Student Access Services (SAS)

Information for Faculty on Eligibility, Accessibility, and Accommodated Testing Services

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Hope Fisher, Director of SAS
Maureen Dour, Academic Support Coordinator

access@marymount.edu
703-284-1538

http://www.marymount.edu/Academics/Services-Resources/Student-Access-Services/Information-for-Faculty-Staff

SAS is located in the Center for Teaching & Learning (Rowley G105)
• Student Access Services (SAS) trends
• Universal Design and Classroom Engagement
• Accommodation Eligibility and Process
  – Faculty Contact Sheet
• Debunked Myths about SAS
• Testing Center Process and Procedures
• Audio-Video Accessibility
• General Tips for Increased Accessibility for all Students
• Example accommodations
• Questions?
The number of enrolled college students with disabilities has been on the rise for the past 25 years, and studies show that this trend will continue.

The U.S. Department of Education reports that:

- 11-14% of high school students going to college received disability accommodations in high school
- 3-4%* of college students have actually requested disability accommodations from their college/university *(meaning, only 1/3 of students who could potentially receive these support services in college will ever request or use them)*

*At Marymount, 5.9% of the student population is receiving accommodations for disability (~200+ MU students)
- 89% of Marymount students registered with SAS have disabilities that are not readily apparent, such as learning or psychological disabilities.
Marymount’s SAS Office works in collaboration with other MU departments to facilitate the removal of “barriers to access” for over 200 students and coordinates the provision of reasonable accommodations to self identified students with documented learning, psychological and physical disabilities.

- SAS primarily ensures curricular adherence to the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) and its Amendments, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (not to be confused with high school “504 plans” or “IEP’s”), and regulations set forth by the U.S. Dept. of Justice and the U.S. Dept. of Edu.
- Some state, local, and other federal legislation also guide SAS policies and decision-making (i.e., FERPA, VA Code).

Marymount embraces universal course design (UDL) to facilitate learning for all MU students. This approach keeps the focus on broad program objectives and reduces the need to provide many individualized accommodations to a large group of students. SAS and the CTL are available to consult with you on incorporating UDL principles into your course.
Eligibility determinations are made by the Director of SAS, based on the student’s current functioning and written documentation from a licensed professional in a field related to the students’ specific diagnosis.

- Eligibility criteria are based upon the best practices and guidelines set forth by the Association of Higher Education and Disabilities (AHEAD).
- Criteria can be met by combining more than one medical record or doctor’s letter.
- In some circumstances, students with partial documentation can receive accommodations on a temporary basis from SAS.

In addition to the documentation, these factors are considered:

- Student’s level of ability and prior educational experiences
- Primary educational deficits, particularly, for the skills required to be academically successful (i.e., persistence, self-advocacy)
- Student’s input regarding current academic support needs
- Range of accommodations considered ‘reasonable’ for Marymount
- Essential institutional and learning program requirements
Accommodations are reasonable adjustments to the academic environment that allow students with documented disabilities a level ‘playing field’ and therefore cannot alter the essential requirements of any course.

• Students are not required to disclose disabilities (unless they want to receive accommodations) or to use accommodations for a disclosed disability.

• No accommodation can excuse students from attending class, submitting late assignments or taking missed exams without prior planning.

• Student accommodation preferences are considered but not automatically granted by SAS.

• The nature of testing accommodations do not allow for “pop quizzes.”
  • Unscheduled exams/assessments cannot be counted against a student who has been approved for testing accommodations because they do not allow the student an opportunity to make the necessary arrangements.

The course instructor and their respective department has a say in whether or not an accommodation would alter the essential program objectives.
Upon approval for academic accommodations, SAS provides students with electronic and hardcopies of their Faculty Contact Sheet (FCS). The FCS is:

- a summary of disability related academic concerns and approved accommodations, as discussed with the student and SAS
- created collaboratively with the student and signed by Director of SAS
- not enforceable for a particular course, without the instructor’s signature
- not retroactively applied, yet is available at any point throughout semester

Faculty must read, sign and keep copy of the FCS each semester. Accommodations listed on the FCS that do not apply to a given course should be disregarded.

- Any faculty concerns regarding conflicts between the stated FCS accommodations and the course’s stated learning objectives must be brought to the attention of the SAS Office, BEFORE signing the FCS.
SAS FACTS:

- Research shows that although students benefit from accommodations, effective faculty relationships and comprehensive student support services have led to higher success rates for college students, regardless of their disability status.
  - Students should NOT be asked to “go through SAS”, in order to receive the same services that are openly available to other MU students through other offices.

- Services provided by other MU offices are not duplicated by SAS for students with disabilities.
  - Ex., students who are struggling with course subject matter should see a CTL tutor, while a student in crisis is best served by going to the Counseling Center’s posted walk-in hrs.

- Emergency absence notification letters and support for students with short term illnesses/injuries comes from MU’s Office of Student Development which is in the Division of Student Affairs (not through the SAS Office in Academic Affairs).
Debunked Myths about SAS: Policies

**SAS FACTS (cont’d)**

- Students with Service Animals are not required to register with SAS and must be allowed in class. Full policy available on the SAS "Policies" webpage.

- Changes to essential program requirements—such as modifications to the course sequence of a given major, or liberal arts core substitutions—are granted by a Committee and must be approved by the VP of Academic Affairs and Registrar.

- Students who need to arrange accommodations for their internship or on-campus job sites may seek consultation from SAS, but the internship or job site is responsible for providing them with reasonable accommodations.

- MU students registered with SAS are required to follow the same code of ethics and standards of conduct as all other Marymount students.
  - Conduct issues, inappropriate behavior, students in crisis, etc. must be referred to the appropriate office in Student Development/Affairs, not SAS.

*Please use the information on MU’s website and e-Concierge to refer students appropriately. Connecting your student to the right office will help to avoid miscommunications and delay of support services.*
Testing Center Facts

• Only SAS approved students with current signed FCS may use the CTL Testing Center.

• The Testing Center is not available on a walk in basis.

• Students are responsible for scheduling appropriate testing reservations.

• **Testing date and time should overlap the date and time that the class is taking the exam.** Any difference must be approved by professor.
  • The SAS and CTL offices do not arrange date or time details for students.

• Testing Center is open from 9am – 6:45pm Monday – Thursday and from 9am – 4:45pm on Friday. Exams must start and end during these times.
  • Final Exams are only offered at 9am or 2:30pm Tuesday December 15th – Saturday December 19th.
1. Student submits signed FCS to CTL, and receives an additional copy of accommodated testing service brochure.

2. Student learns of date and time for in class test and schedules at least 3 business days before testing date.

3. Student emails testing@marymount.edu to request a reservation. Email contains the date, start time, faculty name and full course name.

4. Testing Coordinator emails professor a “CTL Test Request Form” and the day and time that the student requested.

5. Professor returns a copy of the test and a completed “CTL Test Request Form” at least 24 hours before the scheduled exam. The test request form provides test instructions, the professor’s preferred method for returning completed tests, and contact information for the professor during the exam.

6. Space permitting, the test is scheduled and the student is notified that he or she has a testing reservation and that their professor was contacted.
Providing accessible media formats for videos and audio that are assigned to students or shown in class is not only good Universal Design, it’s required. The conversion of inaccessible media into accessible formats can be expensive, so please think twice before selecting an uncaptioned video or an unscripted audio file for your courses.

SAS recommends the following to ensure that your class media is accessible:

1. Whenever possible, select media that is already captioned or accompanied by a transcript.

2. Insert captions into your own videos or create your own transcripts.
   - a list of Do-It-Yourself tools on the SAS website under “Captioning & Audio Transcription Tools”

3. Send your media file to SAS for professional captioning/transcription services.
Tips for Classroom Accessibility for ALL Students

• Review aloud the activity’s purpose and objectives, rules for group etiquette, and other requirements.

• **Provide multiple ways for students to participate and succeed.**

• Clearly describe the indicators of successful completion of the assignment or activity.

• **Provide written instructions for multi-step activities.**

• Provide online copies of all PowerPoints, assignments and handouts.

• **Reduce page distractions on written materials.**

• Provide appropriate blank space on written materials.

*Go to the SAS website for additional tips and tools, including the SAS syllabus statement: [http://www.marymount.edu/Academics/Services-Resources/Student-Access-Services/Information-for-Faculty-Staff/Faculty-Procedures-Guide](http://www.marymount.edu/Academics/Services-Resources/Student-Access-Services/Information-for-Faculty-Staff/Faculty-Procedures-Guide)*
Testing Accommodation Examples

- Extended 1.5 or double time
- Low distraction testing area vs. isolated testing area
- Specialized lighting or temperature
- Noise cancelling headphones
- Ear plugs
- Magnifiers (hand-held and built-in PC features)
- Computer screen overlays
- Tinted lenses
- Keyboard to type answers
- No Scranton (bubbles)/no answer transferring requirement
- Basic calculator
- Staggered exam dates
- Enlarged font
- Digital test format
- Exam breaks
- Water, snacks, etc.

For a comprehensive list of accommodations and descriptions, see the SAS website and the link to the HopeTool’s Accommodations List Builder: http://www.marymount.edu/Academics/Services-Resources/Student-Access-Services/Information-for-Faculty-Staff/Faculty-Procedures-Guide/Accommodations
Classroom Accommodation Examples

- Physical location of classroom
- Seating arrangements
- Access to notes, guides and presentations before class
- Sign language interpreters
- Volunteer peer note-takers
- Service animals (*Trained dogs & mini-horses, not cats & lizards!*)
- Assistive devices & other accessible technology*
- Alternative format texts*
- Accessible media formats* (*i.e., closed captioned videos*)

* More info on specific accessible technology and media available online:
  
  https://docs.google.com/document/d/1h61fr29f-1nPNNx3bV7OYyoIr5pDnPsgCIXBa7r7-Pg/pub
  and http://www.marymount.edu/Academics/Services-Resources/Student-Access-Services/Accessible-Technology