may offer free or low-cost referral options for the student.

Does Galveston College offer tuition waivers if I am legally blind or deaf?

Yes. You must provide a certificate of blindness or deafness provided through the Texas Workforce Solutions Rehabilitative Services Agency (formally DARS) to the Galveston College Admissions Office. Adjustments to your bill are made through the Business Office once you have submitted your certificate to Admissions.

Is it possible to make adjustments to the classroom when needed for low-vision, mobility access (ex: wheelchair accessibility) or other physical needs?

Yes. Once a student has registered with the Special Services Office and has a documented diagnosis that indicates the need for physical adjustments, room alterations can be made as long as they are reasonable and do not alter the essential requirements of the class and the request provides enough time for the adjustments to be implemented. Students requesting physical adjustments to a room must submit a completed Room Adjustment Request form that is available at www.gc.edu.

May I request a course substitution or exemption?

Texas state statutes prohibit waivers or exemptions for any core course. The statutes only allow the substitution of a core course with another core course that is offered at another school. For example, a math course may only be substituted with a course that would satisfy the math requirements at other schools. Guidelines for course substitutions are set forth by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (RULE §4.28).

Substitution requests are handled on a case-by-case basis. Upon written request, the Special Services Office supplies the appropriate verification of a disability to the Vice President of Academics, who will make the final decision in accordance with federal and state laws.

Will the Special Services Office help with my study skills?

Galveston College does not provide individualized tutoring. Listed below are some options for assistance:

1. Students who need assistance with study strategies or time management techniques may contact the Student Success Center located in N-119.
2. Math and Reading/Writing labs have tutors specifically for those subject areas. Lab locations and times are shared by the instructors for those areas.
3. The Texas Workforce Solutions Department of Rehabilitative Services may be able to offer assistance if the student is their current client. Their contact number 409-795-3620. Additional information may be available through the Special Services Office.

May I request note-taking?

Academic adjustments/auxiliary aids are available to help those who have difficulty taking notes in class. Galveston College does not provide student note-sharing because classmates may not be trained in note-taking and may not be familiar with the language within the respective field.

When note-taking is requested, and auxiliary aids cannot meet the needs of the student, instructors may provide electronic or written lecture notes, which assures expertise in the field and assures that the student receives quality notes. If the course is interactive or requires hands-on skills, it may be unreasonable or impossible to acquire prepared lecture notes. In such cases assistive technology such as smart pens may be utilized.

The minimum time required for a lecture-note request is 10 working days. Requests for electronic and/or written lecture notes should ideally be made a semester prior to the first day of classes when possible. Electronic or typed lecture notes may not be readily available to the instructor and he/she may require notice to provide notes in the format requested. It is in the best interest of the student to make all special services requests as far as possible prior to the first day of classes. Electronic or typed note requests will be included in the Academic Adjustment Agreement letter that is signed by the student, the instructor and the Special Services Advisor.

Does the Special Services Office offer alternative formats for reading materials?

Yes, many textbooks are available as e-books through commercial retailers for purchase by the student. Students must complete an Alternative Format Request (www.gc.edu or M-150) and the Alternate Format Agreement (www.gc.edu or M-150)) to request alternative materials. Allow at least 10 working days for an alternative format request to be fulfilled. Due to the required interaction with outside agencies and publishers, it is highly recommended that

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student's request alternative formats as early as possible in the previous semester and prior to heavy College registration periods.

Some of the agencies that produce alternate texts (e-books and/or recorded text books) have a book request process that can take several weeks or months because the requests are placed in a queue and orders are addressed as they are received. In these cases, the Special Services Advisor or the Counseling and Advisement Center at Galveston College may not have control over the amount of time needed to secure an alternate media textbook.

If e-books are not available through the college bookstore, commercial retailers, Bookshare or Learning Ally, the Special Services Advisor will assist student in obtaining e-books from the publisher. Students must provide a receipt that demonstrates that the book was purchased.

NOTE: In order to receive alternative learning formats all requests must be made at least 10 business day prior to the first day of use.

What if I need a sign language interpreter or CART services?

The Galveston College Special Services Advisor will first work with the Texas Workforce Solutions Department of Rehabilitative Services when a sign interpreter is requested.

1. The request for sign language interpreters must be requested at least 10 working days in advance of the needed service.
 - a. For new students, the request must be made 10 working days prior to the start of the first day sign interpreter or CART services are needed.

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b. Returning students should submit requests in the current semester for the semester following. For example, your request should be made during the fall semester for the upcoming spring semester.

2. Students who request an interpreter should register with the Texas Workforce Solutions Department of Rehabilitative Services (if qualified) to receive interpreter services.

Students must complete the Sign Interpreter/CART Request form (www.gc.edu) and the Schedule Information Form (www.gc.edu or M-150) and submit completed forms to the Special Services Advisor. Requests for interpreters for out-of-class course assignments or other college-required work may be provided with reasonable notice. Interpreters for individual study are not provided. Once assigned, interpreters may be changed if an appropriate substitution is available. Cart services or remote interpreter services may be utilized in lieu of live sign language interpreters.

May I use smart pens or record lectures?

Students may be given permission to use smart pens and/or tape record lectures. Students who use this adjustment understand and agree that the lecture recordings are not to be shared and are only to be used to enhance the student's personal study. Students who request adjustments that involve recording lectures are required to submit Classroom Recording Device Agreement form located at www.gc.edu or M-150.

What kind of auxiliary aids are available? May I borrow them?

Available auxiliary aid equipment may be loaned to students on a semester basis. Students who request equipment loans must be registered with the Special Services Office and will be required to submit an Equipment Loan Request located at www.gc.edu or in M-150.
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Students are financially responsible for any damage beyond normal wear and tear to borrowed equipment. A hold will be placed on the student's account until equipment is returned and/or repair or replacement costs for damaged or lost equipment are paid.

Available auxiliary aids vary as technology changes. Currently, the Student Services Office may loan (in limited supply) the following auxiliary aids:

- FM stereo systems
- Large print keyboard
- Talking calculator
- Zoom-Twix enlarger
- Laptop preloaded with specialized ADA software
- Smart pens & pen supplies
- Speech-to-Text headphones (with an attached microphone)

Reading enhancement software is also loaded on all lab computers and in the Student Success (Tutoring) Center in N-119. CCTV's that allow users to change the magnification, background color, font size and that have text-to-speech features are located in the Learning Resource Center (Library) in R-107, the Student Success (Tutoring) Center in N-119 and in the Testing area. Requests for use of the CCTV for testing must be made at least 24 hours in advance. Use of CCTV's in all areas is available on a first-come-first-served basis.

What if I have food allergies or require a special diet?

The campus cafeteria offers a number of food options. Please alert the cafeteria manager about any specific dietary needs. If a viable option is not available through the cafeteria, immediately contact the Special Services Advisor located in M-154.

Is there accessible parking on campus?

Students who need to park in accessible spaces on campus must display a current campus parking sticker and a temporary or permanent indicator of disability which may be obtained from the Department of Motor Vehicles. All accessible spaces, including those in faculty and staff lots, are available to be used with these two indicators. Students with disability parking stickers may not park in reserved spaces.



Service and Comfort Animals

Service Animals:

Am I required to register my service animal?

No. Service animals are allowed on campus when they are trained to perform specific work and tasks including, but not limited to:

1. Providing guidance for individuals who are visually impaired.
2. Alerting individuals to the presence of allergens.
3. Helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors

It is highly recommended however, that students notify the Special Services Advisor if their service animal will be on campus. Notification allows the Special Services Advisor an opportunity to address classroom set-up requirements (if any) that may be needed to accommodate the animal and it allows the Special Services Advisor an opportunity to describe additional services, auxiliary aids and academic adjustments that may be available.

According to the Department of Justice, (DOJ), a person with a disability cannot be asked to remove a service animal from the premises unless:

1. The animal is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it.
2. The animal is not housebroken.
3. The animal poses a direct threat.

EXCEPTION: MINIATURE HORSE SERVICE ANIMALS

When the service animal is a miniature horse, it is highly advisable that the Special Services Advisor be given an opportunity to evaluate the environment to:

1. Assure that the animal will be safe and comfortable.
2. Assure that the animal's size does not compromise legitimate safety requirements.

A student who wishes to bring a miniature horse service animal to campus is strongly encouraged to register with the Special Services Advisor so that reasonable logistical and safety issues may be considered.

According to the Department of Justice, (DOJ), "Entities covered by the ADA must modify their policies to permit miniature horses where reasonable." The assessment factors the DOJ lists are:

1. Whether the animal is housebroken.
2. Whether the miniature horse is under the handler's control (The handler will have an opportunity to regain control unless the animal poses a threat).
3. Whether the facility can accommodate the miniature horse's type, size and weight.
4. Whether the miniature horse's presence will not compromise legitimate safety requirements necessary for safe operation of the facility.

Comfort Animals:

May I bring my comfort animal to the campus?

Generally, no. Comfort animals that are used for crime deterrence, emotional support, well-being, comfort, therapy or companionship are not considered service animals, and are generally not allowed on campus.

Student housing facilities, under the Fair Housing Act, are the only locations on campus that do allow comfort animals. In order for a student to keep a comfort animal in student housing, the student must:

1. Register with the Special Services Advisor.
2. Provide documentation from a medical professional that the animal is medically required.
3. Medical professionals must see the student in-person. Online 'certifications' for comfort animals will not be accepted if they are obtained through medical personnel or others who have never seen the student in person.

Approved comfort animals that are allowed in student housing facilities may be excluded if:

- a. The animal is out of control (The handler will have an opportunity to regain control unless the animal poses a threat).
- b. The animal is not housebroken.
- c. The animal poses a direct threat.



Powered Mobility Devices

May I use my mobility device (powered wheel chairs, Segways®, etc.) on campus?

Yes. However, if the need for the mobility device is not readily observable to a member of the college administration, staff or faculty, the user may be asked to provide credible assurance to the Special Services Advisor that using the device on campus is necessary because of a disability. Forms of credible assurance may include:

1. A valid state-issued disability parking placard or card
2. State-issued proof of a disability
3. A verbal representation not contradicted by observable fact

According to the Department of Justice, the following factors determine whether a particular power-driven mobility device is allowed:

1. Characteristics of the vehicle (e.g., size, weight, speed, etc.)
2. Volume of pedestrian traffic within the facility
3. Facility's design and operational status (including the ability to store the device)
4. Whether legitimate safety requirements can be established to govern the safe operation of the device
5. Whether the use of the mobility device poses a substantial risk of serious harm to the immediate environment or others

It is highly advisable that mobility devices other than wheelchairs be evaluated based on the criteria above. Contact the Special Services Advisor for further information.

Testing

How do I arrange for testing adjustments/auxiliary aids for tests?

Requests for testing adjustments and/or the use of auxiliary aids should be made at the time of registration with the Special Service Office or as soon as possible thereafter.

- Extended time requests must be made at least 2 business days prior to the quiz or test so that the Testing Center and the instructor have time to arrange the special testing.
- Requests for scribes/readers must be made at least 7 days in advance of the test date.
- Individual adjustments may vary in time requirements.
- A distraction-reduced adjustment may be provided in the Testing Center or another location.
- Print disability software adjustments require that the student be familiar with the software. Test proctors cannot train students on how to use the software. Requests for print disability software must be made at least 5 working days in advance of a quiz or test.
- Scribe or reader requests should be made at least 5 days in advance of the quiz or test.
- Color overlays are allowed for tests and quizzes with documentation of a print disability. The testing proctors may examine the overlay prior to allowing a student to use it during testing.

It is important when making requests for specialized testing to allow enough time for the institution to prepare and arrange the adjustments. Please note that academic adjustments and auxiliary aids for testing may require notification to multiple departments on campus or outside agencies. Timeliness is essential to student success.

May I take my test any time during the day it is provided to the class?

Generally, No. Adjusted tests and/or quizzes are normally scheduled at the same time that the test or quiz is scheduled for the class. The Special Services Advisor and the Testing Center require written approval from the instructor for students to test at a different time.

How do I request academic adjustments/auxiliary aids for professional state certification or licensure exams with outside testing agencies?

Outside tests such as College Board®, CLEP®, state certification testing companies, licensure exams and others are handled on a case by case basis in accordance with the testing company's requirements for specialized testing.

It is the student's responsibility to contact the testing company to initiate the testing accommodation process with outside testing agencies. At the student's request, the GC Special Services Advisor may act as a liaison between the student and the outside testing agency. Reasonable notification (at least 5 working days in advance) to the GC Special Services Office is required when the student intends to utilize the Galveston College Testing Center for a third-party accommodated test.

Often, standardized testing companies require that either the student or the Special Services Advisor send the student's documentation directly to the company that owns the test. Once submitted, a panel of experts who are chosen by the testing company will review all academic adjustment requests. The panel decides which, if any, academic adjustments/auxiliary aids will be allowed during testing.

NOTE: Due to many testing companies' expert review requirements, requests to the company for academic adjustments/auxiliary aids should be made at least 2-3 months prior to the expected testing date.

Once the outside review has occurred, and if the student is approved by the outside testing company to receive academic adjustments/auxiliary aids, the *student must notify the Galveston College Special Services Office with written documentation of the test accommodation approval at least 10 working days prior to the date of the test.*

As stated above, the Special Services Advisor may assist and support a student who is seeking accommodations on a test from an outside entity. However, the outside testing companies are third-party entities who are utilizing the Galveston College Testing Center. The GC Testing Center must remain in compliance with all Galveston College policies and procedures as required to remain in good standing as a certified testing facility.

May I receive academic adjustments/auxiliary aids for placement testing (TSI)?

Students requesting academic adjustments/auxiliary aids for the TSI® must register the request with the Special Services Advisor. Students who qualify to receive academic adjustments/auxiliary aids will work with the Advisor to coordinate testing adjustments with the Testing Center. It can take time to process the request. All documentation and registration paperwork must be submitted at least 48 hours in advance of the testing date. The TSI® is a diagnostic test for reading, writing and math and is not timed, so a request for extended time for the TSI is not necessary.



CONFIDENTIALITY

Is my disability information confidential?

Academic transcripts do not contain information regarding students' interactions with the Special Services Office. The student's Academic Advisement/Auxiliary Aid Adjustment letter (that instructors receive) only lists the required classroom adjustments, not diagnostic information.

Students must sign a "Consent for Release of Information" form www.gc.edu and a FERPA release form (available through the Admissions Office) in order for confidential information to be shared with others. FERPA guidelines, in special circumstances, do allow necessary communication with other College employees. The Special Services Advisor cannot share with an outside party without the student's written consent.

Exception: When sharing of Special Services records is required by law.

How are my special services records stored and maintained?

All records by Special Services records are maintained in a confidential file that is kept in the Special Services Office. Special Services records are retained throughout the student's tenure with the College. Special Services records are kept for five years following the student's graduation or exit from the College and/or five years after the student's last interaction with the Special Services Office. After five years of inactivity, all special services records will be destroyed.

Are other people allowed to communicate on my behalf?

All students may request specific information about their disability or academic progress to be shared with a third party. To release academic information such as attendance and grades, students must sign a FERPA release that remains on file in the Admissions Office. To share special services information, students must also sign a Consent for Release of Information form located at www.gc.edu or in M-150. Information shared with third parties about the student's special services needs will be limited to specific information listed on the signed releases.

Requests made to instructors regarding coursework should come from the student and conferences about the student's course progress should take place with the student present. Third parties may not 'stand in' for the student in ongoing discussions, emails or other communications with instructors, unless there are extenuating circumstances such as a hospitalization or other severe health issues. Instructors will not correspond only with a parent or a private tutor on an ongoing basis without the student's active participation in those discussions. Third parties may not be a student representative or act continuously on the student's behalf.



Special Services Student Rights and Responsibilities

What are my responsibilities?

Students are responsible for using academic adjustments/auxiliary aids appropriately in all circumstances. Responsible use of academic adjustments/auxiliary aids includes but is not limited to the following:

1. Submit acceptable documentation of the disability to the Special Services Office in a timely manner.
2. Meet with the Special Services Counselor and/or your Academic Advisor to select classes and plan your academic program.
3. Submit requests for academic adjustments/auxiliary aids well in advance of the start date for the requested adjustment.
4. Complete an Academic Adjustment/Auxiliary Aid Agreement letter with the Special Services Counselor prior to the start of classes each semester when possible.
5. Meet with your instructors at least 48 hours in advance of scheduled quizzes/tests to establish the procedure for your adjustment(s).
6. Return instructor signed copies of the current semester Academic Adjustment/Auxiliary Aid Agreement letter to the Special Services Office.
7. Request changes in writing to the Agreement from the Special Services Office.

Instructors may not make changes to the Academic Adjustment/Auxiliary Aid Agreement Letter. All changes must be made through the Special Services Office.

Special Services Guidelines and Information

8. Notify the instructor and the Special Services Advisor in writing at least 48 hours in advance if you decide not to use academic adjustments that are already in place.
9. Do not share recordings or materials obtained as academic adjustments.
10. Keep all loaned equipment clean, undamaged, and return it by the deadline.



Student and Faculty Special Services Appeal Process

What is the appeal process for students?

The Special Services Advisor implements provisions of Section 504 on behalf of students. Galveston College will work with any student to eliminate discrimination and establish equal opportunity. Students may appeal decisions by following the student complaint and/or discrimination appeal process outlined in the Galveston College Catalog (www.gc.edu) and the Student Handbook (www.gc.edu).

May faculty members dispute or refuse to provide the adjustments listed on the completed agreement letter?

Faculty members have the right to appeal any adjustments/aids that are listed on the Academic Adjustment/Auxiliary Aid Agreement letter. The process for faculty appeal begins with the Special Services Advisor and the Counseling and Advisement Center. The Special Services Advisor will act as a liaison between the student and the faculty member to resolve the issue. However, if an agreement cannot be reached, the faculty appeal will continue to move through the appeal process until a final decision is rendered by the Appeals Committee.

Faculty members are expected to provide the adjustment throughout the appeal process. If current academic adjustments are not being provided in any courses, contact the Student Services Advisor immediately at 409-944-1220 or go to M-154.