

The DASS Insider

A newsletter for SMU Faculty

Information on disability services and access issues affecting your students and classes

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Accommodation Letters

Many DASS students deliver their accommodation letters in the first few weeks of a semester. In fact, DASS processes over 3000 letters each semester (for around 650 students) so we do stay very busy verifying them in the DASS Link system and meeting with new students during the first few weeks of the semester. For students new to DASS, the digital delivery of the letters to faculty occurs after a lengthy process involving paperwork, interviews, diagnostic testing, professional review and discussion with DASS staff. Accommodation letters:

are provided during a 1:1 intake appointment with the DASS student (initially).

formalize an agreement between the university and the student. They follow a predictable template to meet legal requirements.

are not all the same. Accommodations granted for unique disability impacts may also include detailed information the student has asked our office to share with you. Please read them carefully to help frame your conversation with the DASS student.

implementation options. Students retain the option of disclosing (or not) their diagnosis to others.

are reviewed and shared digitally for each semester of enrollment for a DASS student. Please verify the letter you receive lists the

are shared with individual instructors only after the student initiates the request in DASS Link.

Sticky Scenarios:

*Some students may provide faculty with copies of their diagnostic information or make requests for accommodations outside the DASS process. In both instances, DASS strongly encourages you to refer students to our office for these needs. Because of confidentiality demands of the review process, faculty should not agree to hold or review diagnostic reports containing protected medical information. Likewise, granting informal accommodations not recognized by the university through the DASS process can lead to situations which jeopardize the university or surprise the student when subsequent faculty do not allow accommodations without a letter. A good rule of thumb is to require the accommodation letter in order to implement accommodations in your class. This policy protects you, the university and the student.

*With the bulk of new DASS students scheduling intake appointments at the start of the semester, we have a limited number of staff available to assist with the process. Please be patient and understand that we are doing our best to accommodate all students as quickly as possible.

When you call the main number at DASS, you usually are speaking with Candy Brown, our DASS Administrative Assistant. Candy works with DASS students in many ways and also coordinates all the test proctoring for the department. If you have students with testing accommodations, we ask that you attempt to manage as many of them in the department as you can. For those who have a scheduling conflict or an accommodation that is more elaborate (2.0x or a reader/scribe), you can refer them to schedule their test at DASS. DASS can be an alternative, but be sure to check out our limitations on our website. Your department may have resources for you, as well, so consider talking to your department Chair person.

As you begin administering tests to your class, we, too, begin test proctoring. We serve as a back-up to faculty but your student *should* know they are responsible to schedule tests *at least* + 'XUmgZfca 'hY 'h'ghXUHY' f]Z 'h'gh]b['Uh85GGE' Z mci 'Xcbfii]bZcfa 'mci f'gh XYbngUVci hU' 'h'ghXUHY' k]h 'Uh'YUgh+ 'XUmgbch]Wz'hUhk]'' fYU''m di h'hYa 'fUbx' i gA Ubx mci 'E]b'U'V]bX.

After your student schedules a test through the DASS online portal, you will receive a test request notification, asking you to log in to DASS Link. It is *critical*ly important to finalize the Test Room Booking appointment in the DASS Link system. This is the perfect time to contact Candy if the student has not accurately scheduled the time or date, or if the test date has been changed or cancelled or the student has decided to test with you. Clear communication between our students, faculty and the DASS office will keep misunderstandings (and stress) to a minimum. Lastly, if you do need to drop off a test (and choose

5800 Ownby Drive | Suite 202 Loyd Center
2nd Floor - Altshuler Learning Enhancement Center
Entrance near Gate 3 of Ford Stadium