



## **ACCOMMODATION POLICIES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 state that qualified students with disabilities who meet the technical and academic standards of Orion College may be entitled to reasonable accommodations to foster their academic success. Under these laws a disability is defined as any physical or mental impairment which substantially limits a major life activity. It is Orion College's intention to provide equal access to education so that all students have the opportunity to participate in our academic offerings. The ADA ensures access to all aspects of the academic arena and mandates that auxiliary aids and services be provided to students unless these accommodations place an undue hardship (defined as significantly difficult or expensive) upon the institution.

The ADA requires that each student be professionally assessed to determine whether or not a disability exists. The student is responsible for the cost of this assessment. It is also the student's responsibility to provide the appropriate documentation and to request adjustments/accommodations and services as recommended by their professional assessment. The College may request specific professional credentials for the required assessments.

The law regarding reasonable adjustments/accommodations is meant to allow students with a disability to be on an equal playing field with their nondisabled classmates.

Adjustments/accommodations must be made without affecting the integrity of the school's academic programs. Orion College is committed to enable qualified students to participate in our academic offerings.

Students who desire special adjustments/accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act must disclose their special needs with their Admissions Representative at the time of their enrollment. When feasible, OC will make accommodations as suggested in the student's required professional assessment.

The student has the right to file a written complaint to the ADA Committee if they feel that Orion College (OC) has not complied with the American Disabilities Act/Rehabilitation Act. The student may then file a grievance with Orion College if they believe that the College has not followed its policies. Please see the Catalog for the grievance procedure.

It is expected that students claiming a disability actively communicate their needs with their Admissions Representative. The applicant should inform the College of his/her disability upon enrollment in order to allow the school time to investigate the applicant's needs, make a judgment regarding the feasibility of accommodations, and to carry through with these adjustments. It is a requirement that the applicant must have completed all parts of the enrollment process and paid the enrollment fees prior to requesting accommodations/adjustments. The applicant will be asked to meet with the ADA Committee if they express concern regarding their requested accommodations and they have not yet completed the enrollment process. It is important to be forthcoming regarding requests for accommodations in order to avoid delays in decision making and follow through.

The prospective student is responsible for communicating with the school regarding their disability. They are required to provide the College with professional diagnostic documentation from an appropriately licensed individual. This documentation should detail how the disability affects the student's participation in the academic environment, including the online environment. The ADA Committee will review the documentation and resolve whether OC can adequately meet the applicant/student's needs by making the requested accommodations without forfeiting the school's academic integrity.

All information regarding disability is kept as confidential as permitted by law. Faculty members will be informed if it is necessary for their providing appropriate adjustments/accommodations to the student. The student will be required to give authorization for release of diagnostic information. Such information may be released, however, should the student proceed with a grievance.

Students who are not requesting an adjustment/accommodation but state that they do have a disability, should complete a Waiver of Adjustments/Accommodations form within the first two

weeks of their enrollment or within two weeks of being diagnosed. This form should be submitted to the Dean of Academics and will be maintained in the student's file.

### **ACADEMIC ADJUSTMENT/ACCOMMODATION PROCEDURES**

1. In addition to the required disability documentation, the following forms must be completed within the first two weeks of enrollment or within two weeks of being diagnosed with a disability (all signed forms must be released to the Dean of Academics):

- a. Disability Registration
- b. Statement of Confidentiality
- c. Adjustments/Accommodations Request Form

2. Within two weeks of receipt, the ADA Committee will review all documentation and make a decision whether OC can meet the student's needs through the requested accommodations.

The Dean of Academics will retain a copy of all relevant documentation in the student's file.

3. The student will be notified in writing regarding the outcome of this decision.

If the student has not submitted sufficient documentation to be granted accommodations, they are able to resubmit once they have all required documents.

4. If approved for accommodations, the Dean will speak with the current Instructor to ensure adjustments/accommodations are made. These adjustments/accommodations will be listed on the Approved Adjustments/Accommodations Form. The Dean will communicate with each new instructor and a new Approved Adjustments/Accommodations form will be completed as needed.

5. If it is determined that the student is ineligible for adjustments/accommodations they may file a grievance with OC. The grievance procedures are described in the OC catalog.

### **CRITERIA FOR DISABILITY DOCUMENTATION**

It is the student's responsibility to provide appropriate documentation to the ADA Committee for requesting adjustments/accommodations within the academic setting. Appropriate documentation is defined as inclusive of the following:

An evaluation report from a licensed treating medical doctor, mental health professional or other licensed professional as appropriate, which must include:

1. Stated diagnosis
2. Defined levels of functioning and any limitations on student's academic performance caused by the disability
3. Current treatment
4. Official letter (on letterhead from professional; signed and dated within one year of date of request) stating specific recommended accommodations/adjustments.