



# South Plains College

## Disability Services

Health & Wellness

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Main Office

Phone: (806) 716-2529 Fax (806) 894-7961

## Student Handbook

### Law and Policy

Disability Services at South Plains College provides accommodations and support services for students with disabilities in accordance with Federal laws including Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act, the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and South Plains College policy and procedures.

### Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

Requires colleges and universities that receive Federal financial assistance (including student loans) to make their programs and facilities accessible to individuals with disabilities.

### 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Ensures equal opportunity for persons with disabilities in employment, state and local government services, businesses that are public accommodations or commercial facilities, and in transportation. The ADA also mandates the establishment of telephone relay services for people who use TTYS (telecommunications devices for deaf persons).

### ADA Amendments Act of 2008

Reinstated the broad scope of protection under the ADA. Amended the definitions of disability, major life activities, discrimination on the basis of disability, and additional terminology.

It is strongly recommended that all students who are registered or considering becoming registered with Disability Services read this handbook. It includes information on the following topics: how to register as a student with a disability, how to start using your approved accommodations, rights & responsibilities, and important tips to ensure continuation of eligibility and timely implementation of accommodations.

## ACADEMIC SERVICES

Students are encouraged to meet with Disability Services to begin the accommodation planning process and make arrangements to secure services in a timely manner. Verified students with disabilities are provided with accommodations that may include volunteer note-takers, testing accommodations, interpreters, electronic textbooks, and other accommodations necessary to allow full access to the educational opportunities offered at SPC.

## HOW TO REGISTER & REQUEST ACCOMMODATIONS

South Plains College's Student Disability Services is committed to providing a welcoming and helpful service to SPC students with disabilities and we make every effort to respond to student requests as soon as possible. However, it takes time to arrange for accommodations and students must allow enough time for us to make the necessary arrangements. All accommodations must first be approved by submitting an application and proper professional documentation of a disability.

*Once approved you will be notified in writing via SPC Student Email to make an appointment for your required "initial meeting" and send out your Letters of Accommodation (LOA's). (You must have a class schedule before requesting up your LOA's).*

## STEPS TO REGISTER & REQUEST ACCOMMODATIONS

All admitted students with disabilities who wish to receive accommodations must initiate the registration process by contacting the Student Disability Services. You will be asked to complete an Application for Accommodations and supply appropriate professional documentation regarding your disability.

Only after both the application and documentation are received, can we process your request for classroom accommodations. **Please allow 10-15 business days for this process.**

1. **Application:** AIM Portal to apply for services and upload documentation: <https://bachelor.accessiblelearning.com/SouthPlainsCollege/>
2. Take the TSI Exam if required, then register for classes with your Advisor as soon as possible.
3. Arrange a tour of the campus as soon as you have a class schedule (806-716-2113). South Plains College does not have individuals available the first week of class to walk students to their classes.
4. E-Books: If alternative textbooks and materials are needed by the student, it is the responsibility of the student to register early and to provide the Disability Services with a copy of the receipt from the bookstore. Ordering E-Books may take as long as 4-6 weeks to receive.
5. Sign Language Interpreters: If a sign language interpreter is required, it is the student's responsibility to register early and to request interpreters through Disability Services to facilitate the coordination of available qualified interpreters with the student's schedule. Contact Student Disability Services at (806) 716-2529 to request a Sign Language Interpreter.

### Requesting services in future semesters

6. Beginning two weeks before the start of each subsequent semester, students with disabilities will need to log into their profile on the AIM portal to request their accommodation letters be emailed to their instructors.  
<https://bachelor.accessiblelearning.com/SouthPlainsCollege/>

## IMPLEMENTING APPROVED ACCOMMODATIONS

1. After you have received written confirmation through your SPC email that you have been approved for services and only after you have enrolled in courses, you should schedule an appointment for your initial meeting with Student Disability Services via Zoom or in person.
2. During your initial meeting with Disability Services, you will review your approved accommodations, the process of requesting your Letters of Accommodation through the AIM portal, information on Testing Accommodations, etc. Students will then need to meet with each instructor privately during the first week of class or as soon as possible after accommodations are approved to discuss accommodations in each course and make specific plans for their implementation. Should your accommodations need to be altered or updated contact Disability Services and be prepared to discuss justifications and scenarios for this adjustment. Accommodations will be forwarded after approval and will take effect from that date forward, not retroactively.
3. Communicate Your Concerns. Keep in mind that communication between the student, instructor, and Disability Services Staff is critical to making the accommodation process work. If conflicts occur in the accommodations process, students are asked to inform Disability Services right away.
4. Test accommodations should be discussed well in advance of the test date. Accommodated exams may be proctored by the instructor, the instructor's designee or by Testing Center staff members. Students with test accommodations are strongly encouraged to review and be familiar with the Testing Center Guidelines and be sure to make appointments at the Testing Center at least three to five days in advance.
5. Make requests in advance. Some accommodations require more time to implement and, therefore, require more advanced notice. This includes sign language interpreters, and conversion of textbooks to alternate formats.

## CONFIDENTIALITY AND RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Disability Services is committed to protecting the confidentiality of student information. We retain student records in compliance with both state and federal law, including the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). Should you need a copy of your records or need to transfer them to another college or university, you will need to complete a "Release of Information" form with appropriate contact information in order for our office to process your request. In addition, photo identification is required before records can be released.

## Disability Services Responsibilities

Provide information and services so that students with disabilities may participate in all of the programs, services, and activities of the institution.

Provide services in a timely fashion.

Review documentation of a disability for eligibility and determine on behalf of the institution what types of accommodations are appropriate.

Keep disability-related information confidential, discussing it only with those who have an educational right to know.

Consult with college administration, faculty, and staff on the provision of services, accommodations, and access as required under current federal and state law.

Advocate responsibly for the rights of persons with disabilities.

## Student Responsibilities

Voluntarily identify disability-related needs to the Student Disability Services Staff.

Provide current and complete documentation of disability to Student Disability Services through the AIM portal.

Formally request needed accommodations and services in a timely manner.

Notify Student Disability Services of any changes or concerns in needed services or accommodations.

Abide by the student code of conduct set by the college.

Discuss classroom and testing accommodations with faculty members in accordance with Disability Services policies.

Attend class and maintain the academic standards set by the college, and the department.

Use services responsibly and treat service providers and faculty with respect and courtesy.

Arrange and pay for personal care attendants if needed-SPC does not provide personal attendants.

### Institutional Responsibilities

Provide a campus in which educational, cultural, and extracurricular activities are accessible.

Create policies that encourage the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all programs and activities.

Provide a process so students with disabilities may address their grievances with the institution and the office(s) that provide services.

### PERSONAL AND HEALTH CARE

Fully accredited health care is available on campus through Student Health Services. The Student Health Services office is located on the South side of the Technology Center. A Physician and a registered nurse are available during the spring and fall semesters.

Mental health professionals are available at the Health & Wellness Office during regular business hours. Services provided by the Health & Wellness Office include short-term personal counseling. The Center is staffed by Licensed Mental Health Practitioners and occasionally Graduate Assistants.

Students who require a personal care attendant are responsible for arranging these services and incurring the costs of this services.

### ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Assistive hardware, software, and alternative material are available to students with disabilities who qualify for those accommodations (on campus only). Contact Student Disability Services to request assistive technology.

## INTERPRETER SERVICES

Requests for interpreter services should be completed immediately following your registration for classes in order to assure this accommodation is provided on the first day of class. Contact the Disability Services office on the campus your classes are on as soon as your schedule is set to arrange Sign Language Interpreters. This accommodation takes time to arrange, so plan ahead to make sure an Interpreter will be available on the first day of class.

Students are required to notify Disability Services by email or phone at least 24 hours in advance if they intend to miss class. You must also notify Disability Services in person, by phone or email if interpreter services are needed outside the classroom: (3-day notice for field trip, tutoring sessions or the need to visit with another office for information).

## SERVICE ANIMALS

Service Animals are dogs or miniature horses that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Service Animals are permitted in every area on campus unless posted due to health or safety concerns. Students with Service Animals are not required to register with Disability Services but notification is recommended.

Service Animals in Training are dogs undergoing training by an approved trainer who is an agent of an organization generally recognized by agencies involved in the rehabilitation of persons who are disabled as reputable and competent to providing training for service animals, and/or their handlers. SPC recognizes an approved trainer as “an individual who has been certified by an organization whose primary mission is to train service animals for people with disabilities”. Students will be required to provide Disability Services with contact information for the organization who certified them, as well as a copy of their individual certification.

Approved animals on campus must be under the direct control of the handler at all times. This can occur using a harness, leash, or other tether. The handler is responsible for the care and supervision of the animal. If an animal behaves in an unacceptable manner and the handler does not control the animal, South Plains College may ask for the removal of the animal. The Service Animal itself is an extension of the student and therefore under the same code of conduct as the student. South Plains College has the right to deny access to Service Animals that are disruptive. The Service Animal handler is responsible for repairing or replacing any property that may be damaged by the Service Animal or ESA. The handler is responsible for removal of animal waste. All Service Animals must be vaccinated and licensed according to local or county ordinances.

## **Emotional Support Animals (ESA)**

Emotional support animals are used in the treatment of a diagnosed condition. ESAs are not allowed in campus buildings with the exception of student housing. Refer to the Service Animal and ESA Housing Procedures for further information. Information on Housing can be found at:

<http://www.southplainscollege.edu/campuslife/residencehalls/index.php>

*\*All Emotional Support Animal requests must be submitted to Disability Services on the Levelland Campus by filling out an application through the online portal and provide appropriate documentation.*

*AIM Portal to apply for services and upload documentation:*

<https://bachelor.accessiblelearning.com/SouthPlainsCollege/>

*Only after Disability Services has approved the accommodation of an Emotional Support Animal and required documentation is provided to the Housing Office can the student can bring the animal to campus housing.*

- All required immunizations must be up-to-date and a copy of the immunizations must be on file with the Housing Office.
- Dogs must be licensed by the City of Levelland and a copy of the license must be on file with the Housing Office.
- Dogs must be sprayed or neutered. A copy of the veterinarian's report must be on file with the Housing Office.
- A Certificate of Health signed by a veterinarian certifying the dog is healthy and free from infectious or contagious diseases, parasites, etc., must be on file with the Housing Office.
- Collars and tags must be worn at all times. The dog must be kept on a leash at all times when outside the residence hall. Dogs must never be allowed to run freely.

## **ADVOCACY**

Student Disability Services staff assists students in negotiating disability-related barriers and strive to improve access to college programs, activities, and facilities. Students who wish to voice concerns or discuss campus access, policies and procedures are encouraged to contact Disability Services at (806)716-2529.

## **DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Procedures are in place for those who believe they have been discriminated against within the college's prohibited discrimination policy. You may contact the Vice President for Student Affairs at 806-716-2360.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Refer to Campus Emergency Procedures at:

<https://www.southplainscollege.edu/about/campussafety/emergencyprocedures.php>

## DIFFERENCES YOU CAN EXPECT BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

| Applicable Laws   |  |
|---|--|
| High School   | College  |
| IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)  | ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Title 11)  |
| Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973   | Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973  |
| IDEA is about SUCCESS   | ADA is about ACCESS  |
| Required Documentation  |  |
| High School   | College  |
| IEP (Individualized Education Plan) and/or 504 Plan   | High School IEP and 504 are not sufficient. Documentation guidelines specify information needed for each category of disability. |
| School provides evaluation at no cost to student or family  | Students must get evaluation at own expense.   |
| Documentation focuses on determining whether student is eligible for services based on specific disability categories in IDEA | Documentation must provide information on specific functional limitations, and demonstrate the need for specific accommodations. |

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| <b>Self-Advocacy</b>   |  |
| <b>High School</b>   | <b>College</b>   |
| Students is identified by the school and is supported by parents and teachers          | Student must self-identify to the Disability Office.   |
| Primary responsibility for arranging accommodations belongs to the school.             | Primary responsibility for self-advocacy and arranging accommodations belongs to the student.            |
| Teachers approach you if they believe you need assistance.                             | Professors are usually open and helpful, but most expect you to initiate contact if you need assistance. |
| <b>Parental Role</b>   |  |
| <b>High School</b>   | <b>College</b>   |
| Parent has access to student records and can participate in the accommodation process. | Parent does not have access to student records without student's written consent.                        |
| Parent advocates for student   | Student advocates for self   |
| <b>Instruction</b>   |  |
| <b>High School</b>   | <b>College</b>   |
| Teachers may modify curriculum and/or alter curriculum pace of assignments             | Professors are <b>not required</b> to modify instruction or alter assignment deadlines.                  |
| You are expected to read short assignments that are                                    | You are assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing  |

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| then discussed and often re-taught in class.   | that may not be directly addressed in class.  |
| You seldom need to read anything more than once; sometimes listening in class is enough. | You need to review class notes, read chapters in textbooks and other material regularly.  |
| <b>Grades and Tests</b>  |   |
| <b>High School</b>   | <b>College</b>  |
| IEP OR 504 Plan may include modifications to test format and/or grading.                 | Grading and test format changes (i.e. multiple choice vs. essay) are generally not available.   |
| <b>Tests may be untimed.</b>   | All students are required to complete exams within the specified classroom time or as specified by the professor.<br><br>(Students that are granted extended time due to their documented disability, are only allowed 50% or 100% more time). (Example: Students in class receive 1 hour to complete exam – you receive 1.5 hrs. to complete exam – 50%) |
| Testing is frequent and covers small amounts of material.                                | Testing is usually infrequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material.<br><br>(In most classes you can expect 3 or 4 exams during the semester (16 weeks period) and a comprehensive final)   |
| Teachers often take time to remind you of assignments and due dates.                     | Professors expect you to read, save, and consult the course syllabus (outline); the syllabus spells out exactly what is expected of you, when it is due, and how you will be graded.<br><br><b>Student's awarded 50% more time on work <u>done in class</u> – DOES NOT APPLY TO HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS or TAKE HOME EXAMS.</b>                              |
| <b><u>FINAL COURSE GRADE</u></b><br><br>In high school you usually have 50-70 grades to  | <b><u>FINAL COURSE GRADE</u></b><br><br>In college, you may only have 3 test grades and a final that could be worth up to 50% of your course grade.   |

average for your final grade.

### Study Responsibilities

#### High School

#### College

Tutoring and study support may be a service provided as part of an IEP or 504 Plan.

Tutoring DOES NOT fall under college disability services. Students with disabilities must seek out the tutoring resources that are available to all SPC students.

Your time and assignments are structured by others.

You manage your own time and complete assignments independently.

You may study outside of class as little as 0 to 2 hours a week, and this may be mostly last minute preparation.

You need to study at least 2 to 3 hours outside of class for each hour in class.

15 hour course load means that you are in class for 15 each week x 2 to 3 hours of study time = 30 to 45 hours per week. This is equivalent to a full-time job.

### Auxiliary Aids

You must be granted approval from Disability Services to use these Accommodations:

**Tape/Voice Recorder** – Can be used to tape college lectures

**Spell Checker** – Can be used for spelling. **Cannot be used in an ENGL-0301, 0302 or ENGL-1301 course where use of spelling and grammar are part of the essential course element or objective.**

## ACCOMMODATIONS: WHAT THEY ARE AND WHAT THEY ARE NOT

Accommodations are provided for the purpose of **ensuring equal access** to an education. They are **not** a guarantee of a certain grade or of success in a particular class; rather, they are intended to **“level the playing field”** for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are expected to fulfill all academic and course requirements and evaluation standards, as is expected of all students.

Accommodations are approved on a **case-by-case** basis. They are assigned depending on the documentation that each student submits, the impact of each student’s disorder, and our conversations with each student regarding his/her strengths, weaknesses, and needs. An accommodation which is reasonable in one class may not be reasonable in another.

**No accommodation will be provided if it compromises or alters essential elements or evaluation standards of a course or program of study.**

Accommodations are considered to be **classroom supplements**. They are **NOT** intended to replace regular classroom attendance or participation.

**Accommodations are NOT provided retroactively.** Disability Services is unable to provide accommodations for academic work completed before the student is approved for accommodations or before the student requests accommodations each semester. Therefore, it is **imperative** that you request accommodations as early in the semester as possible.

Students must renew their accommodations each semester. Students will log into their profile in the AIM portal to renew their accommodations 2 weeks prior to the beginning of each semester.

## Accommodations in Higher Education

### **Accommodations cannot:**

- Reduce assignments
  - Ignore attendance policies
  - Alter course material
  - Allow a student to turn in assignments late
  - Alter testing methods
  - Provide options for students to not be penalized for spelling errors, if this is an integral component of the course
  - Affect the integrity of the course in any way
  - Allow an accommodation where the course objective is compromised because of the accommodation.
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- South Plains College is not required to provide a personal attendant, individually prescribe devices, readers or scribes for personal use, homework assignments or study, or other devices or services of a personal nature, such as tutoring or typing.
  - Students must seek out their own tutors. SPC provides free tutoring at each campus location.
  - South Plains College is not required to provide transportation to or from class – or – to or from dorm to class, - or – to or from your residence to the campus.

### **Acceptance into Specific Programs (Nursing, Radiology, Physical Therapy Assistant, etc.)**

In the case of a qualified individual with a documented disability, appropriate and reasonable accommodations will be made unless to do so would fundamentally alter the essential training elements, cause undue hardship, or produce a direct threat to the safety of the patient or student. Students should visit with the specific Program Advisor to determine their eligibility to meet technical requirements and essential elements of the program.

South Plains College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Vice President for Student Affairs, South Plains College, 1401 College Avenue, Box 5, Levelland, TX 79336. Phone number 806-716-2360.