A Guide for Students with Disabilities

Academic Support Center
271 Scott Swamp Road
Farmington, CT 06032
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Introduction

Tunxis Community College is committed to the full participation of all students in its programs. Students with disabilities who feel they may require specific academic adjustments or auxiliary support services are encouraged to contact the Learning Disabilities Specialist in the Academic Support Center. This handbook will explain how students with disabilities request academic adjustments and access support services at Tunxis Community College. It serves as a guide to help students understand the guidelines as well as the steps for obtaining reasonable academic adjustments and access to learning in a postsecondary setting.

Philosophy and Mission Statement
The mission of the Tunxis Academic Support Center is to assist students in academic skill development and effective learning enhancement by providing basic skills assessment, learning strategies, tutoring, as well as, support services for students with disabilities. The Academic Support Center’s professional staff strives to promote a comfortable atmosphere, while creating a balance for challenges faced in postsecondary learning and supportive interventions to encourage student academic independence.

The mission of Disability Services (DS) is to support the college in its efforts to provide physical and programmatic access to students with disabilities. This is carried out within the overall goals and mission of Tunxis Community College.

While complying with the legislative guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) and Rehabilitation Act (1973), and the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (2011), Disability Services embraces a philosophy of self-actualization and recognizes that a student’s search for personal fulfillment is driven by access to college academic programs and activities. Disability Services can assist students as they strive to maximize their potential. Our goal is to enhance self-advocacy and self-awareness in a comprehensively accessible environment.

Accessibility: The Key to Equal Opportunity

Assurance of equal educational opportunity rests upon legal foundations established by federal law, specifically the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, including Section 504, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (2011). By federal law, a person with a disability is any person who 1) has a physical or mental impairment; 2) has a record of such impairment; or 3) is regarded as having such an impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities.
Students New to Disability Services: How to Start the Academic Adjustment Process

Tunxis Community College is responsive to the needs of students with disabilities. We have a simple procedure for students who would like to request services and establish eligibility for academic adjustments. There are many academic support options for qualified students.

**How do I request academic adjustments?**

1. Apply and be accepted to Tunxis Community College.
2. Take the Accuplacer computerized placement test in the Academic Support Center.
3. Register for courses through the advising office.
4. Schedule an appointment with a Learning Disability Specialist in the Academic Support Center for an overview of services.
5. Submit appropriate documentation (see pgs. 5-6)
6. Complete an Intake Interview with a Disability Specialist to discuss individual strengths, specific academic adjustments, and to create a Learning Profile as described on page 8.
7. Submit a Semester Academic Adjustments Request form to request Learning Profiles.
8. You will receive a phone call from someone in Disability Services when your Profiles are ready to be picked up.
9. Make an appointment to pick them up.
10. Review your Learning Profile with Disability Specialist and give your Profiles to your instructors.
11. You need to complete a Semester Academic Adjustments Request every semester.
What are the differences between high school and college disability services?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>K-12 (IDEA)</th>
<th>COLLEGE (ADA)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education is a RIGHT and must be provided in appropriate environments to ALL individuals.</td>
<td>Education is NOT A RIGHT. Students must meet certain admissions criteria and be defined under the ADA as “otherwise qualified”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School districts are responsible to identify students’ disabilities.</td>
<td>Students must SELF-IDENTIFY to Disability Services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School districts must provide free testing evaluation, and transportation to programs.</td>
<td>Students must provide transportation as well as current and appropriate documentation. If the documentation is insufficient, students may obtain evaluations at their own cost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School districts develop Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)</td>
<td>NO IEPs are developed at college, there is no special education. IEPs from high school do not apply in college and need not be submitted for services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School districts are responsible for providing all IEP supports and services.</td>
<td>Students are responsible for activating and using approved services every semester.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundamental alterations of programs and curricula are required.</td>
<td>No fundamental alternations are required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal services for medical/physical disabilities is required.</td>
<td>No personal services are required.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why is it necessary to contact the Learning Disabilities Specialist?

The process for obtaining a reasonable academic adjustment in college is an interactive one that begins with the student’s disclosure of his/her disability and the request(s) for academic adjustments to the Learning Disabilities Specialist. Students with disabilities may or may not disclose; however, it is the student’s responsibility to contact Disability Services to initiate the college academic adjustment process. Once contacted, Disability Services will generally schedule two or three meetings with new students.

What is Appropriate Documentation?

Disability Services requires documentation of your disability in order to fully evaluate your eligibility for services. Students with documented disabilities, visible or hidden, qualify for services. Categories of disability include, but are not limited to the following:

- Learning Disabilities
- Autistic Spectrum Disorders
- Attention Deficit Disorders
- Psychiatric Disorders
- Mobility/Orthopedic Disabilities
- Traumatic Brain Injuries
- Chronic Health-Related Disabilities
- Blind/Low Vision Impairments
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing

Documentation Guidelines

- Determination of eligibility for academic adjustments must be supported by appropriate documentation provided by qualified professionals.
- This documentation must substantiate the need for these services based on the individual’s current level of academic functioning in an educational setting.
- Students are required to provide recent (within 3-5 years for learning disabilities/attention deficit disorders; 3-6 months for mental health and/or chronic health disorders) and appropriate documentation relevant to the student’s needs and learning environment.
- Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), Summary of Performance (SOPs), or Section 504 plans from high schools may provide supportive information of a disability, but are not considered sufficient forms of documentation of a disability.
- The DS office will not accept documentation that has been altered in any way or that has pages missing from the text.
Documentation Must Include:

A clear and detailed comprehensive assessment of the disability and/or diagnosis provided by a qualified professional

1. Evaluation of possible alternative diagnoses or explanations by appropriate professionals include school and/or clinical psychologists, educational therapists, special education teachers, licensed psychiatrists, neurologists, or physicians (for medical conditions). Certified/appropriate professionals cannot be family members.

2. Historical and background evidence of existing impairment.

3. Current impact of (or limitations imposed by) the present disability.

4. Treatments, medications, devices or services currently prescribed or used to minimize the impact of the impairment.

5. Expected duration, stability, or progression.

6. Supportive testing and/or qualitative neuropsychological or psycho-educational assessment discussing academic area(s) of impact and/or limitation(s).

7. Recommended academic adjustments with rationale as related to the student’s disability.

8. Integrated summary of medical documentation, related testing, and supportive information.

9. Name, title, address, and phone number of certifying professional, as well as, the date of diagnosis and/or evaluation included on typed letter head.
What are academic adjustments?

Academic adjustments are designed to provide students with disabilities equal access and equal opportunity to participate in programs, courses, services, and activities of the college. Accommodations allow student to be evaluated on their true abilities.

TCC offers academic adjustments designed to “level the playing field” for students with disabilities. All students must learn the same material and are graded according to the same standard. Likewise, all students, including students with disabilities, must comply with the behavioral standards set forth in the College Catalog.

Because many requests for assistance involve access to information, classroom accessibility, and adaptive technology/devices, institutional response and planning may be required. Examples of requests include the provisions of auxiliary aids and services, such as:

- Note taking assistance
- Extended time for exams
- Audio recording of lecture format classes and review sessions
- Sign language interpreters
- Textbooks in alternate formats
- Assistive Listening Devices
- Material enlarged
- Wheelchair accessibility
- Request for accessible table/chair
- Adaptive technology and software
- Scribe/Reader for exams

TCC reserves the following rights which are governed by federal law:

- To deny a request for accommodations, academic adjustments, and auxiliary aids/services if a student’s documentation demonstrates that the requested accommodation is not reasonable, or if the student fails to provide appropriate documentation.
- To select among equally effective academic adjustments.
- To refuse to approve an adjustment that requires fundamental alteration of a program of study or TCC activity.
What is a Learning Profile?

When a student has been approved for an academic adjustment such as allowances for extended testing time, a written “Learning Profile” is developed with the Learning Disabilities Specialist. This profile is then available to the student to present to each of his/her instructors. Students are responsible for communicating this information to their instructors/professors and for discussing academic adjustment arrangements. However, the Learning Disabilities Specialist can assist students through this process and communicate with faculty per student request and with written permission. Learning Profiles are available on a semester-basis and are updated each semester per student request.

How to Request Semester Academic Adjustments

The timeliness of each written request (“Semester Academic Adjustment Requests” noted below) is critical to enable the College to make necessary adjustments and/or obtain required services in coordination with appropriate administrative/department personnel or faculty when required.

All efforts to comply with student requests for auxiliary aids, services and adaptive devices, including rationale for alternative options will be documented and maintained in the student’s confidential file.

1. **Each semester**, complete the “Semester Academic Adjustment Requests” form for the courses you wish to receive adjustments for **at least two weeks prior to the start of the semester**. Remember to list only the courses for which you need adjustments.

2. Make an appointment to pick up your Learning Profiles with disability services personnel.

3. Give the Learning Profile to your instructors as soon as possible, preferably the first day of class.

4. If something changes with your schedule or your adjustment requests, notify a Learning Disabilities Specialist.
**Extended Times on Testing Requests**

Extended time is usually considered to be 100% of the given test time plus 50% more than that afforded other students.

Reduced distraction testing in the Academic Support Center (ASC) is an essential part of this accommodation. It provides a quieter space with fewer distractions than the classroom. Students approved for this accommodation may test in the ASC for all exams.

**Request Process**

1. Students must complete a “Semester Academic Adjustment Requests” form and submit it to Disability Services at least one month prior to the start of the semester.
2. Students deliver Learning Profile to instructor.
3. **Request to take the exam in the ASC by completing the “Academic Adjustment Testing” form at least 2 business days before exam.**
4. Remind the instructor to make a copy of the exam available in the Academic Support Center (ASC).
5. Arrive on time for the test. Failure to arrive on time compromises the Disability Services (DS) testing schedule for that day.
6. If the student is more than 30 minutes late for the exam, the test will be returned to the instructor and the student will need to reschedule another time to take the exam. **The instructor must give DS approval of the new time via email, phone, or in person.**
7. Call the ASC (860-773-1533) 24 hours in advance if you need to cancel or reschedule the testing time.
8. **Students must alert the instructor that they will need to change the time of the test and the instructor must submit their approval via email, phone, or in person. Students may not test without this approval.**

**Scribe/Reader for Exams**

1. Students must complete an “Academic Adjustment Testing Request” form and place it in the Exams Box at least one week prior to the exam date to ensure staff and space availability.
2. The Learning Disabilities Specialist processes the requests and coordinates accordingly.
### FAQs about Extended Time for Tests and Reduced Distraction Testing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I have to use extended time for testing and reduced distraction testing on every test?</td>
<td>No. You do not have to use this academic adjustment. You can always choose to test in the classroom without extended time for testing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I test in the classroom with extended time for testing instead of going to the Academic Support Center?</td>
<td>No. If you want extended time, you need to test in the Academic Support Center. Professors are not equipped or expected to proctor tests with extended time in the classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What should I do if an exam or quiz takes place at the beginning or end the class?</td>
<td>Quizzes need to be taken in class without extended time unless arrangements can be made for the quiz to be taken at another time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What should I do if a professor suggest that I take a test without extended time?</td>
<td>You have the right to use extended time on your tests for all exams except lab exams. You can agree with your professor’s suggestion if you feel comfortable doing so. However, you can also tell your professor, “I have been approved for this academic adjustment and prefer to use it.” If you encounter any difficulties, please contact a Learning Disability Specialist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why do I need to remind my professor that I am taking my test/exam in the ACS?</td>
<td>Your professor will need a reasonable amount of time to deliver your test to the ASC and to complete paperwork prior to your testing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I start my exam in the classroom and decide to use extended time in the ASC?</td>
<td>No. Once you start the exam, you cannot stop and continue taking it at another time or in another place.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Alternate Format Textbooks Requests

Alternative format textbooks accommodation makes the content of the textbooks accessible for students whose disability affects their ability to interact with printed textbooks and process printed materials. Alternative format may include audio books, digital talking books, e-texts, and Braille.

We request that you make your requests for alternate format textbooks at least 4-6 weeks in advance of the first day of classes.

1. Register for classes.
2. Complete a Semester Academic Adjustments Request and check off “Audio Books” or write in the program you think you may need.

Accessible Furniture

Accessible Furniture is defined as a chair and/or table placed in the classroom for use by the approved student. For example, a student who uses a wheelchair may request a table that provides an accessible writing surface. A person who has severe back pain may request a free-standing chair if the classroom only provides attached seats. Accessible Furniture is simple, uncushioned furniture provided as a means to improve classroom access.

Request Process
1. Students must complete a “Semester Academic Adjustment Requests” form and submit it to Disability Services at least one month prior to the start of the semester.
2. Disability Services will email the TCC Facilities Department with a request for accessible furniture.
3. Facilities will contact Disability Services once the request has been fulfilled.
4. It is up to the student to communicate with Disability Services if any issues arise.

NOTES
- Accessible furniture is not prescriptive; it is provided only to improve classroom access.
- Students are responsible for bringing any needed cushion or orthopedic support; the college is not responsible for items left in the classroom.
- Students must contact Disability Services immediately if their schedule or classroom location changes.
- Students must contact Disability Services immediately if they find accessible furniture is missing or has been moved to another classroom.
Interpreting Services and Assistive Listening Devices

If sign language services or assistive listening devices are deemed appropriate, Disability Services will hire qualified providers through approved vendors. Students may also request the adjustment of a note taker in their classes to provide written notes. Please refer to the Interpreting Services Guidelines for specifics on how to request these services.

Request Process
1. Students must complete a “Semester Academic Adjustment Requests” form and submit it to Disability Services at least one month prior to the start of the semester.
2. Students need to complete an interpreting request/assistive listening device request form that provides information about current schedule and needs.

NOTES
- Students in need of interpreting services should make their request at least 4-6 weeks prior to the first day of classes.
- If requests are not made early, students risk services being unavailable.
- Students requesting services for specific events must follow the same procedures as they would when requesting services for classes.
Note Taking Assistance
If note taking assistance is deemed as an appropriate academic adjustment, Disability Services, faculty, and students will be involved in a multistep process to seek volunteers from classes to provide copies of their own notes.

Request Process
1. Students must complete a “Semester Academic Adjustment Requests” form and submit it to Disability Services at least one month prior to the start of the semester.
2. Fill out a Request for Note Taking Assistance and get it approved by a Learning Disability Specialist.
3. Pick up an announcement and sign-up sheet for a volunteer note taker from Disability Services in the Academic Support Center (ASC).
4. Take the announcement and sign-up sheet, along with your Letter of Academic Adjustment, to your professor who will ask for a volunteer from the class. They will pass around a sign-up sheet. Your name will not be used in the announcement.
5. After class, get the sign-up sheet from your professor and return it to the ASC.
6. Take your own notes to the best of your ability. Recording lectures to listen to again can be a good option. Please see a Learning Disability Specialist for more information on recording lectures.
7. Get a copy of your notes in the Academic Support Center. They are made available within 24 hours after each class.
Grievance Procedure

Students with disabilities who feel that they are not receiving the services they are due by law should address their concerns with the Director of the Academic Support Center, Kathleen Schwager (kschwager@tunxis.edu or 860.773.1523) If that is uncomfortable or the response they receive is not acceptable they should address their concern to the Dean of Student Affairs and ADA/504 Coordinator, Kirk Peters (kpeters@tunxis.edu or 860.773.1483).

Disability Services Contact Information

Please contact Cathy if you have any questions regarding Disability Services.

Cathy Felice
Learning Disabilities Specialist
860-773-1524
cfelice@tunxis.edu
# Assistive Technologies

ASC ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY INCLUDES:

| **NATURALLY SPEAKING** | A computerized speech recognition system. With Naturally Speaking, you can dictate text in any Windows applications and the internet by simply speaking. You can also use Naturally Speaking to control all of your favorite applications using voice commands. This enables “hands free computer use” by automatically transcribing speech to text. |
| **JAWS** | A screen reading software that reads everything that appears on the computer screen. This assistive technology allows users access to a wide variety of information. |
| **INSPIRATION** | Mind mapping software that allows students to think visually. Inspiration helps students in the process of brainstorming and organizing ideas for written documents. Students can use a “rapid fire” approach to get the ideas mapped out and then the software will organize the ideas into an outline. |
| **TOUCH TURNER** | A page turning device that turns pages both forward and reverse. The sensitive switch actuates the turning action and can be accomplished with a finger, eyebrow, chin, etc. |
| **MALTRON KEYBOARDS** | Adaptive keyboards for use with a single hand. Using only one hand means only using one side of the brain for typing, which can make it easier to learn the keyboard and increase efficiency. |
| **EZ-MAGNIFIER** | Magnifies a computer screen |
| **MINIPRINT 425 (TTY)** | A device to direct connect a telephone line with a TTY keyboard and display. When you use direct connect, you can dial from the keyboard. The auto answer answers calls and prints messages when person is unavailable. |
| **READ AND WRITE GOLD** | Assistive technology software program developed by Texthelp Systems that reads electronic text such as from e-books, websites, and documents created in word-processing documents. |
| **SMART VIEW** | SMART VIEW is a video magnifier which provides large print access to text and information (20” monitor). |
Emergency Evacuation Plan

The Academic Support Center works with the Dean of Administration to provide students with disabilities information on emergency response planning. Emergency rescue chairs have been installed on the second floor stairways of the 600 building and at the top of the second floor landing of the 700 building. Individuals with disabilities who cannot use stairwells:

- Please do not use the elevators. Go to closest stairwell marked on the map below and wait for assistance.

  600 Building—2nd floor stairwells located at both ends of the building  
  700 Building (Library)—2nd floor stairwell

- The Fire Department will be the first to respond in case of an emergency.
- All indicated stairwells will be checked by emergency personnel.
- Remain in stairwell until all clear or assistance arrives.
# Frequently Asked Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>How do I request academic adjustments for an online course?</strong></td>
<td>To request extended testing time for an online course please follow the same process used for requesting any other academic adjustment. The extended academic testing adjustment allows additional time to complete the online exam, but does <strong>not</strong> allow access to the test once it is closed (unless arranged otherwise). Once the online test is open, the student is expected to complete the exam. This academic adjustment also does <strong>not</strong> allow access to the test beyond the designated testing date/s posted by the instructor. Testing date/s remain the same.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>When do I submit the Semester Academic Adjustment Requests Form?</strong></td>
<td>Prior to the beginning of each semester.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Once you have registered for classes (use the information on your pink registration copy).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>As soon as possible. Requests are processed in the order received. Some requests such as interpreters, audio books, and copies of notes require advance notice to allow for time to coordinate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What is the Semester Academic Adjustment Requests” form?</strong> (The Pink Sheet)**</td>
<td>Every semester students submit a “Semester Academic Adjustment Requests” form if they would like to request one or more academic adjustments in their semester courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students complete request form for Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer sessions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do I need to request a Learning Profile each semester?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Yes.</strong> If you plan to request an academic adjustment, such as extended testing time, you will need to request Learning Profiles for your classes each semester. You may not sign up to take tests with extended time if you have not requested an academic adjustment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How do I request a Learning Profile?</strong></td>
<td>Complete a “Semester Academic Adjustment Requests” form and submit to Disability Services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Schedule an appointment with Disability Services personnel to pick up your Learning Profile.</td>
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</table>
# Student Resources

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Support Center/Placement Testing</td>
<td>773-1533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admissions</td>
<td>773-1490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising Office</td>
<td>773-1510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookstore</td>
<td>773-1338</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business Office</td>
<td>773-1320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Center</td>
<td>773-1390</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counseling</td>
<td>773-1510</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dean of Student Services</td>
<td>773-1483</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information Center</td>
<td>773-1300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid Services</td>
<td>773-1422</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>773-1550</td>
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<tr>
<td>Registrar/Records</td>
<td>773-1440</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Activities</td>
<td>773-1361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Information (from Tunxis)</td>
<td>773-1510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunxis Weather Line</td>
<td>773-1301</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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