



# South Plains College

## Disability Services

Student Health & Wellness Department

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1401 S. College Avenue - Box 176 - Levelland, Texas 79336 - (806) 716-2577 – Fax (806) 894-7961  
819 Gilbert Drive, Room 805 - Lubbock, Texas 79416 - (806) 716-4675 – Fax (806) 716-4731

## Student Handbook

It is strongly recommended that all students who are registered or considering becoming registered with Disability Services read this handbook. It includes information on the following topics: how to register as a student with a disability, how to start using your approved accommodations, rights & responsibilities, and important tips to ensure continuation of eligibility and timely implementation of accommodations.

### ACADEMIC SERVICES

Students are encouraged to meet with Student Disability Services Office to begin the accommodation planning process and make arrangements to secure services. Verified students with disabilities are provided with accommodations that may include volunteer note-takers, testing accommodations, interpreters, electronic textbooks, and other accommodations necessary to allow full access to the educational opportunities offered at SPC.

### HOW TO REGISTER & REQUEST ACCOMMODATIONS

South Plains College's Student Disability Services Office is committed to providing a welcoming and helpful service to SPC students with disabilities and we make every effort to respond to student requests as soon as possible. However, it takes time to arrange for accommodations and students must allow enough time for us to make the necessary arrangements. All accommodations must first be approved by submitting an application and proper professional documentation of a disability.

*Once approved you will be notified in writing to make an appointment for your "initial meeting" and to pick up your Letters of Accommodation. (You must have a class schedule before picking up your LOA's).*

## STEPS TO REGISTER & REQUEST ACCOMMODATIONS

All admitted students with disabilities who wish to receive accommodations must initiate the registration process by contacting the Student Disability Services Office. You will be asked to complete an Application for Accommodations and supply appropriate professional documentation regarding your disability.

Only after both the application and documentation are received, can we process your request for classroom accommodations. **Please allow up to 30 days.**

1. **Application:** <http://www.southplainscollege.edu/information-for/future-spc-students/special-services.php> or at <https://myspc.southplainscollege.edu/ICS/Students/FYI/>
2. Take the TSI Exam if required, then and register for classes with your Advisor as soon as possible.
3. Arrange a tour of the campus as soon as you have a class schedule (806-716-2113). South Plains College does not have individuals available the first week of class to walk students to their classes.
4. E-Books: If alternative textbooks and materials are needed by the student, it is the responsibility of the student to register early and to provide the Disability Office with a copy of the receipt from the bookstore. Ordering E-Books may take 4-6 weeks to receive.
5. Sign Language Interpreters: If a sign language interpreter is required, it is the student's responsibility to register early and to request interpreters through the Student Disability Office to facilitate the coordination of available qualified interpreters with the student's schedule.

### Requesting services in future semesters

Before the start of each subsequent semester, students with disabilities must inform the Student Disability Services Office that they wish to continue to receive accommodations by filling out the LOA request form (half orange sheet available at both offices).

Levelland Campus – 806-716-2577  
Linda Young  
[lyoung@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:lyoung@southplainscollege.edu)

Reese Center- 806-716-4675  
Dawn Valles  
[dvalles@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:dvalles@southplainscollege.edu)

## IMPLEMENTING APPROVED ACCOMMODATIONS

1. After you have received written confirmation through email that you have been approved for services and only after you have enrolled in courses, you should schedule an appointment at the appropriate campus to meet with the Coordinator of Student Disability Services or the Disability Accommodation Specialist to set up your initial meeting.
2. During your initial meeting with the Student Disability Office, you will receive your Letters of Accommodation. Students should speak with each instructor privately during the first week of class or as soon as possible after accommodations are approved to discuss accommodations in their course and make specific plans for their implementation. Should your accommodations need to be altered or updated contact the Office of Student Disability Services be prepared to discuss justifications and scenarios for this adjustment. These accommodations will be forwarded after approval and will take effect from that date forward, not retroactively.
3. Communicate Your Concerns. Keep in mind that communication between the student, instructor, and Student Disability Services Staff is critical to making the accommodation process work. If conflicts occur in the accommodations process, students are asked to inform the Office of Student Disability Services right away.
4. Test accommodations should be discussed well in advance of the test date. Accommodated exams may be proctored by the instructor, the instructor's designee or by Testing Center staff members. Students with test accommodations are strongly encouraged to review and be familiar with the Testing Center Guidelines and be sure to make appointments at the Testing Center at least three to five days in advance.
5. Make Requests in Advance. Some accommodations require more time to implement and, therefore, require more advanced notice. This includes sign language interpreters, and conversion of textbooks to alternate formats.

## CONFIDENTIALITY AND RELEASE OF INFORMATION

The Student Disability Office is committed to protecting the confidentiality of student information. We retain student records in compliance with both state and federal law, including the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). Should you need a copy of your records or need to transfer them to another college or university, you will need to complete a "Release of Information" form with appropriate contact information in order for our office to expedite your request. In addition, photo identification is required before records can be released.

## Office of Student Disability Services Responsibilities

Provide information and services so that students with disabilities may participate in all of the programs, services, and activities of the institution.

Provide services in a timely fashion.

Review documentation of a disability for eligibility and determine on behalf of the institution what types of accommodations are appropriate.

Keep disability-related information confidential, discussing it only with those who have an educational right to know.

Consult with college administration, faculty, and staff on the provision of services, accommodations, and access as required under current federal and state law.

Advocate responsibly for the rights of persons with disabilities.

## Student Responsibilities

Voluntarily identify disability-related needs to the Office of Student Disability Services Staff.

Provide current and complete documentation of disability to the ODS.

Formally request needed accommodations and services in a timely manner.

Notify the ODS of any changes or concerns in needed services or accommodations.

Abide by the student code of conduct set by the college.

Attend class and maintain the academic standards set by the college, and the department.

Use services responsibly and treat service providers and faculty with respect and courtesy.

## Institutional Responsibilities

Provide a campus in which educational, cultural, and extracurricular activities are accessible.

Create policies that encourage the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all programs and activities.

Provide a process so students with disabilities may address their grievances with the institution and the office(s) that provide services.

## PERSONAL AND HEALTH CARE

Fully accredited health care is available on campus through Student Health Services. The Student Health Services office is located on the South side of the Technology Center. A Physician and a registered nurse are available during the spring and fall semesters.

Mental health professionals are available at the Health & Wellness Office during regular business hours. Services provided by the Health & Wellness Office include short-term personal counseling. The Center is staffed by Licensed Mental Health Practitioners and occasionally Graduate Assistants.

Students who require a personal care attendant are responsible for arranging these services and incurring the costs of this services.

## ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Assistive hardware, software, and alternative material are available to students with disabilities who qualify for those accommodations. Contact the Office of Student Disability Services to request assistive technology.

## INTERPRETER SERVICES

Requests for interpreter services should be completed immediately following your registration for classes in order to assure this accommodation is provided on the first day of class. You may make your request for these services in person by phone or by email. Students are required to notify the Disability Office by email or phone at least 24 hours in advance if they intend to miss class. You must also notify the Student Disability Office in person, by phone or email if interpreter services are needed outside the classroom: (3-day notice for field trip, tutoring sessions or the need to visit with another office for information).

## SERVICE ANIMALS

**Service animals are dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Service animals are permitted in every area on campus unless posted due to safety concerns.** Students with Service Animals are **NOT** required to register with the Disability Services office, but notification is recommended. The ADA requires service animals be under the control of the handler. This can occur using a harness, leash, or other tether. It is suggested that the service animal also wear identification (e.g. identification tags, vest, bandana, etc.). When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, only limited inquiries are allowed. Staff may ask two questions: (1) is the dog a service animal required because of a disability, and (2) what work or task has the dog been trained to perform. Staff are not allowed to ask the student to have the animal perform the task.

The following guidelines are required for service animals on campus:

- The service animal must be vaccinated and licensed according to local or county ordinances.
- Animals must be under the control of the owner at all times.
- The owner is responsible for waste disposal.

A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove his/her service animal from the premises unless: (1) the dog is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it or (2) the dog is not housebroken. When there is a legitimate reason to ask that a service animal be removed, staff must offer the person with the disability the opportunity to obtain goods or services without the animal's presence.

## **Emotional Support Animals (ESA)**

Emotional support animals are used in the treatment of a diagnosed condition. ESAs are not allowed in campus buildings with the exception of student housing. Refer to the Service Animal and ESA Housing Procedures for further information.

*\*All Emotional Support Animal requests must be submitted to the Disability Services Office on the Levelland Campus. Only after the Disability Office has approved the accommodation of an Emotional Support Animal and required documentation is provided to the Housing Office can the student bring the animal to campus housing.*

## **ADVOCACY**

The Office of Student Disability Services staff assists students in negotiating disability-related barriers and strive to improve access to college programs, activities, and facilities. Students who wish to voice concerns or discuss campus access, policies and procedures are encouraged to contact the Office of Student Disability Services Coordinator, Dawn Valles at (806) 716-4675 or at [dvalles@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:dvalles@southplainscollege.edu)

## **DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Procedures are in place for those who believe they have been discriminated against within the college's prohibited discrimination policy. You may contact the Vice President for Student Affairs at 806-716-2360.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Refer to Campus Emergency Procedures at:

[https://myspc.southplainscollege.edu/ICS/Safety\\_and\\_Health/Emergency\\_Procedures.jnz](https://myspc.southplainscollege.edu/ICS/Safety_and_Health/Emergency_Procedures.jnz)

## DIFFERENCES YOU CAN EXPECT BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Applicable Laws	
High School	College
IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)	ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Title 11)
Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973	Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973
IDEA is about SUCCESS	ADA is about ACCESS
Required Documentation	
High School	College
IEP (Individualized Education Plan) and/or 504 Plan	High School IEP and 504 are not sufficient. Documentation guidelines specify information needed for each category of disability.
School provides evaluation at no cost to student or family	Students must get evaluation at own expense.
Documentation focuses on determining whether student is eligible for services based on specific disability categories in IDEA	Documentation must provide information on specific functional limitations, and demonstrate the need for specific accommodations.



**Self-Advocacy**

<b>High School</b>	<b>College</b>
Students is identified by the school and is supported by parents and teachers	Student must self-identify to the Disability Office.
Primary responsibility for arranging accommodations belongs to the school.	Primary responsibility for self-advocacy and arranging accommodations belongs to the student.
Teachers approach you if they believe you need assistance.	Professors are usually open and helpful, but most expect you to initiate contact if you need assistance.

**Parental Role**

<b>High School</b>	<b>College</b>
Parent has access to student records and can participate in the accommodation process.	Parent does not have access to student records without student's written consent.
Parent advocates for student	Student advocates for self

**Instruction**

<b>High School</b>	<b>College</b>
Teachers may modify curriculum and/or alter curriculum pace of assignments	Professors are <b>not required</b> to modify instruction or alter assignment deadlines.
You are expected to read short assignments that are then discussed and often re-taught in class.	You are assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing that may not be directly addressed in class.
You seldom need to read anything more than once; sometimes listening in class is enough.	You need to review class notes, read chapters in textbooks and other material regularly.

**Grades and Tests**

<b>High School</b>	<b>College</b>
IEP OR 504 Plan may include modifications to test format and/or grading.	Grading and test format changes (i.e. multiple choice vs. essay) are generally not available.
<b>Tests may be untimed.</b>	All students are required to complete exams within the specified classroom time or as specified by the professor.  (Students that are granted extended time due to their documented disability, are only allowed 50% or 100% more time). (Example: Students in class receive 1 hour to complete exam – you receive 1.5 hrs. to complete exam – 50%)
Testing is frequent and covers small amounts of material.	Testing is usually infrequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material.  (In most classes you can expect 3 or 4 exams during the semester (16 weeks period) and a comprehensive final)
Teachers often take time to remind you of assignments and due dates.	Professors expect you to read, save, and consult the course syllabus (outline); the syllabus spells out exactly what is expected of you, when it is due, and how you will be graded.  Student's awarded 50% more time on work <u>done in class</u> – DOES NOT APPLY TO HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS or TAKE HOME EXAMS.
<b><u>FINAL COURSE GRADE</u></b>  In high school you usually have 50-70 grades to average for your final grade.	<b><u>FINAL COURSE GRADE</u></b>  In college, you may only have 3 test grades and a final that could be worth up to 50% of your course grade.

### Study Responsibilities

High School	College
Tutoring and study support may be a service provided as part of an IEP or 504 Plan.	Tutoring <u>DOES NOT</u> fall under college disability services. Students with disabilities must seek out the tutoring resources that are available to all SPC students.
Your time and assignments are structured by others.	You manage your own time and complete assignments independently.
You may study outside of class as little as 0 to 2 hours a week, and this may be mostly last minute preparation.	You need to study at least 2 to 3 hours outside of class for each hour in class.  15 hour course load means that you are in class for 15 each week x 2 to 3 hours of study time = 30 to 45 hours per week. This is equivalent to a full-time job.

### Auxiliary Aids

You must be granted approval from the Disability Services Office to use these Accommodations:

**Tape/Voice Recorder** – Can be used to tape college lectures

**Spell Checker** – Can be used for spelling. Cannot be used in an ENGL-0301, 0302 or ENGL-1301 course where use of spelling and grammar are part of the essential course element or objective.

## ACCOMMODATIONS: WHAT THEY ARE AND WHAT THEY ARE NOT

Accommodations are provided for the purpose of **ensuring equal access** to an education. They are **not** a guarantee of a certain grade or of success in a particular class; rather, they are intended to **“level the playing field”** for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are expected to fulfill all academic and course requirements and evaluation standards, as is expected of all students.

Accommodations are approved on a **case-by-case** basis. They are assigned depending on the documentation that each student submits, the impact of each student’s disorder, and our conversations with each student regarding his/her strengths, weaknesses, and needs. An accommodation which is reasonable in one class may not be reasonable in another.

**No accommodation will be provided if it compromises or alters essential elements or evaluation standards of a course or program of study.**

Accommodations are considered to be **classroom supplements**. They are **NOT** intended to replace regular classroom attendance or participation.

**Accommodations are NOT provided retroactively.** The Student Disability Services Office is unable to provide accommodations for academic work completed before the student is approved for accommodations or before the student requests accommodations each semester. Therefore it is **imperative** that you request accommodations as early in the semester as possible.

Students must renew their accommodations each semester. This is a simple process. A renewal form is available in the Student Disability Services Office.

## Accommodations in Higher Education

### **Accommodations cannot:**

- Reduce assignments
  - Ignore attendance policies
  - Alter course material
  - Allow a student to turn in assignments late
  - Alter testing methods
  - Provide options for students to not be penalized for spelling errors, if this is an integral component of the course
  - Affect the integrity of the course in any way
  - Allow an accommodation where the course objective is compromised because of the accommodation
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- South Plains College is not required to provide a personal attendant, individually prescribe devices, readers or scribes for personal use, homework assignments or study, or other devices or services or a personal nature, such as tutoring or typing.
  - Students must seek out their own tutors.
  - South Plains College is not required to provide transportation to or from class – or – to or from dorm to class, - or – to or from your residence to the campus.

### **Acceptance into Specific Programs (Nursing, Radiology, Physical Therapy Assistant, etc.)**

In the case of a qualified individual with a documented disability, appropriate and reasonable accommodations will be made unless to do so would fundamentally alter the essential training elements, cause undue hardship, or produce a direct threat to the safety of the patient or student. Students should visit with the specific Program Advisor to determine their eligibility to meet technical requirements and essential elements of the program.

South Plains College shall not discriminate based upon age, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, gender-identity, sex, pregnancy, disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran's status, marital status, religion, or political affiliation