COVID-19 FACULTY F.A.Q.
STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY AND RESOURCES

Q: A student in my course has requested remote/virtual participation in my class, what should I do?

A: If the student has self-disclosed a disability-related need for remote participation or you are unsure, refer them to the SAR office's COVID-19 Information webpage (link) or online application (link). If the student would like to discuss the SAR approval process before applying, they may call the SAR office directly at 903-566-7079 and ask to speak with a staff member.

Q: What happens after a student is referred to SAR?

A: In order to receive COVID-related accommodations, the student will need to follow the following procedure:

1. Student submits online application for services at https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler/ApplicationStudent.aspx and submits supporting documentation from their treating healthcare or mental health provider. Students may use the SAR Remote Learning Request Form (link).
2. Student application and documentation are reviewed by the SAR Accommodations Review Committee.
3. If application and documentation are sufficient, instructor is contacted by SAR to determine whether accommodation request will fundamentally alter an essential element(s) of their course. If accommodation does not fundamentally alter the course, the request will be approved. If requested accommodation does fundamentally alter the course, alternative accommodations will be discussed and implemented, or request will be denied. **Please note: Denial notifications must be sent to the student in writing. Professors will be asked by the SAR office to provide their pedagogical rationale for denial in writing and departmental administrators will also be contacted.**
4. Student meets with Accessibility Coordinator to discuss accommodation request and available options.
5. If approved, instructor notification emails will be sent to each affected faculty. If not approved, student will be notified in writing and informed of their appeal rights.
6. Determinations will be done on a semester-by-semester basis. COVID-related accommodations approved for the current semester will not automatically transfer to subsequent semesters.

Q: Can I accommodate a student without SAR approval?

A: Yes. If remote options are available in your course, you may accommodate a student request without SAR approval. **Please note: Consistency in accommodating students is crucial. Approving remote learning options for another student in your course may affect SAR accommodation recommendations for students in the same course who choose to go through our process.**

Q: What sort of questions can I expect from SAR during the accommodation approval process?

Instructors can expect questions regarding the essential elements of their course(s), teaching methodology, course structure, and student learning outcomes; however, each set of questions will be tailored to the type of request and format of the specific course in question. Some common questions include but are not limited to:

- What are the general class policies and process and how do they affect equal access determinations?

- What knowledge is the professor or instructor teaching and what activities are being used to determine or measure the student's understanding, implementation, and expression of gained knowledge? For example, what is the test/project/assignment truly measuring and how does the requested accommodation affect or not affect this measurement?

- Does the requested accommodation fundamentally alter the class requirement(s)? If so, be very detailed in describing how this is the case.

- Does the requested accommodation lower the learning standards? If so, explain how.

- Would the accommodation result in undue financial or administrative burden? If so, be very specific in describing how. (Please note: It is usually not sufficient for faculty to assert that an accommodation cannot be met due to the resource constraints of an individual course or program.)

- Does the request give the student an unfair advantage over other students? If so, exactly how? (Please note: Giving the student equal access to remove barriers does not provide an unfair advantage. The accommodation must actually exceed equal access by giving the student an unfair edge.)

- What other equally effective accommodation(s) can be considered and provided that will offer equal access for the student if the instructor denies the requested accommodation?

Instructors are highly encouraged to meet with their supervisors/departmental administrators and/or SAR staff before responding to emailed requests for information.

Q: Does SAR approve COVID-related accommodations because of a household member's immunocompromised status/disability, childcare concerns, or transportation difficulties?

No. While the SAR office recognizes the increased strain on students and their families caused by the pandemic, COVID-related accommodation approvals will only be based on the student's own disability and disability-related needs. Students will be referred to their professors and/or departments to discuss the availability of departmental-approved accommodations.

Q: Is SAR offering any resources or assistance to professors to help them implement remote participation accommodations?

For students who have been approved for remote participation, the SAR office and Testing Center will continue to offer remote proctoring of tests and quizzes. Please note: Due to increased staffing needs during the beginning of the semester, remote/Zoom proctoring will not be offered during the first two weeks of classes. Please contact the SAR office if you would like to coordinate zoom proctoring for your course.

Q: Where do I refer a student who requests remote participation because they are pregnant?

Instructors should refer students to the Title IX office for pregnancy-related accommodations.

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