

# **Naugatuck Valley Community College**

## **Guide for Students with Disabilities**

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# **Naugatuck Valley Community College**

## **Guide**

### **For Students**

### **With Disabilities**

Naugatuck Valley Community College is committed to providing equal education opportunity and full participation for qualified students with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), ADA Amendments Act of 2011, and Sections 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

## **1. Disability Services at NVCC**

The Office of Disability Services endeavors to empower all students, to advance their independence and develop a sense of self-advocacy. We strive to create a learning environment which assists students in reaching their full potential with reasonable accommodations. These services are provided at no cost to the student and in a timely manner once necessary documentation to access such accommodations are received.

In determining what types of auxiliary aids and services are necessary to ensure effective communication for individuals with disabilities, the College will:

1. Consider the method of communication used by the individual, the nature, length, and complexity of the communication involved, the context in which the communication is taking place, the number of people involved, and the importance of the communication.
2. Give primary consideration to the requests of the individual with a disability.
3. Provide auxiliary aids and services:
  - i. at no cost to individuals with disabilities
  - ii. in accessible formats
  - iii. in a timely manner
  - iv. in such a way as to protect the individual's privacy and independence.

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires institutions of higher education to provide reasonable accommodations to those with documented disabilities, provided an undue hardship is not created.

An undue hardship refers to any accommodation that would be unduly costly, expensive, substantial, disruptive, or that would fundamentally alter the nature of the business or program.

A reasonable accommodation is the provision of an auxiliary aid, or modification to the course or program, that will allow access to the educational program, material, activity, or degree. Auxiliary aids and services that may be provided to students with disabilities, as appropriate, based on receipt of the necessary documentation to access such accommodations include:

- Making existing facilities readily accessible to, and usable by, persons with disabilities.
- Alternative testing accommodations.
- Provision of note takers and sign language interpreters.
- Provision of print in accessible formats.

It is the responsibility of the student to inform the institution of his or her need for accommodations, and to provide the necessary documentation to access such accommodations.

## 2. Examples of a Disability

The ADA defines disability as any physical or mental condition that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Some major life activities include:

- Concentrating
- Hearing
- Learning
- Walking
- Seeing
- Speaking

## 3. Student Disclosure of a Disability

- It is the responsibility of each student to voluntarily contact the Office of Disability services to disclose his/her disability and request academic adjustments **each** semester.
- All students who are requesting academic adjustments must provide the Office of Disability Services with appropriate documentation substantiating the nature of his/her disability **prior** to academic adjustments being granted.
- The Office of Disability Services reserves the right to require additional documentation from a student if the current documentation is deemed insufficient before granting academic adjustments.
- Eligibility for academic adjustments will be determined by the Office of Disability Services on an individual basis, as validated by the documentation that has been supplied by the student.
- Students are required to provide documentation one week prior to initial appointment, and allow time to discuss academic adjustments before granting them.
- No other representative at the College may determine or grant academic adjustments for a student with a disability.
- Academic adjustments are not retroactive and must be requested each enrollment period.

## 4. Defining Reasonable Academic Adjustments

A reasonable academic adjustment is a modification or adjustment to a course, program, service, job activity, or facility that ensures an equal opportunity for qualified students with disabilities to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, a service, program, or activity. Aids, benefits, or services need not produce equal results, but must afford an equal opportunity to achieve equal results. When necessary, the Office of Disability Services Staff will consult with faculty regarding whether an adjustment would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity, or whether an academic requirement is essential to the instruction being pursued, or to any directly related licensing requirement. In doing so, the Office of Disability Services will examine the following:

- Barriers between individuals with disabilities and the campus environment in accessing courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, or facilities without academic adjustments.
- Requested modifications, adjustments, and auxiliary aids.
- Whether the proposed adjustments would fundamentally alter the nature of the course, program, service, job, activity, or facility.
- Whether an academic requirement is essential to the instruction or to any directly related licensing requirement.
- Whether effective alternatives exist that would allow the individual with a disability to participate without lowering essential requirements or fundamentally altering the nature of the program.

## 5. How to Apply for Disability Services

### Step 1: Gather Official Documentation

The student should gather the appropriate documentation which should:

- Be from the professional who made the diagnosis and be on letterhead with signature and license information.
- Specifically name the diagnosed disability.
- Identify diagnostic testing mechanisms, procedures and results.
- For recent high school graduates, education related documentation usually includes the Psychological Report and the Educational Evaluation including tests, such as, the Wechsler Intelligence Scales (WAIS/WISC) and the Woodcock-Johnson Test of Achievement and the Individualized Education Program.
- Contain a narrative linking the testing results to the effect of the disability on learning and functioning in an educational environment.

### Step 2: Enroll and Choose Your Classes

- In order to begin the process with the Office of Disability Services, you need to have received a letter of acceptance from the college with a student I.D.

number. After you have seen an academic advisor and chosen your classes, please call the Office of Disability Services to make an appointment at 203-596-8608.

### Step 3: Schedule an Appointment

- Bring all your documentation to your appointment. The demand for appointments becomes very high as the semester approaches. New students should contact the Disability Office at least six weeks prior to the beginning of the semester or as soon as possible. Continuing students (those who have provided documentation and previously met with the Disability Office to discuss accommodations) should call at least two weeks prior to the beginning of the semester. Appointments will be scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis.

#### 6. Contact Information (Waterbury and Danbury campus students)

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