Student Accessibility Services

A Guide for Students with Disabilities

Academic Success & Tutoring 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 accommodation or auxiliary support services are encouraged to contact the Associate of Student Accessibility Services or the Learning Disabilities Specialist in the Academic Success & Tutoring. This handbook will explain how students with disabilities request academic accommodations and access support services. It serves as a guide to help students understand the guidelines as well as the steps for obtaining reasonable academic accommodations and access to learning in a postsecondary setting.

Notice of Nondiscrimination

Tunxis Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, marital status, ancestry, present or past history of mental disorder, learning disability or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or genetic information in its programs and activities. In addition, the College does not discriminate in employment on the basis of veteran status or criminal record. The following individuals have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Amy Feest Interim Dean of Academic Affairs, 504/ADA Coordinator, afeest@tunxis.edu, 860.773.1631 and Cheryl Cyr, Interim Director of Human Resources/Affirmative Action Officer ccyr@tunxis.edu 860.253.3045, Tunxis Community College 271 Scott Swamp Rd, Farmington, CT 06032.
Defining Reasonable Accommodations

A reasonable accommodation is a modification or accommodation to a course, program, service, job activity, or facility that ensures an equal opportunity for qualified students with disabilities to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, a service, program, or activity. Aids, benefits, or services need not produce equal results, but must afford an equal opportunity to achieve equal results. When necessary, Student Accessibility Services (SAS) staff will consult with faculty regarding whether an accommodation would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program or activity or whether an academic requirement is essential to the instruction being pursued or to any directly related licensing requirement. In doing so, SAS will examine the following:

- Barriers between individuals with disabilities and the campus environment in accessing courses, programs, services, jobs, activities or facilities without accommodations;

- Requested modifications, accommodations, and auxiliary aids;

- Whether the proposed accommodations would fundamentally alter the nature of the course, program, service, job, activity, or facility;

- Whether an academic requirement is essential to the instruction or to any directly related licensing requirement;

- Whether effective alternatives exist that would allow the individual with a disability to participate without lowering essential requirements or fundamentally altering the nature of the program.

- When the University determines that a modification related to facilities or communication would result in a fundamental alteration or undue burden, SAS shall acquire the written opinion of the proper authority, i.e. department chair of impacted discipline, providing the reasoning supporting the decision.
Philosophy and Mission Statement

Student Accessibility Services supports the educational experience of students with permanent and temporary disabilities. Our goal is to enhance self-advocacy and self-awareness in a comprehensively accessible environment.

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).

Student Accessibility 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. Student Accessibility Services can assist students as they strive to maximize their potential.
What are the differences between high school and college accessibility and disability services?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>K-12 (IDEA)</th>
<th>COLLEGE (ADA)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual Disability Education Act</td>
<td>Americans with Disability Act</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Education</strong></th>
<th><strong>Higher Education</strong></th>
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<td>is a right and is provided in appropriate environments to all individuals.</td>
<td>is a choice and all students follow certain admission criteria.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>School districts</strong></th>
<th><strong>Students</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>are responsible to identify students’ disabilities.</td>
<td>self-identify in higher education. At Tunxis, students contact Student Accessibility Services.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>School districts</strong></th>
<th><strong>Students</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>provide free testing evaluation, and transportation to programs.</td>
<td>arrange their own transportation and submit appropriate documentation. An evaluation is the student’s responsibility</td>
</tr>
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</table>

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<tr>
<th><strong>School districts develop Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)</strong></th>
<th><strong>IEPs are not developed at college; college support is not called special education</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| **School districts are responsible for providing all IEP supports and services.** | **Students are responsible for activating approved services every semester and following the steps for access to approved accommodations.** |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Fundamental alterations of programs and curricula are required.</strong></th>
<th><strong>No fundamental alterations of course criteria or standards are required.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| **Personal services for medical/physical disabilities are provided.** | **Personal services are the responsibility of the student.** |
Academic Success & Tutoring Center-Access and Disability Support Services Checklist

Step 1: Admission, Financial Aid, Disability/ Student Accessibility Services

- Visit [http://tunxis.commnet.edu/admissions](http://tunxis.commnet.edu/admissions) for Admission and application information.
- Upon acceptance, all students receive a (BANNER) Student ID Number to be used for all campus related transactions.
- If you are accepted into a degree or eligible certificate program, interested students may apply for student financial aid (grants, loans, work-study); information available online tunxis.edu and search financial aid.
- Students with a disability who are interested in requesting reasonable accommodations/academic adjustments, please see STEP 4 (you may contact a Learning Disabilities Specialist at any time to discuss support services).

Step 2: Course Placement

- Submit the [Course Placement Form](#) or if available, take English and Math Placement Exams.
- If you need special accommodations, please contact Cathy Felice at 860-773-1524.

Step 3: Register for Classes

- Refer to the links noted in your acceptance letter to schedule an advising appointment at one of the New Student Registration sessions.

Step 4: For a general overview of accessibility services, please email [TX-DS@Tunxis.edu](mailto:TX-DS@Tunxis.edu). If interested in obtaining accessibility support services, access the Accommodate site at: [https://tunxis-accommodate.symplicity.com/public_accommodation/](https://tunxis-accommodate.symplicity.com/public_accommodation/). Prior to the Intake meeting, provide a copy of your most recent documentation by uploading it directly to the Accommodate site noted in Step 4 or emailing to TX-DS@Tunxis.edu. Examples of documentation include: Psycho-educational Evaluation report and/or 504 Plan (if completed in high school) and/or medical documentation. Submitted documentation becomes part of a confidential file that is used in assessing the appropriateness of requested academic adjustments. School districts maintain confidential records on file for 7 years.
- At the Intake meeting be prepared to discuss your history of learning strengths, challenges and adaptive technology use in preparation to request semester academic adjustments.
- The Intake Interview is generally 30-45 minutes.

Step 5: Request an intake meeting by completing the required information in the Accommodate site noted in Step 4.
Why is it necessary to contact the Learning Disabilities Specialist?

Tunxis Community College is responsive to the needs of students and we have a 2-step procedure for students who choose to contact Student Accessibility Services and establish eligibility for academic accommodations. (Please see steps 4 & 5 above) Though not inclusive, we assist students who disclose:

- 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

While students are a vital source of information, in order to determine reasonable and appropriate accommodations, we may also request information from other sources in order to establish a disability and the impact it has on learning in a postsecondary environment.

➢ Students are encouraged to submit any prior assessments and/or evaluative reports conducted by evaluators, physicians, medical professionals, etc., which may assist in determining appropriate academic accommodations.

➢ Documentation should be current and provide a clear and detailed comprehensive assessment of the disability and/or diagnosis provided by a qualified professional.

➢ This documentation should substantiate the need for these services based on the individual’s current level of academic functioning in an educational setting.

➢ Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), Summary of Performance (SOPs), or Section 504 plans from high schools may provide supportive information of a disability; however, students are asked to also submit the most recent Psychological/Educational Evaluation Report completed in high school.

➢ As requested, a Medical Verification Form is available to assist students who are currently working with a professional in the health field.

Documentation may include:

1. Evaluation of possible alternative diagnoses or explanations by appropriate professionals such as clinical psychologists, educational therapists, special education teachers, licensed psychiatrists, neurologists, or physicians. Certified/appropriate professionals cannot be family members.
2. Background history and/or evidence of existing impairment.
3. Current impact of (or limitations imposed by) the present disability.
4. Treatments, medications, or services in place.
5. Expected duration, stability, or progression.
6. Neuropsychological or psychological-educational assessments that discuss academic area(s) of impact and/or limitation(s).
7. Recommended academic accommodations 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 Accommodations?

Academic accommodations are designed to provide students with disabilities equal access and opportunity to participate in programs, courses, and college activities.

An overview of some academic accommodations include:

- 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

Please note: an academic accommodation does not change the academic standard/s or criteria of a college course, nor does it provide a fundamental alteration of a program of study.

What is an Accommodation Letter?

When a student has been approved for an academic accommodation such as; allowances for extended testing time, a written “Accommodation Letter” is developed with the Learning Disabilities Specialist.

Each semester the Accommodation Letter is shared with faculty; students are responsible for requesting their letters each semester.
How to Request Semester Academic Accommodations

**New Students**
- To begin a confidential file with Student Accessibility Services and request an intake meeting, complete the required information located on our Accommodate site at: [https://tunxis-accommodate.symplicity.com/public_accommodation/](https://tunxis-accommodate.symplicity.com/public_accommodation/)

**Returning Students**

1. Access the Accommodate site at: [https://tunxis-accommodate.symplicity.com/](https://tunxis-accommodate.symplicity.com/) to submit a semester request form. This should be done as early in the semester as possible, since accommodations are not in place until your instructor receives your Accommodation Letter.
2. If something changes with your schedule or your accommodation requests, notify a SAS Specialist at [tx-ds@tunxis.edu](mailto:tx-ds@tunxis.edu).
Extended Testing Time

Extended time is usually considered to be 100% of the given test time plus additional 50% more time, i.e., if an exam is scheduled for 1 hour; the student with extended testing time has approval to test for 1 ½ hours.

Reduced distraction testing in the Academic Success & Tutoring (ASTC) 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 ASTC for all exams.

All Students - Please Review These Steps for Testing in the Center!

1. Students who have met with the Learning Disabilities Specialist and have approval for extended testing time are asked to submit the Semester Request through the Accommodate site at: https://tunxis-accommodate.symplicity.com/
2. An Accommodation Letter must be provided to the instructor so that they are aware of the testing accommodations.
3. At this time, testing in the ASTC is limited and by appointment only. Request to take the exam in the ASTC by emailing SAS at TX-DS@Tunxis.edu as soon as possible and at least 2 business days before exam.
4. Remind the instructor to make a copy of the exam available in the Academic Success & Tutoring (ASTC).
5. Arrive on time for the test. Failure to arrive on time compromises the Student Accessibility Services (SAS) testing schedule for that day.
6. If a student is more than 30 minutes late, you may need to reschedule another time to take the exam because of proctor availability. The instructor must give SAS approval of the new time via email, phone, or in person.
7. Call the ASTC (860-773-1530) in advance if you need to cancel or reschedule the testing time. Also, it is the student’s responsibility to contact his/her instructor.

Scribe/Reader for Exams

1. Follow the same request process as documented above for Extended Time on Tests, however, please submit testing request form at least one week prior to the exam date to ensure staff and space availability.
2. The SAS Specialist processes the requests and coordinates accordingly.
**Alternate Format Textbooks Requests**

Textbooks are available in alternative formats for those students who qualify with a print or processing disability that affects reading accuracy. Alternative formats may include e-texts and audio books, both of which make the content more accessible through features such as text to speech with highlighting. If requesting alternate format textbooks, contact Student Accessibility Services staff at least 3 weeks prior to the first day of classes.

**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, un-cushioned furniture provided as a means to improve classroom access.

**Request Process**

1. Students must complete the *Semester Request* form located on the Accommodate site at: [https://tunxis-accommodate.symplicity.com/](https://tunxis-accommodate.symplicity.com/) indicating the classes they are requesting accessible furniture in **at least one month prior to the start of the semester**.
2. Student Accessibility Services will email the TCC Facilities Department with a request for accessible furniture.
3. Facilities will contact Student Accessibility Services once the request has been fulfilled.
4. It is up to the student to communicate with Student Accessibility Services if any issues arise.

- **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 Student Accessibility Services immediately if their schedule or classroom location changes.
- Students must contact Student Accessibility 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, Student Accessibility Services will hire qualified providers through approved vendors. Students may also request the accommodation 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

Students must complete the Semester Request form located on the Accommodate site at: https://tunxis-accommodate.symplcity.com/ indicating the classes they are requesting services in as well as a completed Interpreting Request/Assistive Listening Device Request form that provides information about current schedule and needs.

- 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 at the start of the semester.
- Students requesting services for specific events must follow the same procedures as they would when requesting services for classes.

Note Taking Assistance

If a student is approved for note taking assistance, a SAS staff member, in collaboration with the student (and instructor if applicable), will determine the appropriate method of assistance for each class. Students should schedule a consultation with a SAS Specialist as soon as possible if they believe they will be requiring note taking assistance. If comprehensive notes are available from the instructor, on Blackboard, or through the use of technology (audio recording), additional note taking assistance may not be indicated.

Contact SAS staff as soon as possible if you require additional training or you have concerns with the technology you are using for note taking assistance.
Assistive Technologies

Student Accessibility Services retains hardware and software to aide students with both specific and nonspecific learning disabilities.

**READ&WRITE GOLD**
A software program to support reading and writing with a customizable toolbar that floats on top of commonly used applications including Microsoft Word and Google Docs. The software includes many features such as text to speech, vocabulary list builder, dictation, and fact mapper.

**NATURALLY SPEAKING**
A computerized speech recognition system allowing you to dictate text in any Windows applications and the internet by simply speaking. 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**
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.

**EZ-MAGNIFIER**
Magnifies a computer screen.

**ECHO SMART PEN**
The Echo Smart Pen can record everything you write, hear, or say. Lectures may be replayed by tapping on your notes. Notes may be transferred to your computer via a USB cable and Live Scribe Desktop. Smart pens may be loaned out for a semester, the only charge that would incur is if a device is lost, damaged, or otherwise not returned.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Frequently Asked Questions</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>How do I request academic accommodations for an online course?</strong></td>
<td>To request extended testing time for an online course please follow the same process by submitting the semester request form through our Accommodate site(<a href="https://tunxis-accommodate.symplicity.com/">https://tunxis-accommodate.symplicity.com/</a>). The extended testing accommodation 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 accommodation does <strong>not</strong> allow access to the test beyond the designated testing date/s posted by the instructor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>When do I request Semester Academic Accommodations?</strong></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>Do I need to request an Accommodation Letter each semester?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Yes.</strong> If you plan to request an academic accommodation, such as extended testing time, you will need to request your letters for your classes each semester. You may not sign up to take tests with extended time if you have not requested an academic accommodation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How do I request an Accommodation Letter?</strong></td>
<td>Students must complete the <strong>Semester Request</strong> form located on the Accommodate site at: <a href="https://tunxis-accommodate.symplicity.com/">https://tunxis-accommodate.symplicity.com/</a> as soon as possible. Upon receipt, SAS staff will email the letter to your assigned instructor(s) with a copy to you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do I have to use extended time for testing and reduced distraction testing on every test?</strong></td>
<td>No. You do not have to use this academic accommodation. You can always choose to test in the classroom without extended time for testing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Can I test in the classroom with extended time for testing instead of</strong></td>
<td>It would be up to the discretion of your Professor if they are able to accommodate your extended test time accommodation in the classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>going to the Academic Success &amp; Tutoring Center?</strong></td>
<td>Alternative arrangements should be discussed directly with your Professor.</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What should I do if an exam or quiz takes place at the beginning or end the class?</strong></td>
<td>Quizzes are generally taken in class without extended time arrangements; contact Student Accessibility Services to discuss further as needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What should I do if a professor suggest that I take a test without extended time?</strong></td>
<td>You have the right to use extended time on your tests for all 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 accommodation and prefer to use it.” If you encounter any difficulties, please contact Student Accessibility Services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Why do I need to remind my professor that I am taking my test/exam in the ASTC?</strong></td>
<td>Your professor will need a reasonable amount of time to deliver your test to the ASTC and to complete paperwork prior to your testing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Can I start my exam in the classroom and decide to use extended time in the ASTC?</strong></td>
<td>Once you start the exam in class, it must be completed in class. However, if arranged in advance, some students will start an exam in class &amp; complete in the Center.</td>
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Emergency Evacuation Plan

The Academic Success & Tutoring 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.
**Grievance Procedure**

Students with disabilities who feel they are not receiving the services they are due by law should address their concerns to the Interim Dean of Academic Affairs and ADA/504 Coordinator, Amy Feest ([afeest@tunxis.edu](mailto:afeest@tunxis.edu) or 860.773.1631).

**Student Accessibility Services Contact Information**

Please contact Cathy if you have any questions regarding Student Accessibility Services.

- **Cathy Ann Felice**  
  Learning Disabilities Specialist  
  860-773-1524  
  [cfelice@tunxis.edu](mailto:cfelice@tunxis.edu)

- **Debbie Kosior**  
  Associate of Student Accessibility Services  
  860-773-1526  
  [dkosior@tunxis.edu](mailto:dkosior@tunxis.edu)
# Student Resources

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<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Success &amp; Tutoring/Placement Testing</td>
<td>773-1530</td>
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<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Center</td>
<td>773-1390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling</td>
<td>773-1510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean of Student Services</td>
<td>773-1480</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information Center</td>
<td>773-1300</td>
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<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>
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