

## Student Rights

In college you are responsible to make sure that your needs are met. Two federal civil rights laws can assist you in reaching your school goals. These laws are called the **American with Disabilities Act (ADA)** and **Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act**. These laws provide students with certain rights.

- the right to equal access to post secondary education
- the right to non-discrimination
- the right to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of your school
- the right to an accessible education
- the right to an appropriate accommodation
- the right to have information about your disability kept private
- What rights do you have that are not currently being met?

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Understanding the laws can assist you in achieving success as a student. Many web sites on the Internet can help you learn more about how these laws relate to you. One site that answers many of the questions you may have is located at

[www.pacer.org/pride/504.htm](http://www.pacer.org/pride/504.htm)

In addition, the state you live in may have laws, often called "human rights laws" which prohibit discrimination and require equal access for people with disabilities.

Please realize that the laws do not require a school to lower its academic standards. Schools will not

- Give you easier work or
- Change the rules to make it easier for you than other students

You must continually meet relevant academic and conduct standards to receive protection of the law.

## Accommodations

The law states that some students with disabilities have a right to academic accommodations.

Accommodations are changes to how things are normally done which provide you with an equal opportunity to participate in and enjoy the benefits of your education. Accommodations include

- changes to a classroom environment or task
- removal of architectural barriers
- modifications to policies, practices or procedure
- provision of appropriate auxiliary aids and services

*(Please see student brochure #2, Accommodations for Students with Disabilities, for more details.)*

What accommodations would be helpful to you in the classroom?

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## Disclosure

If you think you will need any accommodations because of your disability, you must tell your school. You will not receive

accommodations or assistance unless you tell the Disability Resource Center of your disability. You may also have to provide paperwork on your disability.

**Your responsibility** is to tell your school that you will need an accommodation. Each school has its own paperwork requirements necessary to arrange an accommodation. Most schools require that you provide recent, professional documentation from a doctor or other licensed professional. Simply put, you may have to prove you have a disability.

- What paperwork does your school require to prove your disability?

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- Where can you get copies of this documentation?

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Accommodations must be appropriate and effective for your situation.

An effective accommodation will address your specific limitations caused by your disability.

Finally, understand that your school must provide educational accommodations at no cost to you. But they do not have to provide or pay for

- Personal devices
- Accommodations for personal use
- Accommodations which fundamentally alter a school program or cost too many people to make it work.

This means that schools will not pay for personal care attendants; they will not pay for you to have an accommodation at home to do your homework; and they do not have to provide an accommodation if it is too expensive.

## Student Responsibilities

*Check off each responsibility when completed.*

- 1. Notify the School**  
If you will need any accommodation, register with the Disability Resource Center.

- 2. Provide Documentation**  
A student's responsibility is to provide professional documentation of his or her disability. The Disability Resource Center will be able to tell you what types of documentation are required.

- 3. Determine Accommodation**  
Determine your classes' requirements and possible needed accommodations.

- 4. Request Accommodation**  
Request accommodations as far in advance as is possible.

- 5. Meet Academic and Conduct Standards**  
You get no special treatment because you have a disability. You must still meet the essential requirements of a class or program.

## Self Advocacy

3 in a 6 Part Series

**Winona State University  
Disability Resource Center**

**136 Howell Hall**

drc@winona.edu

[www.winona.edu/disabilityservices](http://www.winona.edu/disabilityservices)

Voice: 507-457-2391

FAX: 507-457-2957

MN Relay Services:

1-877-627-3848

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This Brochure is available in alternative formats upon request.

# Rights and Responsibilities of Students with Disabilities

A short guide to knowing and understanding the law and what it means to you



**In a 6 Part Series**