

SIMPSON COLLEGE

Student Accessibility Services Handbook

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General Information

Mission Statement

To remove barriers to the Simpson Experience for students with disabilities.

Vision Statement

Our vision is to provide Simpson students with personalized and holistic self-advocacy and accommodation support. We aim to provide this specialized support through uniquely qualified staff and proactive programming.

Our Purpose

Simpson College Student Accessibility Services (SAS) works with students to develop and implement accommodations for students with documented disabilities. The SAS office supports students with academic, housing, dining, and temporary accommodations. SAS also works with all stakeholders on campus to educate and support the members of our Simpson community regarding ability related needs of students.

Below you will find information about the accommodations process, rights and responsibilities, grievance procedures, and other information valuable to disabled students on our campus.

Contact us with any disability related needs, questions, or concerns at 515-961-1515 or sas@simpson.edu.

Code of Ethics

As members of the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), Simpson College Student Accessibility Services professionals agree to abide by the code of ethics set forth by AHEAD whenever possible. As members of AHEAD we agree to monitor ourselves and each other in accordance with the spirit and provisions of the AHEAD code of ethics below:

Equity and Inclusion

Postsecondary disability resource professionals will

- Act as leaders and advocates for equitable and inclusive policies, procedures, and systems in all facets of campus and community life.
- Facilitate and advocate for the highest levels of access, inclusion, and equity for all disabled people.
- Strive to utilize and facilitate high quality and effective processes, procedures, and services to promote equity and inclusion for disabled people within disability resources offices and the institution.
- Recognize and value the importance of collaborating with the campus and community to promote access, equity, and inclusion.

Respect and Acknowledgment

Postsecondary disability resource professionals will

- Act in ways that acknowledge, consider, and respect disabled peoples' voices, lived experiences, and complex intersectional identities.
- Strive to respect the dignity, worth, and self-determination of all people.
- Take steps to develop awareness of their potential biases, the boundaries of their competence, and the limitations of their experience to ensure that they do not lead to or condone unjust practices.
- Act in ways that respect and acknowledge diversity within higher education and work to create inclusive, equitable, and socially just environments for all.
- Act in ways that respect and acknowledge the professional expertise of campus and community colleagues, while recognizing that professionals may have differing opinions.

Professional Competence

Postsecondary disability resource professionals will

- Work to achieve and maintain the highest levels of competence and integrity in their work to mitigate barriers to disabled people with various intersecting identities.
- Use objective professional judgment in making decisions that impact equitable access and inclusion.
- Continually participate in professional activities and educational opportunities to promote effective disability advocacy, social justice, resources, and services.
- Engage in scholarly activity contribute to the knowledge base of the profession in ways that respect participants, are accessible, and adhere to standards of federal, institutional, and local research ethics.
- Use a social justice perspective to work collaboratively with students and relevant campus and community stakeholders to support the profession.

Laws and Standards of Practice

Postsecondary disability resource professionals will

- Support and clarify applicable local and federal laws to foster equity for disabled people.
- Value and act in ways that respect the confidential nature of records and information about disabled individuals as outlined by relevant federal and local laws.
- Value and carry out their responsibilities in accordance with the AHEAD Professional Standards and Program Standards. When certified, licensed, or affiliated with other professions or organizations, they value and comply with those professional guidelines as appropriate. (AHEAD, 2021)

Association on Higher Education and Disability (2021). *The AHEAD code of ethics*.
<https://www.ahead.org/about-ahead/ahead-ethics>

Information about laws and disability

The [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) and [Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act](#) require educational institutions to provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students with documented disabilities.

The US Department of Education's (in partnership with the Office Civil Rights) pamphlet for postsecondary students with disabilities can be found [HERE](#) and provides information on the rights of disabled students.

Definitions

Disability:

The ADA and Section 504 define a disability as:

- A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of an individual (caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, sitting, standing, lifting, reaching, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working).
- A record of having an impairment that is substantially limiting to a major life activity.
- Being regarded as having an impairment that is substantially limiting to a major life activity.

Please note: disability can be on-going or temporary (related to accident, surgery, injury).

Reasonable Accommodation:

A reasonable accommodation is an adjustment to a course, program, or activity or facility that allows the person with a disability to participate as fully as possible in the programs and activities offered by the college. Accommodations may be necessary when the student has a documented disability.

Reasonable accommodations may not include accommodations of a personal nature (e.g. transportation or personal attendants) or "best" accommodation if another accommodation is reasonable. If an accommodation creates undue financial or administrative hardship for the institution, granting the accommodation is not required.

Emotional Support Animal:

The Simpson College student handbook defines an ESA as a companion animal that a licensed medical professional has determined is necessary and is part of a treatment plan for an individual with a disability. ESAs alleviate one or more identified effects of a person's disability. The animal's presence must have a nexus with the person's disability.
<https://simpson.edu/app/uploads/2026/01/Student-Handbook-2025-2026.pdf>

Service Animal:

The Simpson College student handbook defines a service animal as a dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability that are directly related to the individual's disability (e.g., guide people who are blind, alert people who are deaf, pull a wheelchair, alert and protect a person who is having or is about to have a seizure, remind a person with a mental illness to take prescribed medications, alert individuals to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone, solely providing physical support and assistance with balance to individuals with mobility disabilities, helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or distractive behaviors, etc.). A service animal is not one that provides emotional support, well-being, comfort, companionship, or protection. More information about types of service animals may be found in the handbook [HERE](#).

Single Bedroom Accommodation:

A single bedroom accommodation allows a student to have a bedroom that is not shared with any roommates. This accommodation may be met in a traditional hall or an apartment. If a student with a single bedroom accommodation is placed in an apartment, other people will be placed in the other bedroom. Every effort is made to place students with both their accommodation and their preference in mind but there are circumstances in which only the accommodation can be met.

Private Bath:

A private bath refers to a bath space that can be locked from the inside allowing the student privacy. Other students may also have access to this bathroom when the accommodated student is not using the space.

Letter of Accommodation:

Official document produced by Student Accessibility Services that lists a student's reasonable accommodations

Subject to Change:

The rules, regulations and policies that appear in this handbook were in effect at the time of its publication. They are published for informational purposes only. This handbook does not create any express or implied contractual rights between the College and any student, applicant for admission, or other persons. The information in this handbook is subject to change at any time.

Rights and Responsibilities

(created and adapted using [ISU Shared Responsibilities Statement](#) and Luther college websites)

Student Accessibility Services is responsible for:

- Working with students with disabilities to determine reasonable accommodations as informed by the professional documentation on file
- Providing services and accommodations in a timely manner
- Supporting students, faculty, and staff with conversation regarding accommodations
- Maintaining student confidentiality
- Supporting students with self-advocacy skills to effectively communicate their accommodation needs
- Contributing positively to a disability community on campus
- Viewing the student as the expert on their disability

Note: Reasonable accommodations may not include accommodations of a personal nature (e.g. transportation or personal attendants) or “best” accommodation if another accommodation is reasonable. If an accommodation creates undue financial or administrative hardship for the institution, granting the accommodation is not required.

Student Rights

Admitted Students have a right to:

- To participate fully in the Simpson experience
- Reasonable Accommodations, as determined by SAS when appropriate documentation has been provided
- Confidentiality of disability related information
- Ability to make a complaint when there are problems/concerns with accommodations or discrimination based on disability
- Appeal a decision regarding their accommodations

Students are responsible for:

- [Requesting accommodations](#)
- Providing appropriate documentation that meets SAS guidelines
- Requesting their letter of accommodation and renewing this each semester
- Communicating their accommodation needs to faculty at the beginning of each term and working with faculty to ensure that accommodations can be met
- Notifying instructors and/or SAS if there are difficulties with their accommodations
- Advocating for themselves in the accommodation process
- Communicating testing accommodation needs with faculty and SAS

Limitations to student rights:

- Student may not force an instructor or SAS to implement an accommodation in any specific way
- Accommodations only need to be implemented by instructors upon delivery of letter of accommodation; accommodations do not have to be implemented retroactively

Note: Student Accessibility Services does NOT share accommodation or disability information with faculty except in cases of a safety plan or temporary accommodation.

Instructor Rights

Instructors have a right to:

- Maintain expectations and fundamental nature of their course content
- Request verification of a student's accommodation from SAS
- Require students to demonstrate learning in accordance with the academic standards, Specific Learning Outcomes, and essential knowledge of their course
- Discuss accommodation concerns with SAS if the accommodation seems to fundamentally alter their course
- Request support from SAS with accommodation/disability related issues
- Request an official letter of accommodation from the student

Instructors are responsible for:

- Implementing accommodations as specified by SAS and communicated by the student (NOTE: Accommodations should be implemented when the instructor is notified by the student, but not retroactively)
- Acknowledge accommodations in a timely manner once received from student
- Coordinate student assessment with SAS (re: sending exams 24 hr prior to the testing time whenever possible)
- Notify SAS if there is a barrier to implementing an accommodation
- Maintain confidentiality of disability/accommodation related information
- Viewing the student and SAS as experts on disability and accommodations

Instructors may not:

- Deny reasonable accommodations listed on an official letter of accommodation
- Negotiate accommodations with a student
- Ask a student to disclose a disability or explain why an accommodation may apply
- Ask if an accommodation is necessary
- Request documentation of a student's disability

Note:

If a student mentions a disability, 504 plan, IEP, or accommodations, please refer them to our department at sas@simpson.edu, 515-961-1515, or our website <https://www.simpson.edu/sas>

Important differences between high school and college (adapted from [Luther College](#))

High School	College
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability information is identified and managed by school district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students must self-identify and register with Student Accessibility Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents/Guardians have access to and can be involved with information about classes, services, and accommodations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents/Guardians may not have access to any information or involvement in accommodations process without written student consent (FERPA agreement)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily and weekly schedules are structured within the school and students are expected to be in class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student must manage their own schedule /time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School often initiates discussion about accommodations and implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student must initiate discussion with SAS and faculty about their accommodation needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are reminded of deadlines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student is expected to use syllabi to keep track of deadlines on their own
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to be in class, parents are notified if student misses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are often no noticeable consequences for missed class other than an expectation that the student knows the attendance policy in the syllabus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional support is often initiated and provided by the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional support may be available, but the student must initiate contact and follow through with these resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually little to no homework or work to be done outside of class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-3 hours of work are expected to be done outside of class for every hour in class (8-10 hrs of homework per week for 4 credit course)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classes and schedules may be modified to suit the needs of the student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No changes may be made to the fundamental requirements of a course

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are usually told that they are going to use their accommodations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students choose when and how to use their accommodations and communicate that with faculty
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Accommodations

The process for obtaining reasonable accommodations (temporary or permanent) at Simpson College is as follows:

- 1.) Complete a [request for accommodation form](#) (if you already have accommodations and are requesting a new accommodation, please go to Symplicity and select “supplemental accommodation” and complete the request form there).
- 2.) Provide appropriate documentation. Documentation should be submitted to Simpson College SAS via an upload to the Simpson College Symplicity system, email to sas@simpson.edu, fax @ 515-864-0437, or in person to Dunn 103H or Dunn 103G. Appropriate documentation can include:
 - a. An IEP or 504 plan that is no more than 3 years old
 - b. A neuropsychological evaluation with recommendations for accommodation that is no more than 3 years old
 - c. Simpson-approved [ESA](#) or [Housing](#) forms
 - d. A letter from a medical provider that includes:
 - i. Professional letterhead
 - ii. Notes absence/presence of disability
 - iii. The impacts of disability on daily activities
 - iv. Provider’s explanation of how to mitigate or alleviate the impact/s to daily activities
 - v. Provider signature
- 3.) Student will meet with Director of SAS who will connect you with accommodations, resources and support on campus
- 4.) Approved accommodations are then shared via letter of accommodation

Special notes about housing accommodation requests:

New Requests:

- New housing accommodation requests for students currently living on campus are reviewed in the order they were submitted between **Oct. 1** and **Jan. 15**.
- Incoming first-year students must submit housing accommodation requests by June 1 to ensure the process is complete by move-in day. While we do our best, we cannot guarantee that incoming first-year housing accommodation requests made between June 1- August 1 will result in accommodations being in place for move-in day.
- No housing accommodation requests will be reviewed from August 1 - September 1.

Determinations are made once every two weeks.

Current Housing Accommodation Holders:

- Currently enrolled students must submit new housing accommodation requests by January 15.
- Students renewing previously approved Housing Accommodations for the upcoming academic year need to submit their request by February 10. Students will receive this renewal form by the end of January.
- Housing accommodations must be renewed each year at the start of the spring semester. Renewal instructions are sent via email from Symplicity.

Special notes about Emotional Support Animal accommodation requests:

- All ESAs and Service Animals must be up to date with rabies vaccines and will not be allowed on campus without proof of current vaccination.
- No ESA accommodation requests will be reviewed from August 1 - September 1
- If an animal is approved, the owner must meet with Residence Life staff to review rules and responsibilities of animal owners on campus BEFORE the animal is brought to campus.
- Owners of approved animals must renew this accommodation and provide proof of up-to-date vaccination information each August. Renewal instructions are sent via email from Symplicity.

Please refer to the [Simpson College student handbook](#) for more information on Emotional Support Animals and Service Animals.

Special notes about academic accommodation requests:

- Students must renew academic accommodations each semester. Renewal instructions are sent via email from Symplicity
- Students are responsible for sharing academic accommodations with their faculty. SAS will NOT send accommodations to faculty unless a safety plan or temporary accommodation is in place.
- Students receiving accommodations that include recording course material will be asked to sign a recording agreement. Renewal instructions are sent via email from Symplicity.
- Students using an accommodation that allows for recording of course material are required to sign a recording agreement when they receive the accommodation.

For Pregnancy and Parenting related accommodations contact the Title IX Coordinator, Email: titleix@simpson.edu

Exam Proctoring:

Students with test accommodations may take tests in SAS and are responsible for:

- Scheduling their exam on Symplicity least 48 hrs in advance of the requested time
- Scheduling their exam in SAS at the same day and time as the test is being given in to other students in the course (if this is not possible, SAS requires confirmation that the alternate day and time is acceptable to the professor)

- Communicating with instructors that they are planning to take the test in SAS
- Communicating any changes to approved test room bookings related to illness, injury or emergency with both instructors and SAS as soon as possible.

General Exam Proctoring Information

- Student Accessibility Services is open from 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. Monday – Friday (extended hours for finals) to proctor exams. Exams taken in SAS will be proctored by the Director of Student Accessibility or designee.
- Student Accessibility Services is dedicated to maintaining the highest academic integrity possible in the exam-proctoring environment. Students having exams proctored by Student Accessibility Services will be required to follow the [Simpson College Academic Integrity Policy](#).
- The only materials permitted in the testing room are those provided by the professor, items specified by the professor on the completed exam proctoring form and/or materials provided by Student Accessibility Services at the request of the professor.
- Students are not permitted to leave Student Accessibility Services once the exam begins unless approved by the test proctor.
- The following items are not permitted in the testing room and can be held at the front office:
 - Cell phones, smartwatches, or electronic devices
 - Backpacks, purses, pencil cases, or bags
- All testing rooms are equipped with recording capabilities and will be recording during test sessions. A Student Accessibility Services proctor may enter the test room at any time to perform a random integrity check.
- In the event of a suspected academic integrity violation, a professional staff will ask the tester to stop testing. The exam and any unauthorized items will be collected and returned to the professor. An incident report will be filled out by the test proctor and given to the director and the instructor. SAS will provide instructor or administrator with the video footage if requested. The instructor will determine the next steps related to the test and potential integrity violation. SAS will not discuss the potential violation with the student unless the instructor is included.

Notetaker Accommodations:

This service is provided through peers enrolled in the same course who are employed by SAS. For purposes of privacy, neither SAS nor faculty should reveal notetaker identity or recipient identity. We strive for anonymity between the two parties. Employed notetakers are trained by SAS and any comments or concerns related to notes should be communicated to SAS as soon as possible to ensure the best use of our resources and success for students.

The following are the roles of the Student Accessibility Services Office in relation to notetaking services:

- Student Accessibility Services will contact the professor(s) and confirm receipt of accommodation letter and notetaking needs for the course.
- Student Accessibility Services will work with the student and professor to acquire a notetaker.
- Student Accessibility Services will resolve and respond to any issues related to note taking accommodations.

The following are the expectations of the student hired to provide notetaking services:

- Notetaker will maintain confidentiality in all steps of process
- Notes will be uploaded into the Symplicity Accommodate system by the end of the next academic day
- Notetakers will notify the SAS Office of all class absences ahead of time

Appeals/Grievances

- Students are encouraged to discuss disability-related concerns with Student Accessibility Services professional staff.
- Students may appeal the denial of any accommodation by providing additional information to the director of SAS.
- If a satisfactory resolution is not reached:
 - The student may appeal the decision to the Associate Dean of Student Success for academic accommodations or to the Dean of Students for Housing/ESA accommodations. If a student does not wish to meet to discuss the concern in person, a decision will be made based on the information contained in the request to appeal and any supporting documentation.
- If necessary, the student may continue to appeal academic accommodation concerns to the Dean of Academic Affairs.
- If the complaint is not resolved at the institutional level, a student may choose to file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights at <http://www.ed.gov/ocr/>. Complaints must be filed within 180 days from the date of the alleged discrimination. OCR may extend the 180-day deadline if "good cause" can be shown.
- Complaints can be filed using OCR's electronic complaint form, found at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html>.
- Complaints can also be mailed and should include the following information in the written complaint, or request a Discrimination Complaint Form from an OCR Regional or Headquarters office (complaints must be signed by the complainant or an authorized representative):
 - Your name, address, and telephone number
 - Name and address of the entity you believe discriminated against you.
 - How, why, and when you believe you were discriminated against
 - Any other relevant information.

- Send your complaint to the Regional Manager at the appropriate OCR Regional Office, or to the address located below.

Kansas City

Office for Civil Rights

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 601 East 12th Street - Room 353

Kansas City, MO 64106

Customer Response Center: (800) 368-1019 Fax: (202) 619-3818

TDD: (800) 537-7697

Email: ocr@ed.gov

- Upon receipt, OCR will review the information provided. If OCR determines they do not have the authority to investigate your complaint, they will, if possible, refer it to an appropriate agency.