

Reasonable Accommodation Analysis Process

Purpose

The purpose of the disability accommodation process is to ensure a student is not discriminated against due to a disability and has the same level of access to Grove City College (GCC) as their non-disabled peers. Students with disabilities experience equal access when they are able to fully engage and participate in the same programs and activities, utilize the same information shared with everyone, have the same opportunity to achieve and enjoy the same campus services, benefits and experiences as a student without a disability. The goal of our process is equal access, not to facilitate a specific accommodation.

Grove City College prioritizes equity and strives to facilitate accommodations that offer the most equitable experience without fundamentally altering an essential outcome or aspect of a course or campus experience. Students with disabilities are expected to meet the same academic/ conduct standards and essential course objectives as every other student. Furthermore, the overall expectations of being a college student, as required of all students at GCC, are not to be reduced.

Note: Accommodations in the PreK-12 educational environment may reduce standards and expectations to promote academic success due to the fact that success is central to the PreK-12 accommodation approval process. In post-secondary educational settings, the process is substantially different. The fundamental baseline in college is access and equal opportunity relative to other students.

Process

Grove City College facilitates an interactive process to understand a student's disability-related needs and how any accommodations requested may be necessary to ensure nondiscrimination and equal access. Every request for accommodation is explored on an individual basis in which the facts and relevant information are reviewed.

We rely on the following information to make informed decisions:

- Student application
- Supporting documentation from a qualified medical provider
- Student interview
- Input from other campus partners (as needed)

What is the role of supporting documentation in determining reasonable accommodations?

While third-party documentation may be sufficient to establish the presence of a disability, documentation alone does not inform whether an accommodation is reasonable. Medical information will be considered, but it is **not** the definitive information that drives our final decisions. A medical provider's recommended accommodation does not automatically bind Grove City College to approve the accommodation as being reasonable. When recommendations primarily enhance academic success or are considered outside the scope of what is necessary for equal

access, the student will be referred to other resources and given options that may be able to address the specific need.

Supporting documentation helps to establish that a student has a disability and to provide information to help us understand how and why a requested academic, dietary or housing accommodation may be reasonable and necessary to ensure nondiscrimination and equitable access relative to the disability. Our guidelines for supporting documentation are available at <https://www.gcc.edu/Home/Experience-the-Grove/Campus-Life/Disability-Services/Documentation>.

What factors determine if an accommodation is reasonable?

When necessary, reasonable accommodations are facilitated when the accommodation addresses all the following:

- Establishes meaningful access or an equal opportunity to the college experience.
- Logically addresses the impacts of one's disability relative to the barriers/challenges established by and rooted in the academic, dining, housing, and/or campus environment. (Challenges in isolation of an academic/campus barrier are not accommodated.)
- Is logically designed to and will effectively remove the identified academic/campus barrier to create equitable access.

When are academic accommodations potentially not reasonable?

Generally, requested accommodations will not be facilitated for disability reasons if the accommodation would result in any of the following:

- Lowering an academic standard, such that it becomes inappropriately easier for a student to fulfill the mandatory elements or learning objectives required of all other students for the course, program, or degree achievement.
- Removing or waiving acquisition of an essential skill such that it becomes impossible to accurately assess the individual student's learning, knowledge, and course work relative to the required course, program, or degree goals, and/or essential elements.
- Reducing expectations of what is generally expected of all college students (including but not limited to consistent in-class participation, managing time and deadlines, content memorization, experiencing challenges with academic content, etc.).
- A significant change in the nature of the program.
- Establishing the accommodation would pose a health or safety risk to the student with a disability or others within the academic setting.
- Removing or waiving requirements that are directly related to qualifying for a professional license.
- Enhance student success without removing an academic/institutional barrier that impedes equitable access.
- Address something that the student could otherwise manage through various approaches (time management, reduced course load, different study strategies, etc.).

When are housing accommodations potentially not reasonable?

A housing accommodation due to disability is generally not provided for any of the following reasons:

- Solely to ensure the student is successful at GCC.
- To ensure a quiet, solitary place for studying. The Buhl library and other campus buildings have spaces available for students to study.
- To increase comfort or alleviate discomfort in the housing arrangement (such as having a specific roommate or having a roommate-free experience to avoid addressing typical roommate conflicts).
- To ensure a private space for virtual appointments.
- To serve as an alternative to the student developing the skills, abilities, and practices necessary to effectively live on campus.
- When a request is meant for the housing space to serve as part of a student's treatment plan for their diagnosis.
- To increase comfort by making it easier to manage an academic schedule.
- For perceived greater access to services.
- Implementation would pose an undue financial or administrative burden.
- Implementation would fundamentally alter university housing policies.
- Facilitation poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others and/or to personal and GCC property.

NOTE: A requested housing accommodation may not be immediately possible if they are requested and/or approved after the priority deadlines, and rooms meeting the accommodation request are already assigned for the given semester. In such cases students approved for a housing accommodation may be placed on a waitlist and/or given priority placement prior to the next housing cycle.

When are dietary accommodations potentially not reasonable?

A dietary accommodation request due to disability is generally not provided for any of the following reasons:

- Implementation would create a significant change in Food Services policies/practices.
- Establishing the accommodation would pose a health or safety risk to the student with a disability or others and/or to personal or GCC property.
- To serve as an alternative to the student developing skills, abilities or practices necessary to effectively navigate the Food Services.
- Address something that the student could otherwise manage through various approaches (talking with the chef on duty, using the Inspired Eats or Gluten-friendly stations, or our Special Diets program).
- Implementation would pose an undue financial or administrative burden.

Grove City College is committed to providing equal access to opportunity by utilizing appropriate and reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities as intended by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act of 2008.

The Office of Disability Services is the only designated office at the College for students to willingly disclose disabilities, submit appropriate documentation, and request accommodations. Students approved for accommodation are responsible for completing all the steps necessary to use the accommodation(s) each semester/term, if needed, and for reporting any concerns promptly to Disability Services staff.

Questions about this information or requesting accommodations can be directed to DisabilityServices@gcc.edu.