

Faculty Guide to the



Academic Resources Center
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About the ARC

The Academic Resources Center (ARC) fosters an enthusiasm for knowledge, the process of learning, and personal growth, and provides opportunities for students to reach their individual goals.

We offer the following programs to help students:

- **Success Coaching:** Students can stop by the office to make an appointment with a success coach to get direction on issues such as time management, note-taking, active reading and test preparation.
- **Academic Improvement:** By participating in this program either voluntarily or in adherence to conditions of academic warning or probationary status, students will meet regularly with a member of ARC staff in order to receive instruction on healthy academic practices, goal-setting, and strategies for grade improvement. ARC staff will also maintain contact with each student's professors in order to receive feedback on the student's performance as well as expectations for each class and will share that feedback with the student.
- **Disability Resources:** Students with learning disabilities, attention disorders, medical or psychological conditions can register with our office to receive reasonable accommodations at Stetson; students with disabilities can also use the ARC throughout their time at Stetson as a resource for support and guidance

Who to Refer to the ARC

Any student enrolled at Stetson University may utilize the ARC in order to improve academic performance. In addition, any student who self-identifies and provides appropriate documentation about a disability may register with us for disability support. Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD), Attention Disorders (ADD or ADHD), deafness, hearing impairment, blindness, visual impairment, mobility impairment, or other chronic health impairments/conditions.

Students whom you may want to refer to the ARC are:

- Students with academic difficulties who could benefit from learning/study skills development.
- Students with disabilities (physical, learning or attention disorders). Please refer students with psychological disabilities (depression, bipolar disorder, etc.) to the Counseling Center (386) 822-8900.
- Students seeking course/testing accommodations for a disability.
- Students who suspect they have a Specific Learning Disability or an Attention Disorder.
- Students whom you suspect may have a Specific Learning Disability or Attention Disorder, as evidenced by severe, unexplained academic difficulty; however, please **do not** suggest a diagnosis to students.

How to Request Disability Support Services

If a student would like to request disability support services, please direct him/her to our office. The Disability Support page on our website may also be of help, particularly the How to Request Services section, which provides full details about the request process.

Disability Support url:

<http://www.stetson.edu/administration/academicresources/disability.php>

What is an Accommodation?

An academic accommodation is any change in the policies or procedures of a course/academic program for the purpose of allowing a student with a disability equal opportunity to learn and demonstrate knowledge.

The ARC recommends reasonable accommodations in accordance with Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), and the University's academic standards to ensure that there will be no discrimination on the basis of disability. These recommendations are developed through the review of disability documentation and consideration of each student's needs, strengths, and academic program.

There are two types of academic accommodations:

- Course (e.g., use of a note-taker, ability to record lectures, preferential seating, alternative text formats)
- Test (e.g., separate room, extended time, alternate format)

Additionally, non-academic accommodations may include access to facilities (e.g., academic buildings and residential facilities).

Disability Law

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), a person with a disability includes any person who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities, has a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having an impairment.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) states,

No otherwise qualified person with a disability in the United States shall, solely on the basis of disability, be denied access to, or the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity by any institution receiving federal financial assistance.

Failure to make reasonable accommodations can place the University in violation of federal and state statutes, resulting in costly penalties. In addition, a student is denied the opportunity to achieve success and self-sufficiency. Although Stetson University is a private university, it receives federal financial assistance and is, therefore, subject to the aforementioned laws.

Confidentiality

The ARC respects students' privacy. The University complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), in regards to maintenance of student records. You can find more about FERPA at: <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

General Information about Disabilities

Since students with disabilities are not required to self-identify to faculty/staff, many who need help suffer academically. It is common for freshmen and transfer students who want a fresh start at college to choose not to disclose their disabilities to anyone. They want to succeed by themselves without any labels or extra help. This can be especially true of students with Specific Learning Disabilities and Attention Disorders--the hidden disabilities.

Students wish to be treated as individuals and not be singled out or stereotyped as disabled. The following general considerations are important in assisting students with disabilities to meet their educational goals:

- A disability is seldom total, and usually affects a surprisingly narrow range of activity.
- Many persons find themselves feeling awkward, fearful, or self-conscious when interacting with persons with disabilities. Common sense, courtesy, caring, and experience will reduce these reactions.
- Actions that call attention to deficiencies manifested by students with disabilities should be avoided. For example, do not announce to the class that a student will be taking the test in another room because he/she has special needs.

- The majority of students with disabilities are of average to superior intelligence.
- Misconceptions and/or lack of knowledge concerning persons with disabilities are common to many people. It is important to remember that disability is not synonymous with cognitive impairment
- It is important to make a statement at the beginning of each term inviting students to discuss their unique needs, giving students the opportunity to discuss such needs privately.
 - It is advisable to add a statement in your course syllabi about disability support; here is a **suggested syllabus statement**:

“If a student anticipates barriers related to the format or requirements of a course, she or he should meet with the course instructor to discuss ways to ensure full participation. If disability-related accommodations are necessary, please register with the Academic Resources Center (822-7127; www.stetson.edu/arc) and notify the course instructor of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. The student, course instructor and the Director of the Academic Resource Center will plan how best to coordinate accommodations.”

Creating Accessible Classes

There are several small actions professors can take to make their classes more accessible:

- Provide students with a detailed course syllabus that clearly addresses expectations at the beginning of the semester
- Identify your reading material early. This way alternative text formats can be made available promptly, and students have time to complete assignments.
- Make handouts available in electronic versions allowing students who use assistive technology to have better access.
- Consider allowing students to tape record your lectures; the ARC has a Tape Recording Agreement available for students and professors to sign to protect lecturers' rights.
- Assure that all videos shown in the class are captioned when a deaf or hard of hearing student is registered
- Be available to collaborate with students with disabilities and the ARC to create an accessible class experience

Common Accommodations Provided by the ARC

The ARC strives to provide appropriate accommodations tailored to the needs of each individual student we serve. As such, accommodations vary with the needs of our students, and may even be subject to change during an academic semester in the pursuit of the most appropriate arrangement. While accommodations are individualized as much as possible, there are certain accommodations that are commonly provided:

Extended time on exams. Students may receive this accommodation for many reasons. Extended time on exams assures equal opportunity to show content mastery by providing time that is necessary to compensate for the disability. Studies show that extended time makes a significant difference in the performance of students with disabilities, while only slightly improving the performance of students without disabilities. If you are unable to proctor the exam with extra time the ARC is available to proctor those exams. It is the student's responsibility to schedule exams with the ARC according to our exam proctoring policy.

A separate testing environment. For some students, a separate, quiet environment with reduced distractions is more conducive to test taking. This environment may be a department office, or, if needed, the ARC.

Use of a note taker. For many different reasons it may not be ideal for a student to both listen and attend to lectures and take notes. In such cases the ARC hires a note taker in each of the student's classes. The note taker is to type or recopy his/her notes after class to share with the accommodated student. Use of a note taker is not a substitution for class attendance. Note takers who wish to type notes during class may only do so in accordance with the instructors' policies on computer use in class.

Use of a laptop to take notes in class. In some cases students may be best served by being allowed to use a word-processing program to take notes during class. While many instructors allow all students to use a laptop if desired, in the case that an instructor does not usually allow laptops an allowance would need to be made for students with such an accommodation.

Use of a computer for exams. Some students may benefit from use of a word-processing program or other assistive technology while taking exams. If this technology cannot be used in-class, the ARC can proctor the exam.

Use of alternative text format. Some students may require texts in either an audio or electronic format. The ARC will aid students in finding alternative textbooks as appropriate. In some cases electronic versions of exams may also be warranted. If an electronic version is not available, the ARC can scan texts as needed for students, but asks that professors provide texts in a timely manner.

Scribing. Like note-takers, the ARC will locate and hire scribes for students in need of this service, and in some cases ARC Staff will scribe for students. Scribes are available

Common Accommodations Provided by the ARC

strictly to type as the student in need dictates, so work produced is the work of the student.

Exam Proctoring Policy

The ARC is pleased to be able to offer faculty and students a location to meet most testing needs, during business hours with minimal supervision. Please note that the ARC's primary focus is to facilitate testing accommodations for students with disabilities. The ARC may serve as an alternate facility for proctoring make-up exams for students with extenuating circumstances, such as illness or family emergencies, that would prohibit them from taking such exam in class as scheduled by their instructors. In some cases, an instructor may ask a student to provide documentation in support of this type of request. Please note that students with disabilities will receive first priority for testing space and proctoring availability.

In order to serve you best and provide optimum test security, the following procedures have been established for the handling of exams:

1. The student is responsible for scheduling his or her exam with the ARC.
2. ARC staff will contact the instructor two days prior to the scheduled exam time to request a copy of the exam.
3. The instructor delivers the exam to the ARC as soon as possible, no later than 24 hours prior to the scheduled appointment. Faculty members are responsible for ensuring secured delivery of the exam to and from the ARC. Exams, along with the necessary cover sheet, may be emailed to academicresources@stetson.edu.
4. A cover sheet is completed by the instructor indicating instructions for the exam. ARC staff will check-in the exam and place it in a locked cabinet until the student arrives for his or her appointment.
5. Once the student has taken the exam, it is kept in the locked cabinet until the instructor or department secretary picks it up from the ARC. Please note that student employees will not be able to pick up exams.

For make-up exams proctored by the ARC, the following procedures have been established:

1. The student obtains permission from his or her instructor to take a make-up exam in the ARC. The instructor should inform the student that an appointment is required for all make-up examinations with the ARC.
2. At least **three days prior** to the intended exam date, the student makes an appointment by phone, by email, or in person to take the exam. ARC staff reminds the student to notify his or her instructor (students are advised to email their instructors) of the set appointment.

A copy of the Instructor Cover Sheet is available on page 12.

Attendance Policy for Students with Disabilities

Stetson University makes every effort to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities; however, the institution cannot provide an accommodation that authorizes excused absences or permits routine tardiness. Although some medical conditions may contribute to class absences and/or tardiness, procedures regarding class attendance are established by the instructor. Students are responsible for making up all missed assignments, such as in-class assignments, homework assignments, quizzes, and examinations. Additionally, students are responsible for contacting the instructor in a timely fashion, preferably in advance, about making arrangements concerning their work.

Though explicit accommodations cannot be made for attendance and tardiness issues, the Academic Resources Center can inform faculty of the existence of a student's documented disability which may affect the student's attendance. Additionally, the ARC asks faculty to consider the nature of the absence and whether the absence alters a core component of the course when determining if it is appropriate to provide an opportunity for the student to make up missed assignments, quizzes, and examinations.

Please understand that a submission of a request for an accommodation does not guarantee the request will be granted.

Personal Assistant Policy

Stetson University makes every effort to accommodate students with documented disabilities; however, the responsibility of obtaining a Personal Assistant lies with the student. The institution cannot directly provide or facilitate a search for a Personal Assistant because of liability concerns. Therefore, the student in need of support recruits, interviews, hires, trains, and compensates his or her own assistant.

Any student who has a PA must submit a written request to the Director of the Academic Resources Center for the Personal Assistant to have access to residence halls and University facilities. Please understand that a submission of a request does not guarantee access residence halls. Additionally, the student will be required to complete a FERPA release with the University if he or she desires the PA to have access to student academic information.

What exactly is a learning disability?

A learning disability is a documented neurological disorder that affects the ability to process information in individuals of average or above average intelligence. It is a permanent disorder that may affect the manner in which an individual takes in, processes, retains and/or expresses information. Individuals with learning disabilities may exhibit significant weaknesses in reading, decoding, comprehension, spelling, written expression, math computation, and/or problem solving. The discrepancy between ability and achievement cannot be primarily the result of a visual or hearing impairment; emotional disturbance; or educational, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

Do students with learning disabilities get special consideration during the application process?

No. Students with learning disabilities or any other disabilities have the same rigorous standards of admission as all Stetson University students, and they are expected to meet the same standards of performance as all students.

If a student has a physical or sensory disability (visual or hearing impairment), are they also considered learning disabled?

No. However, many disabilities present a challenge to learning in the traditional education environment in similar ways and require similar accommodations. These separate and distinct disabilities may appear alone or in various combinations with one another.

Do I have the right to know what type of disability a student has when she/he requests an accommodation?

No. A student does not have to inform the faculty about the specifics of the disability, only that accommodations are needed. The ARC professional staff can share information about a student's functional limitations that relate to the academic setting, as well as appropriate accommodations. However, details about the documented disability are confidential and cannot be discussed unless the student signs a release of information. If the student chooses to share information about the disability with you, it is vital to maintain confidentiality.

Once I am notified of a student's disability, with whom can I share this information?

The confidential nature of disability-related information has been an over-arching principle of nondiscrimination since the establishment of Section 503 and 504. Disability-related information is considered to be medical information protected under FERPA and to be treated in the same confidential manner, with the same need-to-know restrictions.

What if I disagree with the academic accommodation provided?

Please contact the ARC to discuss your disagreement immediately. Out of respect for the student, please do not address your disagreement with her/him.

A student has failed the first test and now I received an Accommodations Notification Email. Why didn't I receive this at the beginning of the semester?

There are many possible reasons for late notification:

- The student did not previously want to disclose the disability.
- The student was recently referred to the ARC.
- The student did not previously register with the ARC, then found out it is necessary after the test.
- The student registered with the ARC, but felt the accommodations were not necessary. After the first test, the student realized that the disability is affecting his/her performance and accommodations are needed, after all.
- The student may have been recently diagnosed and just received the documentation needed to register with the ARC.

Students are expected to notify professors as far in advance as possible, preferably before or within two weeks of the start of a semester. If you can provide the accommodation, please do so. If you find that providing the accommodation presents a difficulty, please discuss your concerns with ARC staff. Remember that accommodations are not retroactive to before a student requests assistance.

A student is requesting extra time for tests and I have not received an Accommodations Notification Email. I have no problem giving any student extended time. Should I refer her to the ARC?

If you give all students extended time, then the student should not be required to contact the ARC. However, if you do not give all students extra time, then the student is asking for an accommodation. Please refer any students with disabilities to the ARC in order to discuss accommodation needs. By following this procedure, you are helping to ensure that all accommodations are appropriate and consistent across campus.

Does a student receive special privileges or an unfair advantage under these laws?

No. Providing accommodations should not be regarded as giving students unfair advantages. Rather, they minimize the impact of a disability on a student's academic performance, thereby, leveling the playing field. Institutions are not required to make changes in the requirements of a major or substantial change in an essential element of a course/program. The University has the right to set academic standards, but must prove that a requested change to the curricular requirements would create a substantial change in an essential element.

An important part of the educational experience is that students with disabilities be treated equally and be allowed to fail just as students without disabilities. The legislation does not intend that institutions pass students with disabilities because they feel sorry for them. It is important to expect the same academic performance, with reasonable accommodations, from the students with disabilities as from students without disabilities. Equal access does not ensure success.

Instructor Cover Sheet

Approved testing accommodations and/or make-up exams

Remind your student(s) to make an appointment 3 days prior to exam date.
Fill out the following form completely to bring/email with exam.
Remember to pick up your exam(s) from the ARC during business hours (CUB 230; 8:30-5:00).

Today's DATE _____

Instructor's Name _____ Cell Phone _____

Course Number _____

Student's Name (required) _____

Does this student have testing accommodations through the ARC? Yes No

Amount of time allowed for exam for the class: _____

Date exam must be taken by _____

Aids that are permissible (please check all that apply):

- No aids are permitted for this exam
- Calculator
- Textbook(s)
- Notebook/Notes/Note cards (circle if only one is permitted)
- Laptop Computer
- Dictionary
- Thesaurus
- Word processing
- Other _____

Special Instructions: _____

If you have any questions about approved testing accommodations, please contact the Academic Resources Center.

Instructor or department administrator **MUST** initial exam cover sheet when picking up exam:

Initialed: _____ Date: _____

ARC Use Only

Date Taken _____ ID Checked Staff _____

Start Time _____ Maximum End Time _____

Actual End Time _____ Staff _____