



*Office of Disability
Services*

Student Handbook



OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES

1000 Morris Ave Union NJ 07083 TEL: (908) 737-4910 FAX: (908) 737-4865 EMAIL: disabilityservices@kean.edu

Dear Student:

Welcome to the Office of Disability Services. Our staff is committed to providing the support and services needed to allow you the opportunity to participate in the rich and varied life at Kean University.

We want to get to know you personally while you are a student at Kean and hope that you will view your interactions with the Office of Disability Services as a collaborative exchange. We will work together so that the services offered meet your needs. This is a shared responsibility. We are most effective when we are alerted to problems early on. Knowing about a problem, and your thoughts on possible solutions, enables us to work with you towards a successful resolution. So let us know, good or bad, how things are going.

This manual is a guide to ease your academic experience, not a rulebook. Read it, and keep it handy as a reference. If an issue arises that is unclear or not covered here, please contact one of our staff members. We work hard to make our services and policies “user-friendly” and are always open to your ideas and suggestions for improvements.

All of us at the Office of Disability Services wish you success in your academic and non-academic pursuits!

Sincerely,

Donna Dingle
Managing Assistant Director
2017-2018

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Introduction and Mission

This manual is provided to students with disabilities as a resource and implementation guide addressing accommodations, accessibility, and other services at Kean University (KU). In using this guide, students will become acquainted with the services provided by the Office of Disability Services (ODS) and the procedures they need to follow to access them. This publication describes the services and accommodations, which may be arranged for persons with disabilities, by Kean University's Office of Disability Services.

KU is committed to the full inclusion and equal educational opportunity for all persons with disabilities. Equal educational opportunity means that a person with a disability, who is qualified for admission, must have access to the same university programs, services, and activities as all other students. KU adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in 1998, and applicable state law. The laws require that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of this institution's classes, programs, services or facilities. The University will make reasonable modifications and accommodations, to the extent such modifications are necessary, to accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities. Academic accommodations are designed to provide equal access to course content while maintaining the academic standards of the class. The University may deny an accommodation, academic adjustment or request for assistive technology, if the modification fundamentally alters an academic program or standards.

ODS has been charged by the University to provide students, faculty, and staff with assistance and information on issues of access and full participation for persons with disabilities at KU. ODS is committed to providing equal educational opportunities and academic accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

In order to respect the independence, rights, and dignity of persons with disabilities, the University initiates services only after the voluntary disclosure of a disability, submission of necessary documentation for verification, and a request for accommodations.

Students with disabilities are required to obtain new Letters of Accommodations at the start of each academic semester.

Confidentiality

ODS is Kean University's agent responsible for collecting and maintaining disability documentation for our registered students. This information is handled under strict rules of confidentiality and is kept in a secure file with limited access. Information will be shared only on a limited basis within the institutional community and only when there is a compelling reason.

Confidentiality is not maintained when there is a threat to an individual's safety and/or an emergency situation. In addition confidentiality is also not maintained in cases of suspected child and/or elder abuse, or if ordered by a court of law. Information may also be released without the student's permission if necessary to assist with the accommodation process. Circumstances that may warrant such disclosure may include (but are not limited to):

- Assisting students with requests to the Deans office;
- Special circumstances in housing;
- Special financial aid considerations;
- Grievance procedures

Retention of Student Files

A confidential file is maintained on each student that includes documentation of the disability, approved accommodations, a record of each contact and action taken. Students' records will be destroyed two years after the last contact, but ODS maintains a record of each student, their dates of contact with the office, and approved accommodations.

Rights and Responsibilities

Every student with a documented disability at Kean University has the right to:

- ✓ Equal access to courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities offered at KU;
- ✓ Reasonable and effective accommodations as determined for each individual, including academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services;
- ✓ Appropriate confidentiality of all information regarding their disability and a choice as to whom, outside of KU, information about their disability may be disclosed, except as disclosures are required or permitted by law or legitimate educational need;
- ✓ Appeal the institution's decisions concerning accommodations. This may be done by following the procedures outlined in the Complaint and Grievance section of this Student Manual;
- ✓ Information and course materials available in alternative formats, based on their documented needs.

Every student with a disability has the responsibility to:

- ✓ Provide current documentation that verifies the disability, functional limitations, and the need for accommodations;
- ✓ Meet qualifications and maintain essential institutional standards for courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities;
- ✓ Follow procedures for obtaining reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services as soon as the relevant course information is available;
- ✓ Self-identify as an individual with a disability when an accommodation is necessary and to seek information, tutoring, counseling, and assistance as necessary.
- ✓ Request new Letters of Accommodation from ODS each semester if accommodations are needed.

Rights and Responsibilities (continued)

KU has the right to:

- Maintain its academic standards;
- Request and receive, through ODS, current documentation (generally 3-5 years old) that supports any request for accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services;
- Identify and establish essential functions, abilities, skills, knowledge, and standards for courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and the use of facilities; and to evaluate students on this basis;
- Deny any request for accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services if the individual fails to provide appropriate documentation in a timely manner or if the documentation provided demonstrates that the request is not warranted;
- Select among equally effective accommodations, adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services in consultation with the student;
- Refuse an accommodation, adjustment, and/or auxiliary aid and service as unreasonable.

Every faculty member has the responsibility to:

- Assure the confidentiality and privacy of all information regarding students with disabilities;
- Discuss with ODS any concerns related to the accommodation(s) or arrangements that have been requested by the student during their initial contact;
- Provide appropriate accommodations to students who have provided them with a current Letter of Accommodation, either personally or by making arrangements with ODS;
- Determine the conditions under which an exam is to be administered (e.g., open book, use of notes, computer with word processing including spell check, formula sheet, calculator, scrap paper, dictionary, etc.);
- Assure the timely delivery of the exam, along with all necessary instructions and materials for proper administration, if a student's exam is to be administered outside of class.

Requesting Services

New Registration

Students who are seeking support services are required to submit an *Intake Application* and current documentation to verify eligibility as defined under applicable law. To meet this requirement, documentation must be dated within the last five years and address a present need for accommodations. Educational and Psychological Evaluations and/or detailed medical documentation is required. School plans themselves, such as Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) or 504 Plans, are **insufficient** documentation. *Medical Verification* forms are available for completion by the appropriate doctor or professional. (all forms are located on our website)

Required documentation should be submitted to:

ATTN: Donna Dingle
Office of Disability Services
Kean University
1000 Morris Ave Downs Hall Room 122
Union, NJ 07083

Fax: 908-737-4865
Email: disabilityservices@kean.edu

Once the student has submitted the necessary documentation he/she should schedule an intake meeting with ODS. The intake meeting will evaluate the necessity of accommodations based on the specifics of the disability, discuss campus resources that may be helpful, and review student policies and procedures for maintaining registration with ODS. Once accommodations are determined, a Letter of Accommodation is written.

Students will provide each professor with a Letter of Accommodation and have the professor sign the Signature Receipt page. This form should be returned to ODS within the first two weeks of the semester.

The student will be notified in the event that their documentation is determined to be incomplete or insufficient. ODS will not be able to approve accommodations to students who provide incomplete or insufficient documentation.

Requests for Special Accommodations

Accommodation requests for Housing, meal plan adjustments, ASL interpreters, note-sharing, ADA tables or books in alternate format must be submitted each semester by the priority date (*July 15 for Fall, December 15 for Spring*) in order for those accommodations to be in place for the start of the semester.

Temporary Injuries/Impairments

Students with temporary injuries/impairments should complete an *Intake Form* and provide medical documentation (ie: letter from doctor or *Medical Verification* form) that discusses the impairment, expected time of recovery, and recommended accommodations.

Current Students

Students who have registered with ODS in the past and completed an intake meeting, may maintain an active status each semester by submitting a class schedule from KeanWise and picking up their new accommodation letters for the upcoming semester.

If a student believes that additional accommodations are necessary, new documentation must be provided before these accommodations can be approved. If a student wishes to discontinue the use of any accommodations he/she may do so by contacting ODS.

Students registered with ODS will be allowed **Early Registration** for the next semester if they return the Signature Form signed by each professor for the current semester.

Guidelines for Documentation of Disability

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of ADHD must provide documentation from a professional who has undergone comprehensive training and has relevant experience in differential diagnosis and the full range of psychiatric disorders (e.g., psychologist, psychiatrist, neuropsychologist, and other similarly trained medical professionals).

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of a TBI must provide documentation from a professional who has undergone comprehensive training and has relevant experience in the assessment of TBIs (e.g., neuropsychologist, clinical or educational psychologist).

Blindness or Low Vision

Documentation for students requesting accommodations on the basis of low vision or blindness must include an ocular assessment or evaluation from an ophthalmologist, a low-vision evaluation of residual visual function (when appropriate), and suggestions as to what accommodations would be useful for these functional limitations.

Deaf/Hearing Impaired

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of being deaf or hearing impaired must provide an audiological evaluation and/or audiogram, an interpretation of the functional implications of the diagnostic data and hearing aid evaluation (when appropriate), and suggestions for accommodations that would be useful for these functional limitations.

Learning Disabilities

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of a specific learning disability must provide documentation from a professional who has undergone comprehensive training and has relevant experience in the assessment of learning problems (e.g. clinical or educational psychologist, school psychologist, neuropsychologist, learning disabilities specialist).

Physical mobility, Dexterity, and Chronic health-related issues

Documentation for students requesting accommodations on the basis of physical mobility, dexterity, or chronic health-related disabilities must include an identification of the disabling condition, an assessment of the functionally limiting manifestations of the condition for which accommodations are being requested, degree and range of functioning for a chronic or progressive condition, prescribed medications, dosages and schedules which may influence the types of accommodations provided, and suggestions for accommodations that would be useful for these functional limitations. This documentation must be from a professional who has undergone comprehensive training and has relevant experience in diagnosis and treatment of medical and relative disabilities.

Psychiatric Disabilities

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of a psychiatric disability must provide documentation from a professional who has undergone comprehensive training and has relevant experience in differential diagnosis and the full range of psychiatric disorders (e.g., licensed clinical social worker, psychologist, psychiatrist, neuropsychologist, or other similarly trained medical professional).

Other Disabilities

Students and postsecondary school personnel are advised to discuss the requirements of appropriate documentation for students requesting accommodations on the basis of other disabilities with postsecondary disability service providers.

Accommodation Letter Procedures

Students must come to ODS to pick up their letter packets before the start of each semester. A **Letter of Accommodation** should be given to each professor who then signs the **Receipt of Accommodations Signature Form**. The Accommodation letter contains a list of all the accommodations that have been approved for use in your classes and/or adaptive testing. The signed form must be returned to the disability office within **two weeks**.

Accommodations will not be provided **retroactively**. Students who are approved by ODS for accommodations are entitled to services from the date they present a Letter of Accommodation to their professor.

Services Provided

ODS offers several services to its students with disabilities. Eligibility for these services is determined individually based on documented need.

Services include:

- Early Registration
- New student orientation
- Assistance in setting up tutoring appointments
- Academic coaching/Mentoring
- Academic and Auxiliary Accommodations
 - Assistive Technology
 - Adaptive Testing room
 - Alternative book format
 - Note taking assistance
 - Interpreters
 - Alternative formats for printed materials from class
 - Assistive listening devices;
 - Accessible classroom equipment

Early Registration

Early registration allows students with disabilities to receive priority in registering for classes. This allows the students to access classes most suitable for their needs. It is the student's responsibility to meet with their academic advisor, and resolve restrictions or holds on their account before the announced date of early registration.

Adaptive Testing Services

Students with disabilities are eligible for test accommodations determined on an individual basis. “Test” refers to quizzes, in class essays, exams and graded assignments taken during the semester in conjunction with an academic course. Students will only be provided with approved testing accommodations as listed on their Letter of Accommodation. **** Please note: ODS must have the signed signature form before a student can use the Adaptive Testing room.**

Students are responsible for requesting test accommodations from professors a week in advance. Students who arrange with their professor to take their test/exams through ODS, should have the professor complete a *Testing Accommodation Form (yellow sheet)* and send that form along with the exam to ODS. Students must contact ODS at least 24 hours in advance to schedule a testing appointment the same day/time as their class.

Testing accommodations determined on a case-by-case basis may include:

- Extended time to complete tests;
- A distraction limited testing location;
- Special equipment such as a laptop, magnifier, or braille note;
- Use of text reading software or a reader/scribe

Students using adaptive testing services will be proctored by ODS staff. Only materials listed on the test form from the professor will be allowed into the testing room. Phones must be turned off and placed in students’ bags and all belongings must be left on the shelf in the front of the room. ODS staff are not permitted to make any changes to the test conditions or timing authorized by the professor other than approved accommodations.

Alternative Book Format

ODS has memberships with Accesstext, Bookshare, and Learning Ally for students who have difficulty with printed material and require audio textbooks. Arrangements for such accommodations must be made as early as possible. Eligibility for the service is determined on an individual basis. Students must be able to demonstrate a substantial visual or learning impairment, which requires supplemental materials (such as audio texts).

Students should buy all required books for a course then send ODS the book information along with proof of purchase. Students must provide proof of purchase before an alternative text book will be ordered.

In general, 4 weeks notice is required to obtain alternatives to textbooks.

Note sharing

Students requesting note-sharing must contact ODS no later than **15 business days** before the beginning of the semester with a copy of their class schedule. Students are responsible for notifying ODS if their notes are not satisfactory, if there is a change to their class schedule, a classroom change or if the note-taker is no longer needed. Note-takers are not considered a substitute for a student’s attendance or full participation in the class. Students who miss two or more classes, without medical documentation, may lose the services of their note-sharer.

Interpreters

At the time of registration, students requesting sign language interpreter services should give ODS a copy of their schedule of classes for which interpreting services will be needed. Students are urged to submit their schedule **30 business days prior** to the start of the semester to assure interpreters will be available for the first class. Interpreters may be available to students for classroom lectures, fieldwork, meetings with faculty members, and for any program or activity sponsored by Kean University. It is the student's responsibility to inform ODS of events requiring interpreting services as soon as possible. A minimum of **15 business days** is required to ensure the availability of interpreters.

Interpreting services are arranged through ODS. Other agencies may be called to provide interpreting services. Deaf and hard of hearing students are eligible to receive note-taking assistance. Students are asked to notify ODS or the interpreters if they are going to be late or unable to attend class so that the interpreter can be canceled for the day. Please notify ODS immediately if this service is no longer needed (ex. The class is dropped) or if the interpreter service is unsatisfactory. If a student fails to show up for a scheduled interpreter two times without calling, this accommodation may no longer be provided.

Evacuation Policy for Campus Buildings

When a fire alarm sounds in a building, disabled individuals should move to the staircase and call Campus Police to report their location. (908-737-4800) They should remain there until evacuated by Fire Department personnel or Campus Police.

Transportation and Parking Services

If a student needs to apply for a Handicap parking permit, he or she must go to their local police station to obtain a placard. KU does not provide medical or handicap parking decals. The Campus Shuttle has a handicap assessable van, the Shuttle schedule can be found online.

Complaint and Grievance Procedures

It is the policy of Kean University to comply with Section 504 Regulations adopted by the U.S. Department of Education as well as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Any student who believes there has been a violation of the Section 504 Regulations of the ADA is encouraged to first promptly discuss their concerns with the Managing Assistant Director of Disability Services. If the student's concern is about the Office of Disability Services or the Managing Assistant Director they should follow the steps below. Grievances involving the Office of Disability Services or its Managing Assistant Director should be filed within ten working days of the event or action giving rise to the grievance.

If the concerns are not resolved with the Managing Assistant Director of ODS, the student may then initiate a formal grievance by taking the following steps:

1. Prepare a written description of the facts that the student believes violate Section 504 and/or the ADA and sign it.
2. File the grievance statement with the Director of the Office of Counseling and Disability Services within ten business days of the receipt of a response from the Managing Assistant Director of Disability Services.
3. The Director of the Office of Counseling and Disability Services will conduct an investigation of the grievance and render a written decision within five business days of its receipt.
4. If the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved after step 3 above, the student may forward the original grievance with the answer received at step 3 above within three business days to the Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs. The VPSA will conduct an investigation and render a decision within five business days.
5. If the concerns are not resolved in step 4, the student may file an appeal of that decision. Upon receipt of the appeal the Vice President of Student Affairs shall convene a three-member panel comprised of one representative each from the Offices of the Vice President of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs and the Counsel to the President/Director of Affirmative Action. A hearing will be held within seven business days of receipt of the appeal. The Panel will render a decision in writing within three business days following the close of the hearing.

Deadlines may be extended if requested in writing with consent of the aggrieved student.

The Office Of Disability Services

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