Adtalem's Office of Student Disability Services

Introduction

The Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS) is a division of the Office of Nondiscrimination and Access (ONA). The OSDS serves undergraduate, graduate, professional and health sciences students across the globe.

Mission:

The mission of the OSDS is to support the achievement of superior student outcomes for all students. Our services are designed to provide students with the best academic experience and support removing boundaries and roadblocks to ensure full access and engagement in educational programs.

Vision:

The goal and ultimate vision of OSDS is barrier-free campuses where accessibility is embedded in the thread of our courses and culture and where we lead the example of student experience for all.

Welcome

If you are looking to receive services through the Office of Student Disability Services, we want to support you during this time. To start the process, email the corresponding address in the following Contact Information section relevant to your institution and program. We will provide you with the information to begin the interactive process of accommodation and may then also request a phone call for questions and introduction.

If you need to speak over Teams, we will provide a link.

If you require other accessibility needs to experience the call, please indicate that in your email.

Contact Information

American University of the Caribbean School of Medicine	aucosds@adtalem.com
Chamberlain University	chamberlainosds@adtalem.com
Medical Educational Readiness Program	merposds@adtalem.com
Ross University School of Medicine	rossmedosds@adtalem.com
Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine	rossvetosds@adtalem.com

OSDS Phone: 855.229.0848

OSDS Fax: 630.353.3991

Rights and Responsibilities

Adtalem and its institutions and program are committed to providing equal access to educational opportunities for qualified students with disabilities in accordance with government, state, and local laws as applicable to the student's program, institution, and location. All accommodations requested are reviewed on an individual basis to determine what is reasonable and appropriate. The student should understand the process is an interactive one that takes time.

Timeframe:

Students should apply as early as possible as there may be some situations where a request for accommodation is made at a point where appropriate arrangements cannot *practicably or reasonably* be made. Reviews may take a minimum of 10 *business* days once the file is determined *complete* and status updates are available in your email. Accommodations are not applied retroactively.

Students Have the Right to:

- An equitable experience to participate in their program
- An opportunity to learn and receive applicable accommodations, adjustments, aids, and services
- Confidentiality of records-except where required/permitted by law
- Information available in formats that are accessible for their needs

Students Have the Responsibility for:

- Meeting technical standards with or without accommodations
- Self-identifying when:
    - An accommodation is needed
    - When a concern arises with accommodation
- Providing documentation from a licensed physician or clinician in a field appropriate to opine on the disability in question. More specifically, the existence of a disability, how that disability limits a major life activity and how it affects participation in the program and the activity for which you are applying for accommodation.
- Following the OSDS published procedures for obtaining services and reasonable accommodations
- Respectfully interacting with colleagues in all exchanges

Accommodation Request Process

1. Email the OSDS with your intent to apply for an accommodation.
2. Indicate first and last name, institution, program, term and your preferred method of contact and any supports you require.
    a. Phone
    b. Email
    c. Teams
    d. Other-describe
3. Obtain and fill out the Student Accommodation Request Form
4. Gather the information from your physician or clinician appliable to the diagnoses for which you are applying. If there are multiple diagnoses, there may also be paperwork required from multiple specialists.

Notes Regarding the Process:

- The OSDS will determine if your request is applicable to the office and its services
    - If yes, OSDS will proceed with interactive process and review.
    - If no, OSDS will refer student to the appropriate supports and services available.
- If a student is accepted into the accommodation request process with an applicable request related to a disability, they will proceed and during the interactive process of accommodation the student can expect to get updates on status such as:
    - Incomplete- the student has not provided enough information for a decision (detailing what is missing to continue)

- In Review-the file is at a point where the Accommodation Coordinator can make a decision on the following categories for <u>each of the requests/recommendations:</u>
  - Incomplete
  - Resource already available to all students
  - Approved
  - Alternative Accommodation Provided
  - Denied
- If Approved- Notification letter sent
- If Denied-Notification letter sent and call made for additional assistance if the student wishes to speak on the phone and continue the process
- If an Alternative Accommodation is determined- Notification letter sent
- Incomplete, resource already available- email communication with details and resources

Documentation Expectations

General:

- Request form with 1-Self-report 2- applicable documentation from your physician or clinician
- Documentation from your physician or clinician must be dated within the last five years
- Diagnostic codes
- License numbers and credentials
- A licensed physician or clinician familiar with your diagnosis and history and having expertise applicable to your diagnosis
- Explanation of how your disability affects you in a major life event and subsequently relevant to your need in an academic setting
- Specific recommendations for accommodation

Supporting Documentation:

The following are types of documents that will be requested relevant to student's disability for which they are requesting accommodations. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Audiology Report
- Ocular Assessment
- Formal Diagnostic Interviews

- A Formal Assessment to include:
    - Intellectual functioning
    - Academic Achievement
    - Information processing
- Neuropsychological Assessment
- Clinical summary

Documents that Will Not be Accepted:

- Handwritten correspondence from physician or clinician
- Patient records or any charts etc. pulled off the internet
- Documentation from a member of the family or an acquaintance
- Documentation from a physician or clinician affiliated with Adtalem or its institutions
- Prescription pads as supporting documents
- Documents by professionals who do not know the student's medical history and have not made diagnosis
- Documents from physicians who do not specialize in the disability for which the accommodation is sought (ex: gynecologist for a vision request)

Services not covered under the disability-related accommodation request process*

- English as a second language
- Personal Care Attendants
- Medical devices personal to the student (glasses, hearing aids etc.)
- Personal Transportation
- Services for students who do not have a temporary or long-term disability.
- See FAQ for more information and examples.
- Pregnancy accommodations unrelated to disability
- For assistance with pregnancy and parenting, contact pregnancy.parenting@adtalem.com.
- Personal Tutoring
- Religion
- For assistance, please contact ONA@adtalem.com.

*If you would like information for what is available in your community regarding these services you may reach out to OSDS. However, please know OSDS does not recommend and are not affiliated with any of these services which may be available in the community and any responsibility would lie with the third party directly.

Student Frequently Asked Questions

- **Will my high school or previous college documents be sufficient?**

  Accommodations are determined on a case-by-case basis, however, generally speaking, OSDS will require documents relevant to your current program of study and institution.

- **What if I disagree with my Accommodation Coordinator's decision?**
  - Students will need to file an appeal- see Accommodation Decision Appeal and retrieve form from OSDS

- **Why won't you tell me what I can get for accommodations without the process or give me a list of accommodations I can apply for?**
  - OSDS reviews requests on an individual basis to customize support for students' needs.

- **What happens if I don't feel I have received my approved accommodations?**
  - Contact OSDS immediately to have a case opened for review

- **How are accommodations implemented?**
  - Students who are approved to receive accommodations are given a notification letter of approval. To utilize the accommodations, students are required to provide notification of the accommodations to the appropriate professor/instructor/department prior to their intended use. There will also be a minimum required time period for notice in order to implement the approved accommodations. For details, refer to the specifications on the letter provided.

- **Does OSDS review requests for professional testing such as NCLEX, USMLE Step 1, USMLE Step 2 CK, and USMLE Step 3, NAVLE, etc.**
  - No, those examinations are out of OSDS jurisdiction, however, we are happy to work with the student through basic questions and potentially provide supporting documents as appropriate
  - Knowing the process, timelines, and requirements to make accommodation requests for those exams is imperative. Start reviewing as soon as you begin your program to understand the process including their requirements and calendar. Here are websites for more information:
  - ▪ NCLEX
  - ▪ NAVLE
  - ▪ USMLE
  - ▪ NBME
- Additional Support document available by contacting OSDS

- **What if I have a service animal or emotional support animal? What should I know?**
    - Each of Adtalem's institutions has its own customized policy taking into account location (to include local laws and ordinances). Please refer to your institution's student handbook for the policy and specifics. Reach out to OSDS any time with questions.
        - If you are attending an institution on the islands, please know that there are restrictions on what types of animals you can bring. More information is available upon request.

- **What if my needs changed or my accommodations are not working for me? How do I request additional or alternate accommodations to what I currently have?**

    - Any student requesting new or additional accommodations should follow this process. Please complete an updated Accommodation Request Form
    - The form should state
        - Your current diagnosis
        - How the diagnosis affects your studies
        - Specific recommended changes or additions to your current accommodations
        - How those requested additional or altered accommodations will further support or address your specific needs in relation to your studies
    - Once you have all of the paperwork, please send one completed file to the Office of Student Disability Services. Documentation can be scanned in a .pdf file and emailed.

Any additional/alternative accommodations that may be provided will take effect once we have and review your paperwork and work with you to determine what accommodations are reasonable and appropriate. Your previously approved accommodations will remain in place while this review is being conducted.

- **What if my institution has housing and I need accommodations related to my disability there?**

    - On campus housing accommodations under the university's jurisdiction are reviewed by OSDS in collaboration with housing.
        - The first step is for OSDS to determine eligibility
        - All students must follow the housing deadlines and accommodations will not be applied to the term when assignments have been distributed.
        - Housing requests are constrained by space and type of housing available
        - Requests may take 2-4 weeks to process and implement after a file is complete
        - Requests will be determined for a semester or academic year and will be indicated on the notification letter
        - OSDS will not determine roommates or room locations
        - OSDS does not regulate stipends which are only available in and applicable to on campus housing.

. **What if something on the institution website is not accessible?**
    - Please report the concern to the Accessibility Specialist by emailing webaccessibility@adtalem.com with the information.

If I am dismissed or withdrawn from my program can I apply for accommodation?
    - A student must be in active student status to have an accommodation request reviewed.

If I had accommodations and went on leave, or was withdrawn, moved locations, or changed programs are my accommodations still active?
    - You will need to contact the Office of Student Disability Services to determine if you need to update your request or if your accommodations are still applicable.

What can OSDS do to support my application to USMLE?
    - Fill out the form verifying accommodations used
    - Provide the Institution's Letter
    - Provide a letter of support upon request

What do I do if I have a food allergy?
    - Contact the OSDS for accommodations, information on signage and support such as food availability on campus.

Accommodation Decision Appeal Process

Students who wish to formally appeal an accommodation decision made by the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS) must submit the required form and any necessary documentation within 10 calendar days after receiving their accommodation decision. Please fill out the form completely and accurately, as information missing from this form may delay the appeal process. Documentation must be submitted in one file to the OSDS. To appeal a decision, your appeal must meet one of the three grounds for appeal as notated in Part C of the request form 1-Procedural error by OSDS during the process that significantly impacted the outcome of the decision. 2-There is new information available that did not exist at the time of the initial request that has the potential to alter the outcome of the decision 3-There is Evidence of bias on the part of the OSDS Accommodation Coordinator that rendered the decision making it impossible to be objective.

*Please know the interactive process is still available to you, for new or alternate requests and does not apply to this process.

If it is determined that the documentation satisfies the appeal process grounds stated previously, the Manager of the OSDS or Designee will review the appeal. Please note that the review of an appeal does not guarantee a reversal of the original decision. If the appeal documentation does not satisfy the process criteria, or the student does not appeal within 10 calendar days, the appeal will be determined to be insufficient for review and the student will forfeit the right to an appeal.

Please note the decision by the Manager of the OSDS or Designee is final and not subject to further review.

Temporary Disabling Conditions

The Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS) acknowledges that certain life events can adversely impact a student's ability to participate in their educational program or activities. Modifications may be made through the OSDS to mitigate the impact of temporarily disabling conditions lasting longer than 8 weeks. A student who has a temporary illness or injury lasting between a couple days through to eight weeks of impacted daily activities are encouraged to work with their faculty or program leadership to determine what options are available.

Students who wish to request modifications for a temporary disabling condition lasting longer than 8 weeks may engage in the Temporary Modification Request Process. This process will provide the OSDS with an understanding of the temporary condition, the time frame of impact, the functional limitations, and recommendations to meet program requirements with temporary modifications. Students are advised that this is an interactive process that takes time to complete. Completed requests are generally reviewed within 10 business days. Paperwork is to be submitted to the OSDS at aucosds@adtalem.com or faxed to 630-353-3991. Students may contact the OSDS by email or phone to explore if their circumstance applies to this process.

For pregnancy and parenting accommodations, please email pregnancy.parenting@adtalem.com.

Concerns with the Interactive Accommodation Request Process

MERP and the OSDS support addressing student concerns regarding the handling of an OSDS request for disability-related accommodations. If students have general concerns with their experience in the interactive accommodation process request, they are encouraged to follow the below steps. Please note, many factors may affect the length of time needed to review and resolve a concern.

1. Students are encouraged to directly contact the OSDS to receive support from an Accommodation Coordinator as their first step in addressing a concern.

2. If outreach to the Accommodation Coordinator does not resolve the issue, the matter may be escalated to the OSDS Lead or designee for review by student request or by recommendation from the Accommodation Coordinator.

3. An escalated concern will be reviewed and responded to within 10-14 business days.

Accommodation Decision Appeal Process

Students who wish to formally appeal an accommodation decision made by the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS) must submit the required form and any necessary documentation within ten (10) calendar days from the issued date of their accommodation decision.

Please fill out the form completely and accurately, as information missing from this form may delay the appeal process. Documentation must be submitted in one file to the OSDS. To appeal a decision, your appeal must meet one of the three grounds for appeal as notated in Part C of the request form:

- Procedural error by OSDS during the process that significantly impacted the outcome of the decision;
- There is new information available that did not exist at the time of the initial request that has the potential to alter the outcome of the decision, OR
- There is evidence of bias on the part of the OSDS Accommodation Coordinator that rendered the decision making it impossible to be objective.

*Please know the interactive process is still available to students, for new or alternate requests and does not apply to this process.

If it is determined that the documentation satisfies the appeal process grounds stated previously, the Lead of the OSDS or Designee will review the appeal. Please note that any review of an appeal does not indicate any specific outcome or a guarantee to reverse the original decision. If the appeal documentation does not satisfy the process criteria, or the student does not appeal within ten (10) calendar days, the appeal will be determined to be insufficient for review and the student will forfeit the right to an appeal.

Please note the decision by the Lead of the OSDS or Designee is final and not subject to further review.

Discrimination

Students who believe they have been discriminated against due to a disability should contact Adtalem's Office of Equity and Access at ONA@Adtalem.com for assistance or to file a complaint.

Additional Resources

National Organization of Nurses with Disabilities
Vets4Vets
MedicalProfessionalsWithHearingLoss
HeathScienceCoalition
PhysicianswithDisabilities