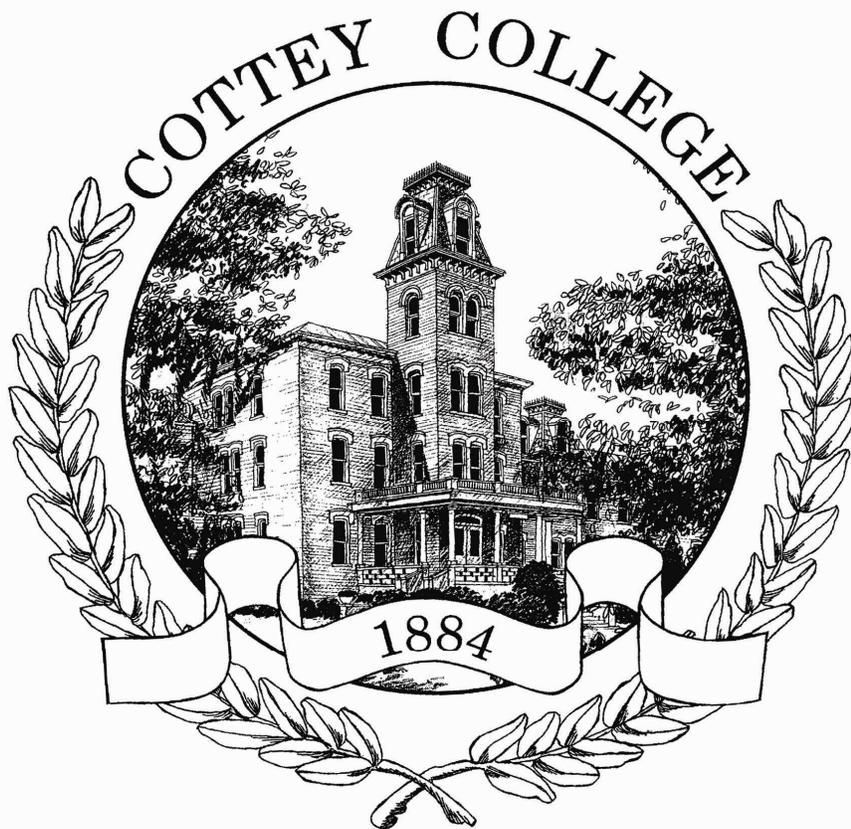


Student Disability Services
HANDBOOK



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Cotley College

Student Disability Services Handbook

INTRODUCTION . . .

This handbook is designed to assist students, parents, faculty, and staff to understand the processes in place for students with disabilities. This document explains how students with disabilities become eligible to receive services, how accommodations are determined, and how they are implemented.

STUDENT DISABILITY SERVICES MISSION STATEMENT . . .

Cotley College is dedicated to providing equal access to educational opportunities for persons with disabilities in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended. The College community, through reasonable accommodations, ensures that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination with regard to any program or activity offered by the College.

Students seeking environmental or academic accommodations due to a disability may contact the coordinator of student disability services. The accommodation process is an interactive one, guided by input from all involved, including students, parents, faculty, and staff.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES . . .

Each student with an identified disability attending Cotley College has a right to:

- Equal access to courses, programs, jobs, services, and activities
- Receive reasonable and appropriate accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services
- Appropriate confidentiality of all information regarding their disability and to choose to whom information about their disability will be disclosed, except as permitted or required by law
- Information reasonably available in accessible formats

Each student with an identified disability attending Cotley College has a responsibility to:

- Meet qualifications and maintain essential requirements and/or function for courses, programs, services, jobs, and activities
- Identify herself as an individual with a disability to Student Disability Services, preferably six weeks prior to the start of classes
- Provide documentation from an appropriate licensed professional describing the

nature of the disability and how the disability limits the student's participation in courses, programs, services, jobs, and activities

- Follow procedures for obtaining appropriate accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services
- Follow Cottey College's procedures and policies

LAWS . . .

Two laws govern higher education regarding the provision of equal access to students with disabilities, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, as amended.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states that ... "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States ... shall, solely by reason of ... disability, be denied the benefits of, be excluded from the participation in, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." Under the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ... the College may not discriminate in the recruitment, admission, educational process, or treatment of students.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, as amended, is the civil rights guarantee for persons with disabilities in the United States. It provides protection from discrimination for individuals based on disability. The ADA extends civil rights protection for people with disabilities in employment, transportation, public accommodations, services provided by state and local government, and telecommunication relay services.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND RELEASE OF INFORMATION . . .

Student Disability Services is committed to ensuring that all information and communication pertaining to a student's disability is maintained as confidential as required or permitted by law.

The following guidelines about the treatment of such information have been adopted by Student Disability Services and will be shared with students. These guidelines incorporate relevant state and federal regulations.

1. Any information regarding a student's disability is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and will only be disclosed as permitted or required by FERPA.
2. Sensitive information in Student Disability Services files will not be released except in accordance with federal and state laws.
3. A student's file may be released pursuant to a court order or subpoena.
4. If a student wishes to have information about her disability shared with others outside the College, the student must provide written authorization to the coordinator to release the information. Before giving such authorization, the student should understand the purpose of the release and to whom the information is being released.

5. A student has the right to review her own Student Disability Services file with reasonable notification.

ELIGIBILITY AND DOCUMENTATION . . .

Students who have self-identified, provided documentation of disability, and requested reasonable accommodations are entitled to receive approved modifications of programs, appropriate academic adjustments, or auxiliary aids that enable them to participate in and benefit from all educational programs and activities.

Definition of Disability

A person with a disability includes any person who (1) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities [including but not limited to walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, caring for oneself, and performing manual tasks], (2) has a record of such an impairment, or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment.

Individuals with disabilities may include persons who have mobility; sensory, or speech impairments; cosmetic disfigurements; or learning disabilities. Individuals with disabilities may also include persons who have neurological, psychological, or physical disabilities.

A "qualified individual with a disability" is defined as an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable modifications to rules, policies or practices, the removal of barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs for the activities.

Documentation Policy

In order to receive a reasonable accommodation, a student with a disability is responsible for providing documentation of the disability to Student Disability Services. This documentation must both establish disability and provide adequate information on the functional impact of the disability so that accommodations can be identified and provided. This documentation will be kept confidential and maintained in a locked file in the Student Life Center. All documentation should:

- Provide a clear DSM-IV or ICD diagnostic statement and details of the progression or prognosis of the condition
- Come from an appropriate licensed professional familiar with the history and functional implications of the disability. Diagnosis or testing battery performed by a member of the student's family is prohibited
- Be dated and signed, and typed on official letterhead including the name, title, and professional credentials of the evaluator. Prescription pad notes, one-paragraph letters, or handwritten treatment notes are NOT appropriate

- As appropriate, include a description of the diagnostic criteria, evaluation methods, procedures, tests and dates of administration, as well as a clinical narrative, observation, and specific results
- Be current and age appropriate. In most cases, diagnostic evaluations should be completed within the past three years. Flexibility in accepting documentation, which exceeds a three-year period, may be necessary depending on the disability
- Reflect on the student's current functional limitations. Demonstrate how a major life activity is substantially limited, and provide a clear sense of the severity, frequency, and pervasiveness of the condition(s)
- As appropriate, elaborate on expected changes in the functional impact of the disability over time. Provide information on the cyclical or episodic nature of the disability, the stability, exacerbations, and recommended interventions
- Include a description of both current and past medications, auxiliary aids, assistive devices, support services, and accommodations, including their effectiveness in improving functional impacts of the disability
- Include recommendations for accommodations, adaptive devices, assistive services, compensatory strategies, and/or collateral support services. When recommendations go beyond equitable and inclusive services and benefits, they may still be useful in suggesting alternative accommodations and/or services

An individualized education program (IEP) or a 504 plan is insufficient documentation, but it can be included as part of a more comprehensive assessment battery.

Guidelines for documentation for specific disabilities, such as learning disabilities, ADD/ADHD, psychiatric disabilities, or others as identified are available through Student Disability Services.

At the discretion of the coordinator, if a student does not possess appropriate documentation, the student may be provided interim accommodations for one semester only. Accommodations for any future semesters are dependent upon submission of complete documentation that conforms fully with the above policy prior to the need for accommodations.

ACCOMMODATIONS AND SERVICES OFFERED . . .

Student Disability Services offers accommodations and support services to students who have documented disabilities. Assistance is also available for faculty and staff whom teach or provide services to students with disabilities.

Accommodations are individualized and flexible, based on the student's request, the nature of the disability, and the academic environment. The accommodation process is interactive and

based on the sharing of information among all individuals involved. Below is a partial list of common academic accommodations that may be coordinated through Student Disability Services in collaboration with faculty and other pertinent offices on campus.

- Orientation to campus facilities, policies, and services
- Priority registration
- Faculty notification and follow-up
- Classroom accommodations
- Note-taking assistance
- Lab/library assistants
- Readers/scribes for exams
- Interpreter services
- Testing accommodations
- Alternate format course materials
- Referrals to campus and community resources

To receive accommodations, a student must self-identify to and provide appropriate documentation to the coordinator of student disability services. This should be done at least six weeks prior to the beginning of each semester, so accommodations can be provided in a timely manner.

Accommodation determinations are made on a case-by-case basis. Students who need classroom accommodations must meet each semester with the coordinator of student disability services **PRIOR** to the need for the requested accommodations. The coordinator and the student will develop Instructor Notification Letters which describe the student's classroom accommodations. It is the student's responsibility to deliver the Instructor Notifications and discuss accommodations with each instructor.

What Is a Reasonable Accommodation?

It is any change in an educational environment that effectively and appropriately enables an individual with a disability to have equal educational opportunities to participate in programs and activities. Accommodations are individualized and flexible, based on the student's request, the nature of the disability, and the academic environment. Access to programs, courses, and services will be provided in compliance with all applicable relevant laws.

Generally, an accommodation is unreasonable if:

- The student requests services of a personal nature
 - Personal attendants
 - Tutoring (outside of what is provided for the general population)
 - Transportation (outside of what is provided for the general population)
 - Mobility training
 - Behavioral coach
- The educational standards or mission of Cottey College would be substantially altered
- The nature of the program, course, service and/or activity would be fundamentally altered

- An undue financial or administrative hardship (College-wide) would be caused by the accommodation
- The individual would pose a direct threat to the health or safety of herself or others

Accommodation Process

To receive accommodations, students must:

1. Self-identify to the coordinator of student disability services
2. Provide appropriate documentation to the coordinator of student disability services
3. Meet with the coordinator each semester, **PRIOR** to the need for requested accommodations
4. Identify in that meeting the courses for which accommodations are requested
5. Deliver the Instructor Notification Letter of Accommodations provided by the coordinator to each instructor and discuss classroom needs with the instructor
6. Alert the coordinator when accommodations are not working or do not meet students' needs.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES . . .

Cottey College has adopted an internal grievance procedure providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student complaints alleging denied equal access in the form of appropriate accommodations, modifications, auxiliary aids, or effective communication, or suffered discriminatory harassment as described in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended.

If informal discussions with College personnel have not resolved the issue, the individual shall submit a written grievance to the coordinator of student disability services within ten (10) business days of the event that triggered the complaint. The grievance should include the student's name, address, and phone number, date and description of the problem, and signature.

An investigation, if appropriate, shall follow the filing. The coordinator will then respond to the complainant in a reasonable and timely manner.

If unsatisfied with the coordinator's response, the complainant shall appeal the decision to the vice president for student life. The appeal shall be filed within ten (10) business days after receiving the coordinator's response. The vice president for student life will respond in a reasonable and timely manner.

If a student's complaint involves the coordinator of student disability services, submit a written grievance directly to the vice president for student life within ten (10) business days of the

event that triggered the complaint. The grievance should include the student's name, address, and phone number, date and description of the problem, and signature.

Students can also file a formal complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR). To find out more information, visit the following Web page: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/howto.html?src=rt> or call 1(800) 421-3481.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH TEMPORARY IMPAIRMENTS . . .

Student Disability Services provides limited assistance for students with temporary impairments (i.e., inability to write because of a broken bone or inability to sit comfortably in class because of recent surgery). The type of assistance is determined on a case-by-case basis and may be dependent upon documentation.

1. Contact the coordinator of student disability services as soon as possible to make a request for accommodations.
2. Complete an application for services.
3. Provide medical documentation to verify the temporary condition and need for assistance. Acceptable documentation includes a clear statement of diagnosis, present symptoms, fluctuating condition/symptoms, expected duration of the condition, and the prognosis.

HOUSING ACCOMMODATIONS . . .

Residential living is central to the learning environment for all Cottey College students. The director of housing and coordinator of student disability services work together to accommodate students with disabilities in the residence hall setting. If you plan to live on campus and have documented disability-related housing needs, please complete your housing form and indicate any special accommodations or equipment you will need. Return your housing form as soon as possible to the director of housing. (Please note: requests received after June 1 may be unable to be filled.)

Requests for single rooms based on a student's desire to have a "quiet, undisturbed place to study" will be considered only in unusual circumstances. By virtue of the shared facilities, resources, and number of people living under one roof in the residence halls, a single room does not necessarily provide a quieter, more distraction-free space than a standard shared room. Students seeking a reduced distraction study environment should seek areas for study outside the residence halls, such as the Library, which has designated quiet study areas.

PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANT POLICY...

Personal Care Attendants may be necessary to address the personal needs of a student so that she can participate in the College's activities, services, and programs. The College does

not assume coordination or financial responsibility for attendant care services. A student with disabilities who requires attendant care services must make her own arrangements.

IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO:

- Secure a female attendant prior to attending any College-related activity; i.e., New Student Orientation and class attendance. (The College will NOT be responsible for providing a personal care attendant on an interim basis.)
- Ensure that each attendant registers with the coordinator for student disability services and inform the coordinator of any personnel changes during the semester.
- Direct the activities of the personal care attendant while at the College.
- Follow College policies and abide by the Student Disability Service Handbook.

A PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANT IS EXPECTED TO:

- Follow all applicable College policies, rules, regulations, and procedures. The Student Handbook can be reviewed at <http://www.cottey.edu/home/currentstudents/hb/index.html>
- As necessary, assist the student before and after class but wait outside the classroom.
- Allow the student to take responsibility for her own progress or behavior.
- Refrain from discussing any confidential information about the student with faculty, staff, or students.

SERVICE ANIMAL GUIDELINES. . .

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Cottey College welcomes persons with disabilities to bring service animals with them to College activities, services, and programs. Disabled students requesting to bring a service animal on campus must contact Student Disability Services to register as a student with a disability, at which point staff will evaluate the student's request and recommend any additional accommodations.

The ADA defines a service animal as "any animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals who are hearing impaired to intruders, pulling a wheelchair for a person, or fetching dropped items for a person with limited mobility." To work on campus, a service animal must be specifically trained to perform a service function. When an animal meets this definition, it is considered a service animal regardless of whether or not it has been certified by a training program.

Therapists often recommend the use of animals as a tool in therapy to promote the well-being of their clients. Although therapy animals may be important to a person's treatment, they do NOT accompany the person at all times and are not covered by the ADA.

REQUIREMENTS:

- The care, feeding, maintenance, and supervision of a service animal are solely the responsibility of the owner.
- The handler/partner shall be in full control of the service animal at all times. If a service animal's behavior fundamentally alters the College's programs, activities, and services; poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others; or displays threatening behavior toward others, the College may ask to remove the service animal.
- The animal must be on a leash/harness at all times unless the service animal user is unable to use a leash, using the leash would harm the handler/partner, tasks are performed without the use of a leash, or the use of the leash is not appropriate for that type of animal.
- The animal must be in good health and must follow state and local licensure and vaccination requirements. The College reserves the right to ask for proof of current vaccination.
- The owner is financially responsible for the actions of the approved animal including bodily injury or property damage.

CONFLICTING DISABILITIES:

If a person has a disabling condition that involves an allergic reaction to or fear of animals, the individual may make a complaint to the coordinator of student disability services (417) 667-8181, ext. 2131. The person making the complaint must provide medical documentation to support the complaint. Action will be taken to consider the needs of both the complainant and the partner/handler to resolve the problem as quickly and efficiently as possible.

RESTRICTED AREAS:

Specific areas are off limits to all animals due to health and safety concerns. These areas include, but are not limited to, laboratories, areas where protective clothing is necessary, mechanical rooms, custodial closets, and other areas where the animal's presence would present a danger to the animal's health or safety or the health or safety of others in the area. Exceptions would be made on a case-by-case basis. If it is determined that an area is unsafe, reasonable accommodations will be provided to assure equal access to the student.

Every request for the use of a service animal will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Should a grievance surface, it should be made following the student disability services grievance procedure.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES . . .

All students should review safety information included in the Student Handbook and familiarize themselves with College buildings, including exits, exit routes, rescue areas, stairways, elevators, and telephones. Students who expect to need assistance during evacuations should discuss their needs with the coordinator of student disability services.

The safety of students with disabilities is a shared responsibility. The College is committed to developing and implementing procedures to assist students with disabilities during an emergency. Likewise, it is strongly recommended that students with disabilities create a personal emergency plan which addresses needs before and during an evacuation. The coordinator of student disability services can assist with the development of a plan.

Development of a Personal Emergency Plan

Step 1: Inform

Students with disabilities who need assistance in an emergency evacuation should notify the coordinator of student disability services. The creation of a personal emergency evacuation plan is highly recommended. The plan, outlined on a card or in print, can be used in an evacuation. Students with disabilities may describe specific types of assistance needed during a building evacuation, mobility devices used, location of emergency supplies, how to operate assistive devices, warnings or actions others should not attempt, etc.

Step 2: Develop a Buddy System

Prepare for emergencies in advance by establishing two "buddies" for each class, work, or residence. A "buddy" could be a classmate, instructor, supervisor, or co worker. A student's personal evacuation instructions should be shared with her "buddies". A "buddy" will assist students with disabilities to an evacuation area outside the building or to a safer area within a building (e.g., stair landing, room away from imminent danger, another wing, opposite end of corridor). A "buddy" may stay until help arrives, so long as it is safe to do so. A second "buddy" or the individual should immediately notify Student Life staff/emergency personnel of the student's location. Rescue personnel are trained to evacuate students with disabilities. Untrained persons should not attempt to lift people or wheelchairs down flights of stairs, unless instructed by the student with disabilities. Stairway evacuation of wheelchair users should be conducted by trained professionals. Only in extreme danger should untrained people attempt to evacuate wheelchair users.

If an individual with a disability is alone during an emergency, she should contact via phone or text the Student Life staff/emergency personnel and provide her present location.

Step 3: Know Your Environment

Become familiar with emergency exits, evacuation routes in campus buildings, and campus evacuation assembly areas. Elevators are not to be used as an emergency exit unless instructed by emergency personnel. Determine the building exit nearest you. In the event this exit is blocked, be familiar with alternate exits.

Step 4: Telephone Numbers

Ambulance: 911 or (417) 667-5079

Fire: 911 or (417) 448-2720

Police: 911 or (417) 448-2710

Director of Housing: (417) 684-0182

Vice President for Student Life: (417) 448-7466

Physical Plant: ext. 2222 or (417) 448-4139 after 5 p.m.

REQUESTS FOR COURSE SUBSTITUTIONS . . .

A request for a course substitution is an interactive process involving the student, the coordinator of student disability services, faculty, and administration. Such accommodations should not result in the fundamental alteration of a course, the curriculum, degree

requirements, or program objectives. Course substitutions are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

To request a course substitution, the student must file a formal request letter. The student shall first discuss her request with the coordinator of student disability services, who will assist in the request process. Next, the student and coordinator shall submit a formal written request to the Academic Committee. The coordinator may consult the Academic Committee or provide additional documentation to support the request. The Academic Committee will review and recommend appropriate course substitutions. If the request is reasonable, the registrar will inform the student of the approved substitution.

RESOURCES . . .

Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>

Missouri College Guidebook: Transition for Students with Disabilities

http://www.moahead.org/MissouriAHEADCollegeGuidebook_1109.pdf

Resources for Students and Parents | AHEAD: Association on Higher Education And Disability

<http://www.ahead.org/students-parents>