

What is ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act?

The Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 ensure that agencies that offer federal financial assistance do not subject individuals with physical and mental disabilities to exclusion, segregation, or unequal treatment. By complying with ADA and Section 504, the college meets basic nondiscrimination requirements, providing access or alternatives for access to facilities, making reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures as necessary; and communicating effectively with people with hearing, vision, or speech disabilities.

Does Tabor offer academic services for students with disabilities?

For any student deemed eligible for special services, Tabor provides reasonable accommodation and/or modifications to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to participate in Tabor programs, services, and activities. The purpose of accommodations is not to ensure success but rather to provide access and equal educational opportunity.

What determines reasonable accommodation?

Reasonable accommodations are granted on a case-by-case basis under an interactive process between the institution and the student. Reasonable accommodation will not and should not:

- substantially alter the educational standards;
- fundamentally alter the nature of the program, course, service, activity, or policy/practice as written and applied;
- Allow access to a program when a student is not otherwise qualified (with or without accommodations) to meet the academic and technical standards required for admission or participation in an education program, course, service, and/or activity;
- cause undue financial or administrative hardship (college-wide);
- be of personal service in nature (personal aid or study coach);
- pose a direct threat to the health or safety of the student with a disability or others as a result of accommodation implementation.

Not all accommodation requests will be granted. Temporary accommodation may be available while the college engages in the interactive process to determine whether ongoing accommodation is appropriate and, if so, which reasonable accommodations are needed. Temporary accommodations do not reflect a determination that ongoing accommodation will be granted and/or which reasonable accommodations are appropriate and do not create an obligation on the part of the college to continue accommodation.

Do I have to disclose my disability to anyone at Tabor?

A student is not required to disclose his or her disability to the college. If a student chooses not to disclose his or her disability to the college, the student is not eligible for accommodations, nor is the college liable for failure to provide accommodations. If, however, a student applies to the Student Success Office for accommodations, the student must provide documentation of his or her disability. The student's disability status will only be shared with relevant Tabor faculty, staff, or administration on a need-to-know basis. After the student has been approved for accommodations at Tabor, the student will not receive retroactive accommodations on work completed before the approval for accommodations was made.

How do I request accommodation?

Step 1: The student must contact the Student Success Office and ask to speak with Daniel Krebs (620-947-3121, ext. 1223 or daniel.krebs@tabor.edu) to discuss accommodations.

Step 2: The student must provide the appropriate documentation in support of his/her accommodation requests.

Step 3: Once the review of the materials is complete, the Student Success Director will contact the student to inform him/her of any accommodations for which s/he was approved. Such accommodations will not be initiated automatically, however (see Step 4). If accommodations are denied, an explanation as to why and what can be done to support those interests will be provided.

Step 4: Within two weeks from the beginning of each semester, the student will inform The Student Success Director of the classes s/he is taking so that the Director can notify the instructors (as requested by the student) to identify specific accommodations, or raise awareness in regards to a condition which may require special consideration. The Director will also ask the student to sign a statement in which the student affirms the specific accommodations requested for the semester.

Note: Steps 1-4 may take up to one week to implement after all documentation is received. Therefore, students are encouraged to initiate this process as soon as possible (before the semester begins or within the first two weeks of the semester). The college is not responsible for providing accommodations for any student who has not requested accommodations in a semester. It is the student's responsibility to provide prompt notice to the Director of Student Success so that instructors can be notified promptly. Instructors are not obligated to provide any accommodations which are not presented in the notice to faculty.

For example, a student should not assume that he/she can wait to request accommodations until the day of an exam! The college is not responsible for allowing a student to take an exam with accommodations, if accommodations were not requested at least one week before the exam. A student will not receive any retroactive accommodations on work completed before the approval for accommodations was made.

Can I request an accommodation directly from my professor, before I have been approved for accommodations?

No. Once you have submitted all necessary documentation to the Student Success Office and have signed a form requesting accommodations, the Director of Student Success will contact the appropriate instructors with the requested accommodations.

Do I need to bring documentation of disability to my initial meeting with Academic Disability Services staff?

While it is helpful for our staff to have as much information as they feel comfortable sharing at our first meeting, documentation of disability is NOT required for the initial meeting. We encourage all students needing services to make an appointment with our staff as soon as they arrive on campus even if they do not have current documentation of disability.

When should I submit my documentation?

The sooner, the better, as the documentation review process may take up to one week. Thus, students are encouraged to initiate the process as early as possible.

Is my conversation with the Academic Disability Services staff confidential?

Yes, you can meet to discuss possible accommodation with our Director, and be assured that all conversations will be confidential. If you decide to request an accommodation, our Director will explain how information will be communicated to appropriate parties on campus and ask you to sign an approval to release disability information for accommodation.

Is it ever too late to request accommodations?

There is no deadline for when a student can begin the documentation process to apply for accommodations; some students don't even get identified with a learning disability or other disabling conditions until their senior year. However, accommodations will not be provided retroactively, and grades will not be changed after a student is approved for accommodations. Students who have used accommodations at their previous institution and who choose not to apply for accommodations when they arrive at Tabor should know that there is no opportunity to retake exams or courses if they are unsatisfied with their grades. Even if a student can establish that he or she had a disability at the time of the course in question, or used accommodations at a previous school, Tabor will not expunge or reexamine coursework completed before the student was reviewed and approved for accommodations at Tabor College. If a student has been approved for accommodations, he or she will have to abide by certain timelines depending upon the kind of accommodation needed.

Do I need to meet regularly with the Director of Student Success?

Although regular meetings during the semester are not required, **students are encouraged to meet with the Director of Student Success at the beginning of each semester.** This meeting allows students and staff to review the past semester and discuss any additional accommodations or issues with the accommodation. Of course, our staff is willing to meet regularly with any student wishing to do so.

What are some of the services Tabor offers?

Academic services for students may include:

- Audible text (when available)
- Extended time on in-classroom exams
- A quiet, distraction-reduced testing environment
- Course note-taker (student volunteer)
- Books in an alternate format when available
- Preferential seating
- Use of assistive technologies
- Use of service animal

Students are encouraged to talk with the Director of Student Success to determine what accommodations may be most appropriate and effective.

Do I have to use all of my accommodations in every class?

Some accommodations may not be appropriate for all classes. For example, if a student has been approved to use a blank sheet of paper as a placeholder on multiple choice exams, and the instructor gives only essay exams, then the accommodation is irrelevant. If a student chooses, however, not to use an accommodation in a given class, then the student will not be given the chance for a re-test or a make-up assignment with accommodations at a later date.

Is there a grievance procedure if I feel I am not receiving my approved accommodations?

Yes, grievances concerning accommodation and appeals (if the accommodation has been denied) can be filed through the Provost with a Grievance Form, available at www.tabor.edu/studentsuccess under 'Disability Support.'

Can my parents contact the academic disability services staff to ask about my academic progress? Our staff believes that the best source of information concerning a student's disability is the student. Release of any specific information concerning disability, academic progress, or accommodation plan will not be discussed with parents without a signed consent form. The student can sign this form at the time of request for services (at the initial confidential meeting) or any time after that.

Can I bring an Emotional Support Animal with me?

Students wishing to have an ESA on campus must seek prior approval from the Dean of Student Life.