

**ACADEMIC POLICIES FOR STUDENTS
WITH DISABILITIES**

**CHESTNUT HILL COLLEGE
PHILADELPHIA, PA**

This information was prepared by the Committee on Disabilities.

Policies and information in this packet are subject to change by official action of the College.

Chestnut Hill College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex, disability or age or on the basis of any other criteria which is inconsistent with state or local laws in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs and athletic and other school administered programs.

Chestnut Hill College does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its programs and activities. Disclosure of a disability is voluntary. The Director of the Disability Resource Center has been designated to handle all inquiries regarding this Policy.

INFORMATION ON ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS RIGHTS UNDER FEDERAL LAW FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

In September 1973, Congress passed Public Law 93-112, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Section 504 specifically states:

No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of his (or her) handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

In 1977, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare issued regulations implementing Section 504 in, among many other institutions, private post secondary colleges receiving federal funds. On July 26, 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law and extends the provisions given individuals with disabilities as provided in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Subsequent amendments are noted in the newly reauthorized Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008.

Chestnut Hill College's Disability Resource Center is focused to address academic, accessibility and student life issues appropriate under ADA, ADAAA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act with attention to compliance, accommodation and access through a comprehensive institutional approach. Inquiries regarding compliance can be directed to the Director of the Disability Resource Center, Chestnut Hill College, Saint Joseph Hall, 2nd Floor, Room 240, 9601 Germantown Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19118.

OBJECTIVES OF THE DISABILITIES SERVICES

Chestnut Hill College offers services on an individual basis to students with disabilities as required by law. The institution is guided by its Mission Statement, designed to protect the rights of all community members and promote diversity. Chestnut Hill College recognizes its legal obligation to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified individuals with disabilities so that they may participate as fully as possible in the College's academic programs.

DEFINITIONS:

The following definitions summarize the regulatory definitions of the ADA found at 28 CFR36.104:

QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS WITH A DISABILITY

A qualified person with a disability has physical or mental impairments that substantially affect major life activities, and who has a record or history of such impairments, or who is regarded as having such impairment.

Physical or mental impairment is (a) a physiological disorder or condition, chronic condition or disease such as epilepsy, paralysis, AIDS, or substantial hearing or vision impairment or (b) a mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness and specific learning disabilities.

Major life activities include functions such as caring for one's self, performing multiple tasks, walking, sitting, standing, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. The ADA of 2008 has added a subclass of major life activities under the rubric "major bodily functions." Included in this subclass are "functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine and reproductive functions." The existence of impairment must be determined with reference to mitigating measures such as medicines or prosthetic devices. The effects of these mitigating measures, both positive and negative, must be taken into account when judging whether the individual is substantially limited in a major life activity.

Substantially limited means a significant restriction of the duration, manner or condition under which the individual can perform a major life activity when compared to the average person's ability to perform that same major life activity. Temporary impairments that take significantly longer than normal to heal, long-term impairments, or potentially long-term impairments of indefinite duration may be disabilities if they are severe. The Committee on Disabilities will evaluate whether the impairment substantially limits any of the major life activities of the person in question, not whether the impairment is substantially limiting in general.

Record of such an impairment means the individual has a history of or has been classified as having, a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

Is regarded as having an impairment means (a) has a physical or mental impairment that does not substantially limit major life activities but that is treated by the College as constituting such a limitation; (b) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits major life activities only as a result of the attitudes of others toward such impairment; or (c) has none of the impairments defined above but is treated by the College as having such an impairment.

Qualified student with a disability means an individual who, with reasonable modifications (if necessary) to rules, policies or practices, the removal of barriers, or the provisions of auxiliary aids and services meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of the services or the participation in programs or activities provided by a school.

SELF-ADVOCACY BY STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Chestnut Hill College neither imposes accommodations on the student nor pre-empts her/his responsibility, as a legal and social adult, to disclose disabilities and request reasonable accommodation.

- a) Chestnut Hill College is in compliance with Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Students requesting special accommodations are required to submit substantive and current documentation indicating the nature and duration of their condition and the need for such accommodations. This documentation should be addressed to the Chestnut Hill College Director of the Disability Resource Center.
- b) Students are encouraged to take advantage of other college resources that are available to support students.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR QUALIFIED STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Chestnut Hill College is in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the ADA of 1990, and the ADAAA of 2008 and provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Students requesting accommodations are required to submit substantive and current documentation indicating the nature and duration of their condition, the need for such accommodations, and how the diagnosed condition currently impacts functioning and causes substantial limitation. This documentation should be submitted to the Director of the Disability Resource Center at the following address:

**Chestnut Hill College
Disability Resource Center
Room 240, Saint Joseph Hall
9601 Germantown Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19118**

Chestnut Hill College neither imposes accommodations on the student nor pre-empts her/his responsibility, as a legal and social adult, to disclose disabilities and request reasonable accommodations.

Confidentiality on all matters pertaining to a disability is protected by state and federal law. Information in an individual's Accommodations Packet and supporting documents, as well as any correspondence pertaining thereto, is housed in the Disability Resource Center in a locked file cabinet. Confidential material will be faxed to a confidential fax machine located in the office of the Disability Resource Center. All disabilities information is kept separate from the student's academic record and will not be shared with anyone except as permitted by law or by the terms of the student's consent.

GENERAL PROCEDURES

1) Upon acceptance to Chestnut Hill College, students who are requesting special accommodations or modifications in the College's courses or programs must contact the Disability Resource Center to obtain an Accommodations Packet as soon as possible to ensure timely provision of services. A student may also contact the Disability Resource Center at 215-753-3655 or disabilities@chc.edu or access the webpage at www.chc.edu/disability for this information.

2) The Accommodations Packet includes: 1) a Confidential Disability Disclosure Document/ Intake Information form, 2) a Request for appropriate documentation, and 3) a Release of Confidential Records/Student Record Release form so that medical and other information (for example, information from a psychologist or therapist) can be released to Chestnut Hill College. All appropriate documentation of medical and other information must be provided on official letterhead from the provider. The College reserves the right to require additional documentation if the Committee on Disabilities feels more information is needed in order to make a decision. The Director of the Disability Resource Center will contact the student in writing if more documentation is required. In addition, the Director or a designee may also contact specialists listed on the Release of Confidential Records/Student Record Release form for additional information or clarification of information

3) The completed Accommodations Packet including supporting documentation can be submitted to the Director of the Disability Resource Center. The accommodations packet should be completed and submitted as soon as possible upon acceptance to Chestnut Hill College. Students, who do not complete the appropriate accommodation forms upon admission to the College or who, at some point, believe they have an eligible disability and qualify for reasonable accommodations may obtain the Accommodations Packet and submit their application at any time. They should be aware that the review, approval and orientation process can take up to four weeks and accommodations are not retroactive. All requests will be considered on an individual basis and will take into account each student's unique situation.

4) After reviewing the completed and signed Accommodations Packet and supporting documentation, the Chestnut Hill College Committee on Disabilities will make a determination of eligibility and provide suggestions for "reasonable" accommodations in relationship to Chestnut Hill College's policies and federal law.

5) If a student qualifies as "in need of accommodations," an Accommodation(s) Letter outlining the approved accommodations will be developed with the student by the Chestnut Hill College Committee on Disabilities. The Director of the Disability Resource Center or designee will forward the letter to the student and instruct the student to give the letter to the instructors of each of the courses the student is taking in order to activate the accommodations.

It is the student's responsibility to provide the instructor with the letter immediately after receiving it since accommodations are not retroactive and arrangements for test taking, equipment, housing assignments and other considerations require advance notice. Students may not give instructors the letter on the day of a test and expect accommodations to be made for that test. Students reserve the right not to provide the letter to the instructor, but in this case, the accommodations will not be granted for that class. The Director of the Disability Resource Center is available for any questions or clarifications needed from the student or faculty members.

6) If the Committee on Disabilities determines that a student does not qualify for accommodations, a letter outlining the decision and the reason for the decision will be developed by the Director of the Disability Resource Center, who will forward the letter to the student.

7) If a student does not agree with the decision of the Committee on Disabilities regarding the question of eligibility or the reasonable accommodations offered by the Committee, then the student may appeal the Committee's decision in writing within 15 calendar days. The student should complete the Disabilities Appeal Form identifying in specific detail the basis for the student's objections to the Committee's decision. The form should be submitted to the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA), Room 334, Saint Joseph Hall, who will then review the situation, including all documentation previously submitted and any additional information the student includes for his/her review. The VPAA may schedule a hearing if deemed necessary to the decision making process. A decision shall be issued by the VPAA within 30 days after receipt of all documentation unless both the student and the VPAA agree in writing that the time period may be extended by a specified period of time. The decision of the VPAA shall

be final. The Disability Appeals Form can be obtained from the Director of the Disability Resource Center, Room 240, Saint Joseph Hall.

ACCOMMODATIONS

A reasonable accommodation in the educational setting is a *modification or adjustment* to a course or program that will enable an otherwise qualified person with a documented disability to participate in the program or course and/ or to enjoy the rights and privileges offered by the College. Modifications that impose an undue burden on the College or pose a health or safety risk are not considered reasonable. All medical and non-medical records supporting the need for an accommodation are to be submitted to the Director of the Disability Resource Center.

Individual Analysis: The modifications offered must be appropriate to the needs of the individual; thus, in each instance, *an individualized analysis must occur*. The Director of the Disability Resource Center will devise a modification plan for the student if a reasonable accommodation is appropriate.

Course Modifications: The College is not required to provide an aid or service or make any modifications that would result in a fundamental alteration of the essential elements of a course or program. However, reasonable accommodations will be provided for qualified students with verified disabilities. When a course requirement is essential to the academic program in which the student is enrolled, the College does not have to modify or waive the requirement. In deciding whether a requested accommodation would result in a substantial program alteration or would fundamentally alter the academic standards of the program, the Director of the Disability Resource Center in collaboration with the faculty member of the appropriate academic department, will take into consideration the underlying academic reasons for the requirement, the program standards and other related factors in order to decide if the requested accommodation would be inconsistent with the academic standards of the course or program.

Accommodations for completion of degree requirements may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Substitution of specific courses required for completion of degree requirements; or
- Adaptation of the manner in which specific courses are conducted.

Examinations:

Exam accommodations may include the following:

- Changes in the length of time permitted for completion of an exam; or
- Adaptation of the manner in which the exam is given.
- Increase in font size.
- Use of computer for Microsoft Word software.

Students who require an alternative testing environment need to submit a completed Exam Sign Up Form to the Director of the Disability Resource Center for notification and scheduling purposes. Testing times and locations will be scheduled by the Director of Disability Resource Center and the instructor of the course and may or may not be scheduled at the same time the class meets.

Auxiliary Aids and Services: This term refers to equipment or services that assist communication. The College pays for the cost of the auxiliary aid for service when the aid is the only reasonable accommodation for a qualified student. If provisions of a particular auxiliary aid or service would result in either a fundamental alteration of the program or in an undue burden (i.e., significant difficulty or expense) the College will attempt to provide an alternative auxiliary aid or service. The College does not need to provide services of a personal nature. The College will give careful consideration to the requests of the individual with the disability, but is not required to give the person with the disability the auxiliary aid of his or her choice.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Academic Support is available for all students through the Teaching & Learning Center, Math Center, Foreign Language Center, Writing Center, and/or the Counseling Services Center. Accessibility issues for qualified students with physical disabilities are coordinated through the Disability Resource Center in conjunction with the Residence Life Office.
- The Director of the Disability Resource Center works in collaboration with the Committee on Disabilities, the Director of the Counseling Center, the Dean of Student Life, and the Dean of the School in which the student is enrolled in order to arrange reasonable accommodations for students with psychiatric disabilities and for qualified students in recovery from a substance use disorder.
- Chestnut Hill College cannot modify ethical and professional standards of conduct required in a professional development program since the purpose of these standards is to protect the welfare of multiple groups, including patients, clients, and students.

All questions should be referred to the Director of the Disability Resource Center.

APPENDIX A

DOCUMENTATION AND VERIFICATION

In order to be considered eligible and in need of accommodations at Chestnut Hill College, students must submit appropriate documentation verifying eligibility according to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and its subsequent amendments of 2008. All documentation must be provided by an appropriate professional provider on official letterhead. The diagnostician must be a properly credentialed professional who is licensed and/or a state certified school psychologist, licensed psychologist, or licensed physician. In cases of mental health issues, the diagnostician must be a licensed mental health professional. In cases of physical, mobility, and health related disabilities, the diagnostician must be a licensed health care professional. In no case, should a diagnostician be a family member or serve in a dual relationship with the student. All non-mental health and medical assessments, e.g. Psycho-educational assessments, achievements tests, etc. should be administered within three (3) years of the date of enrollment at Chestnut Hill College and/or normed for adults. Mental and medical assessments must be current and completed within six (6) months of submission to the Chestnut Hill College Disability Resource Center. *Please see Appendix B for examples of tests for each category.*

Under the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), the term “disability” includes (a) a mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of an individual; (b) a record of such an impairment; or (c) being regarded as having such an impairment. In addition, the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 extends the definition of disability to include, “episodic or in remission if it would impair a major life activity when active”. Also, the definition of major life activity was expanded to include major bodily functions. The ADA further defines mental impairment to include any mental or psychological disorders such as emotional or mental illness. The American Psychiatric Association’s most current *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* is frequently used as guidance for identifying psychiatric, behavioral, and mental health disorders, however, not all conditions listed in the DSM are disabilities or even impairments for purposes of the ADA.

ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER

Assessment for Attention Deficit Disorder should include the information listed below:

1. Provide evidence that ADHD/ADD-type symptoms arose in childhood or significantly impacted functioning until adult diagnosis. This includes approximate age of onset, date of diagnosis, review of DSM criteria, indicating the symptoms endorsed, evidence of a significant impact on academic functioning, results of Behavior Rating Scales, a list of prior accommodations and treatments; if none, explain why not, and if previously not diagnosed or treated, what factors, if any, allowed for successful compensation.
2. Provide evidence that symptoms currently meet DSM criteria in nature and severity. This includes symptoms evident in current functioning, objective evidence of significant functional impairment, and/or indicate why symptoms cannot be explained by other psychiatric or cognitive factors.
3. Provide an explanation of current, mitigating factors that include accommodations, medications, and/or side effects, etc.
4. Provide the rationale for accommodations being requested. This includes the basis for recommended accommodations, a list and discussion of current or past accommodations utilized, and evidence from client's history that particular accommodations have been successful.

LEARNING DISABILITY

The evaluation for a learning disability must include at least one measure from each of the following categories:

1. A measure of Aptitude which includes a measure of Intellectual Ability or Cognitive Functioning that indicates average or above average intelligence as measured by a standardized intelligence test which includes assessment of verbal and non-verbal abilities.
2. A measure of Achievement in reading comprehension, reading rate, written language, writing mechanics, vocabulary, writing, grammar, spelling, and/or mathematics, which reflects a cognitive-achievement discrepancy or an intra-cognitive discrepancy.
3. A measure of Cognitive or Sensory processing which demonstrates the presence of a disorder in one or more of the following areas:
 - Visual and/or auditory processing
 - Memory
 - Processing speed
 - Language
 - Attention and Concentration
 - Perceptual Motor Skills
 - Other Cognitive Measures that are related to the disability

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

1. History should be comprehensive and include approximate age of onset, dates of first and most recent diagnosis, current prognosis, extent, duration, and current functional impact of the disability including impact on academic functioning, and prior accommodations and treatments with an explanation of successes (or not). If accommodations or treatments were not previously employed, explain why, and if not previously diagnosed/treated, what factors allowed for successful compensation.
2. A Comprehensive psycho educational and/or neuropsychological examination that includes a summary of all evaluative procedures as well as diagnostic tests/evaluation results.
3. Academic Testing in Reading, Written Language, and Mathematics and a thorough review of the student's academic record.
4. Assessment of the student's social/emotional functioning that includes current level of functioning and recommended compensatory strategies or interventions.

PHYSICAL, MOBILITY, AND HEALTH-RELATED DISABILITIES

This diagnosis must reflect the student's present and projected level of functioning in the major life activity affected by the disability and include recommendations for accommodations.

After a thorough review of the documentation, the Chestnut Hill College Disabilities Committee will forward, if applicable, the documentation for further evaluation to the Chestnut Hill College consulting physician. The cost of obtaining professional verification, supplementary documentation, or reassessment, including recommendations for College-appropriate accommodations (in cases where the documentation is incomplete or inadequate), is the responsibility of the student. If the College consulting physician requires a second professional opinion, the College will bear any cost not covered by a third party.

Students seeking accommodations, auxiliary aids, or services on the basis of a **temporary disability** must follow the guidelines provided above and must include the following additional information: nature and cause of the condition, current functional impact of the condition, onset and verification of the disabling condition (must be within 60 days of request), expected duration of the condition, and prognosis for recovery.

PSYCHIATRIC/BEHAVIORAL/MENTAL HEALTH DISABILITIES

Documentation includes diagnosis by a licensed mental health professional, including licensed clinical social workers, licensed professional counselors, psychologists, psychiatrists, and certified addiction counselors (when appropriate). When applicable, the Chestnut Hill College Disabilities Committee may recommend a psychiatric evaluation by the College's consulting psychiatrist and/or other designated provider. If this is deemed necessary, the student must agree to the recommendation in order to be considered for eligibility and subsequent accommodations.

The report should include:

1. A clear statement of the disability, including current DSM diagnosis and summary of present symptoms.
2. A summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis, including evaluation results and standardized scores, if applicable.
3. Medical information including the impact of medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of the post secondary environment.
4. A statement of the significant impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities and the degree to which it impacts the individual in the learning context for which the accommodations are being requested.

APPENDIX B

Acceptable Tests and Measurements

The Technical adequacy of instruments including their reliability, validity and standardization on an appropriate normed group will be considered for all documentation provided to the Chestnut Hill College Director of the Disability Resource Center. The following list is provided as a helpful resource, but it is not intended to be definitive or exhaustive. All instruments used must be **current**. Preferred measures are indicated in bold print. **Documentation of aptitude, achievement, and information processing must be conducted within three (3) years of submission to Chestnut Hill College and/or normed for adults. Psychiatric or medical documentation must be no more than six (6) months old.**

Aptitude — A measure of intellectual ability or cognitive functioning which includes assessment of verbal and non-verbal abilities.

- Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale
- Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery — Test of Cognitive Ability
- Kaufman Adolescent and Adult Intelligence Test (KAIT)
- Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale

Note: The *Slosson Intelligence Test — Revised*, the *Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test*, and the *Wechsler Abbreviated Intelligence Scale* are primarily screening devices that are not comprehensive enough to provide the information necessary to make accommodation decisions. Therefore, the College will not accept their sole findings for consideration of accommodations.

Academic Achievement — A measure of achievement in reading comprehension, written language, mathematics, reading rate, written expression, writing mechanics, vocabulary, writing, grammar or spelling.

- Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults (SATA)
- Stanford Test of Academic Skills (TASK)
- Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery — Tests of Achievement
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT)
- Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement (KTEA)

Or specific achievement tests such as:

- Nelson-Denny Reading Skills Test
- Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test
- Test of Written Language (TOWL)
- Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests

Note: Specific achievement tests are useful instruments when administered under standardized conditions and interpreted within the context of other diagnostic information. The *Wide Range Achievement Test* is not a comprehensive measure of achievement and therefore not useful if used as the sole measure of achievement.

Information Processing — A measure of information processing in visual and/or auditory processing, memory, processing speed, attention and concentration, perceptual motor skills, or other cognitive measures.

- Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude (DTLA)
- Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude — Adult (DTLA-A)
- Information from subtests on the WAIS
- Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery — Tests of Cognitive Ability
- Wechsler Memory Scale (WMS)

Or specific tests such as:

- Trails A & B
- Controlled Oral Word Association
- FAS Test of Writing
- Thurstone Word Fluency Test
- Tests of Auditory and Perceptual Memory

Emotional Disturbance, Specific Learning, Attention and/or Mental Health Disorders

- **The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)** — Published by the American Psychiatric Association (APA), this manual covers all mental health disorders for children and adults. It also lists known causes of these disorders, statistics in terms of gender, age at onset, and prognosis as well as some research concerning the optimal treatment approaches.
- **Self Report and Behavioral Rating Scales** such as
 - Beck Depression Inventory (BDI)
 - Manifest Anxiety Scale (MAS)
 - State-Trait Anxiety Scale
 - ADHD Rating Scale
 - Connors Adult ADHD Scale
- **Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI)**

APPENDIX C

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Every qualified student with a disability who requests accommodations has the responsibility to:

- Meet the College's qualifications and essential standards.
- Identify him/herself in a timely manner as a qualified individual with a disability when seeking an accommodation.
- Follow Chestnut Hill College procedures for obtaining reasonable and appropriate accommodations.
- Provide current documentation from an appropriate professional source that verifies the nature of the disability and the need for specific accommodations on official letterhead from the provider.
- Provide signed consent authorizing the Director of the Disability Resource Center to discuss her/his need for reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids with the professional source of his/her documentation.
- Inform the faculty member at the beginning of each semester about the disability, how performance may be affected, and necessary and reasonable accommodations.
- Meet the procedural requirements established by the College for scheduling exams, requesting assistance, or making arrangements with the professor for getting the exam to the location of testing.
- Contact the Director of the Disability Resource Center at the end of each semester so that appropriate accommodations can be made in a timely manner for the following semester. Students are strongly encouraged to make this contact within the last four (4) weeks of each semester. This includes filling out the required academic **Accommodation Renewal form** that indicates the student's need.