



# **Rhode Island College Disability Services Center**

## **Policies & Procedures Manual**

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## **Use of this Manual**

This policy and procedures manual is a working document designed for students, faculty and administration to obtain general information, which is subject to change with or without notice. This manual is not a contract; it serves as a source of guidelines. Specific questions about proper procedures, policies, and accommodations for students with disabilities should always be directed to the Disability Services Center.

## **Commitment**

The Disability Services Center is the central location on campus for disability-related services for students and is a primary resource to educate, train, and guide the college community in understanding disability access, rights, and responsibilities.

We recognize disability as a form of diversity, promote the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in all aspects of college life, and endeavor to make students aware of the many opportunities and resources available to them at Rhode Island College.

We are committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and supporting them in achieving their academic goals. We serve students with all types of disabilities: mobility, hearing, vision, motor, psychological, learning, attention, speech, medical, developmental, and other conditions. In addition, the Disability Services Center shall seek to assist students with temporary impairments, who are in need of short-term accommodations. Support services may include classroom and testing accommodations, advisement, referrals, and use of assistive technology.

Students who self-identify and provide the Disability Services Center appropriate documentation of their condition may be eligible to receive reasonable accommodations in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and analogous state laws. The Disability Services Center is also available to advise any student who needs information about how obtain appropriate documentation of a disability.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)/**  
**The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504**

In accordance with state and federal law, it is the policy of Rhode Island College that *“no otherwise qualified person with a disability...shall, solely by reason of ...disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity.”* The Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, defines the term “disability” to mean a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

Major Life Activities include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working.

A Major Life Activity also includes the operation of a major bodily function, including but not limited to, functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.

**Note:** Although individuals with temporary impairments are not regarded as having a disability under the ADA, the Disability Services Center nevertheless attempts to assist students who need short term accommodations. For the sake of convenience, the references in this manual to "students with disabilities" include both students who meet the legal definition and those whose impairments do not meet the legal definition.

## **Policy on Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action**

Pursuant to the philosophy of the Board of Governors for Higher Education, Rhode Island College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, gender, religion, disability, age, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity or expression, marital, citizenship status or status as a special disabled veteran, recently separated veteran, Vietnam era veteran, or any other veteran who served on active duty during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized (except in those special circumstances permitted or mandated by law). This nondiscrimination policy encompasses the operation of the College's educational programs and activities including admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic and other College-administered programs. It also encompasses the employment of College personnel and contracting by the College for goods and services. The College is committed to taking affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified women and members of minority groups identified in state and federal affirmative action laws and executive orders, persons with disabilities (including qualified special disabled veterans), and veterans of the Vietnam Era.

The College's policy of nondiscrimination is consistent with Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 11246, the Equal Pay Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Americans With Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 402 of the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, and the relevant Governor's Executive Orders and Rhode Island Gen. Laws § 28-5.1 et seq.

Inquiries concerning the College's administration of the nondiscrimination laws should be addressed to the Director of Affirmative Action, 314 Roberts Hall, Rhode Island College, Providence, RI 02908-1991, tel. (401) 456-8218. Questions regarding provisions for students with disabilities should be directed to the Office of Student Life, Craig-Lee Hall Rm. 119, Rhode Island College, Providence, RI 02908-1991, tel. (401) 456-8061. Questions regarding provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) should be addressed to the ADA Coordinator, 114 Roberts Hall, Rhode Island College, Providence, RI 02908-1991, tel. (401) 456-8216.

## **Registering with the Disability Services Center**

The process of registering as a student with a disability includes three elements in order to be considered complete:

- 1.) Students with disabilities who enroll at Rhode Island College should self-identify and register with the Disability Services Center as soon as possible, in order to receive reasonable accommodations.
- 2.) Appropriate documentation of the disability must be provided, as detailed in Documentation section of this manual.
- 3.) A Release of Information form must be signed by the student allowing the Disability Services Center to verify registration and eligibility for accommodations.

## **Confidentiality**

**Disability Documentation:** In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Disability Services Center maintains the confidentiality of registered students' Disability Documentation and will not release any part of the documentation without the student's written consent.

**Registration and Accommodation Information:** In order to begin the accommodation process, students with disabilities must sign a Release of Information form.

- By signing the Release, students authorize the Disability Services Center to confirm to Rhode Island College Faculty and Staff whether the student is registered with the center and which relevant accommodations may be required.
- The Disability Services Center will only provide Off-Campus persons (i.e. family members, doctors, case workers, etc.) with information regarding a student only if written authorization to communicate with the person is given on the Release of Information form.

**Extraordinary Circumstances:** In some circumstances, in order to assist a student with a disability, it is necessary to share certain otherwise confidential information with on or off campus persons whom the Disability Services Center deems have a "need to know". This will not be done, absent extraordinary circumstances, without the student's permission. Such circumstances may include releasing relevant information to appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies, or complying with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.

**Transcripts:** The use of reasonable accommodations is not recorded on a student's official college transcript.

**Disposal of Confidential Information:** The Disability Services Center will shred all information on file after five (5) years of no contact with a registered student.

## **Disability Documentation**

The Disability Services Center requires students to submit appropriate documentation for substantiating a disability and verifying a request for particular accommodations. Disability Services staff work with students on a case-by-case basis to understand how a disability may impact a student and to make informed decisions about reasonable accommodations and support services in a college setting.

Such decisions are based on a combination of information gathered from documentation from qualified external or third parties as well as consultation, observations, and interactions with a student about his or her experience of disability, barriers, limitations, strengths, learning style, and effective and ineffective accommodations. The Disability Services Center is available to advise any student who needs information about how obtain appropriate documentation of a disability.

### **Documentation from Qualified External or Third Parties**

Documentation from external sources may include educational or medical records, comprehensive reports created by health care providers, psychologists, teachers, or the educational system. This information is inclusive of documents that reflect education and accommodation history. Documentation will vary in its relevance and value depending on the original context, how recently the evaluation was conducted, credentials of the evaluator, level of detail provided, and the comprehensiveness of the narrative.

### **Essential Elements of Quality Documentation:**

- **The credentials of the evaluator(s)**  
The best quality documentation is provided by a licensed or otherwise properly credentialed professional who has undergone appropriate and comprehensive training, has relevant experience, and has no personal relationship with the individual being evaluated. A good match between the credentials of the individual making the diagnosis and the condition being reported is expected (e.g., an orthopedic condition might be documented by a physician, but not a licensed psychologist).
- **A diagnostic statement identifying the disability**  
Quality documentation includes a clear diagnostic statement that describes how the condition was diagnosed, provides information on the functional impact, and details the typical progression or prognosis of the condition.
- **A description of the diagnostic methodology used**  
Quality documentation includes a description of the diagnostic criteria, evaluation methods, procedures, tests and dates of administration, as well as a clinical narrative, observation, and specific results. Where appropriate to the nature of the disability, having both summary data and specific test scores within the report is recommended.
- **A description of the current functional limitations**  
Information on how the disabling condition(s) currently impacts the individual

provides useful information for both establishing a disability and identifying possible accommodations. A combination of the results of formal evaluation procedures, clinical narrative, and the individual's self report is the most comprehensive approach to fully documenting the impact.

- **A description of the expected progression or stability of the disability**

It is helpful when documentation provides information on expected changes in the functional impact of the disability over time and context. Information on the cyclical or episodic nature of the disability and known or suspected environmental triggers to episodes provides opportunities to anticipate and plan for varying functional impacts.

- **A description of current and past accommodations, services and/or medications**

The most comprehensive documentation will include a description of both current and past medications, auxiliary aids, assistive devices, support services, and accommodations, including their effectiveness in ameliorating functional impacts of the disability. A discussion of any significant side effects from current medications or services that may impact physical, perceptual, behavioral, or cognitive performance is helpful when included in the report.

- **Recommendations for accommodations, adaptive devices, assistive services, compensatory strategies, and/or support services**

Recommendations from professionals with a history of working with the individual provide valuable information for review and the planning process. It is most helpful when recommended accommodations and strategies are logically related to functional limitations; if connections are not obvious, a clear explanation of their relationship can be useful in decision-making. While the postsecondary institution has no obligation to provide or adopt recommendations made by outside entities, those that are congruent with the programs, services, and benefits offered by the college or program may be appropriate.

For Documentation guidelines based on specific Type of Disability, and a listing of qualified professionals, please see the following documents:

*Guidelines for Documentation of:*

- *Attention Deficit Disorders*
- *Autism Spectrum Disorders*
- *Medical Conditions*
- *Hearing Disabilities*
- *Learning Disabilities*
- *Physical Disabilities*
- *Psychiatric/Psychological Disabilities*
- *Temporary Conditions*
- *Vision Disabilities*

Each of these documents may be obtained from the Disability Services Center or viewed on our website at [www.ric.edu/disabilityservices](http://www.ric.edu/disabilityservices).

## **Accommodations**

Appropriate accommodations are determined on an individual basis for students who register with the Disability Services Center, and are based upon specific recommendations and justifications for reasonable accommodations, as described in the Disability Documentation section of this manual. The final determination for the nature of appropriate and reasonable accommodations rests with Rhode Island College.

### ***Regarding accommodations, students agree that:***

1. Accommodations will not alter or waive an essential part of any course, program, or degree.
2. Technical standards or requirements set forth by the major or school will be met.
3. Receiving reasonable accommodations is not a guarantee of academic success.
4. Accommodations are not retroactive.
5. The effectiveness of accommodations requires an independent effort from the student to accept certain ongoing responsibilities for planning, managing, monitoring, and communicating accommodation needs.
6. In order to receive Testing and Classroom accommodations each semester, Request for Reasonable Accommodation letters must be requested from the Disability Services Center at the beginning of each semester.
7. Students must deliver each Request for Reasonable Accommodation letter to their professors as early as possible. Once the student and professor have discussed the student's accommodation needs and the professor has signed the letter, the original letter must be returned to the Disability Services Center. (Professors and students may make copies of these letters, as needed.)
8. Testing and Classroom accommodations become effective on the date that the Request for Reasonable Accommodations letter is signed by the professor and are only valid from the date signed through the end of the semester.

### **Facilitating Accommodations:**

The Disability Service Center serves as an advocate for students with disabilities and also encourages students toward self-advocacy and self-determination. If a student experiences a problem requesting or receiving reasonable accommodations at the College and is unable to resolve the problem directly with the faculty or staff member providing the accommodation, he/she should contact the Disability Services Center as soon as possible for assistance with negotiating and implementing reasonable accommodations

## **Testing Accommodations**

### **Extended Time for Exams**

If documented, a student may request extended time to complete exams. This usually consists of 1 ½ to double time. Extended time for exams allows a student to have additional time to complete the exam on the day it is scheduled for the class, not the ability to take the exam at a later date (e.g. due to lack of preparedness). The extra time needed to complete an exam should be scheduled such that it does not interfere with the student's other regularly scheduled classes.

### **Separate Location for Exams**

If documented, a student may request to take exams at a separate location that will help to reduce distractions. *Please keep in mind that separate rooms are not guaranteed to be completely distraction-free or private. However, disposable earplugs are available from Disability Services upon request.*

### **Readers for Exams**

Some students may have documentation indicating an accommodation for readers on quizzes and exams. The reader is only allowed to read exam material and is not allowed to clarify questions.

### **Scribes for Exams**

Some students may be eligible for physical assistance in the writing of an exam. The scribe is only allowed to write the exam material that the student dictates. The student is solely responsible for proper spelling and grammar.

### **Use of Computers during Exams**

In some circumstances, students may be permitted to use a computer to type an exam. The professor has the right to determine if functions other than basic word processing will be available to the student.

### **Use of Assistive Technology**

Some students may be permitted to use Assistive Technology for taking an exam, based on their technology needs. Permission to use Assistive Technology for taking exams shall be granted on a case by case basis.

### **Use of Calculator during Exams/Class**

The use of a calculator may be allowed as an accommodation for certain documented disabilities as long as it does not interfere with the student's learning and measuring the student's knowledge and/or skill regarding an essential component of the course. Calculators will not be allowed for exams that measure arithmetic or ability to calculate.

## Policy for Testing Accommodations

### Testing Accommodations, Type I

**Provided by the Professor:** In most cases, a student's professor will arrange testing accommodation requests for extended time and/or a separate location within his/her department .

#### Student responsibility:

- You should provide your professor with a Request for Reasonable Accommodations letter (obtained after you have registered in Disability Services) **at the beginning of the semester** in order to receive testing accommodations.
- For **each** test, you must remind your professor to arrange testing accommodations **at least one week before** the actual test date to ensure your needs are met.
- If applicable, discuss your need to have a separate location in which to take your exam that will help to reduce distractions. **Please keep in mind that separate rooms are not guaranteed to be completely distraction-free or private. However, disposable earplugs are available from the Disability Services Center upon request.**
- Discuss with your professor the amount of time you will need to complete the exam (usually 1 ½ to double time, per documentation). The extra time should be scheduled to **not interfere with your other regularly scheduled classes.**
- The Disability Services Center will provide assistance if your professor indicates that he/she is **unable** to make testing arrangements within his/her department. **You must notify the Disability Services Center at least one week in advance of the test date if such assistance is needed.**

### Testing Accommodations, Type II

**Provided by the Disability Services Center:** In certain cases, specialized accommodations (for example: scribes, readers, or assistive technology) may need to be arranged within the Disability Services Center's testing room.

#### Student Responsibility:

- Call 456-2776 or stop by Disability Services **at least one week in advance of the test date** to schedule your test if such accommodations are needed.
- Be sure to arrive **on time**, otherwise you will cut into your extended exam time and you may not have enough time to complete the exam.
- If you are unable to take your exam as scheduled, you must contact your both professor and Disability Services. The professor handles all decisions related to rescheduling.
- If you do not call or show up, your exam will be returned to your professor.
- Only items indicated by your professor will be allowed into the testing location.
- You will not be allowed to bring personal items (purses, backpacks, cell phones, etc.) into the exam. All personal items will be locked up and returned to you upon completion of your exam.

## Classroom Accommodations

### **Peer Note-Taker Requests**

Students who are eligible for a peer note-taking assistance should notify their professor of the need for a note taker at the beginning of the semester. The professor will make an announcement to the class to ask if anyone is interested in volunteering to provide notes for another student and ask that any volunteers meet with the professor after class. The student and note-taker can meet after class to make copies of the notes. If the student needing the notes does not want to be identified, the note taker can drop off copies of the notes in the Disability Services Center. Notes can be photocopied in the Disability Services Center at no charge. If no volunteer peer note-taker comes forward, the student should contact the Disability Services Center immediately.

### **Permission to Record Lectures**

Eligible students may use their own audio recording device or may borrow a digital voice recorder from the Disability Services Center (for individual classroom use only) at the beginning of each semester, on a first come, first served basis. Students must inform professors that they will be recording. Some professors will require students to sign an agreement to ensure that the recorded lectures are not disseminated.

### **Copies of Lecture Notes and/or Study Guides**

Eligible students may request copies of professors' lecture notes, study guides, PowerPoints and other visual aids, *if available*. Professors are not required to produce lecture notes for individual students, if they are not already using them to teach.

### **Extended Time to Complete Large Assignments**

Some students may be eligible for extended time to complete assignments. Using this accommodation requires timely communication **For each extension desired:** The student must request the extended time for the assignment from the professor. The professor will determine if extended time is possible, and the length of the extension.

### **Accommodations for Verified Disability-Related Absences**

Based on current documentation, some students may be eligible to receive flexibility with making up assignments or exams for verified **disability-related** absences. Such flexibility will not alter or waive requirements or assignments for the course, as determined by the professor. Students should meet with their professors to discuss the extent to which this accommodation may be reasonable for a particular class. The student and professor should have a clear understanding of what accommodation can be made for disability-related absences. If attendance is an essential part of the class and absences become excessive, a medical or mental health withdrawal may be considered a reasonable accommodation. Absent extraordinary circumstances, this accommodation will not be granted for courses involving labs, clinical environments, practicums, workshops, seminars, and other attendance dependent environments.

### **Other Accommodations**

All recommendations for accommodations are made on a case-by-case basis. Students requesting other accommodations should meet with the Disability Services Center.

## Accommodations for Second Language Requirement

Recognizing that the nature and severity of a certain documented disabilities may preclude learning a second language, Rhode Island College has developed the following process by which appropriate alternate courses may be allowed to fulfill (not “waive”) the college’s Second Language Requirement within the General Education Program. In order to be considered for this accommodation, a student must:

1. Register with the Disability Services Center.
2. Request a Second Language Requirement Accommodation at least **two (2)** semesters before the student’s planned graduation date.
3. Provide strong objective evidence that the student will be unable to fulfill the requirement despite best effort/diligence and reasonable accommodations. Documentation substantiating the disability and its specific impact upon the student’s ability in the area of learning a second language is required. This should include:
  - a. A personal statement by the student.
  - b. Documentation of the disability from a qualified practitioner, as required in the Disability Services Center’s *Policies and Procedures Manual for Students with Disabilities*. This documentation must state the condition or diagnosis and clearly indicate the disability’s impact upon the student’s ability to learn a second language.
  - c. A case history documenting the student’s difficulty in language learning from high school through the date of the request. This information is inclusive of documents that reflect education and accommodation history such as high school transcripts, prior IEP’s, and college admission records.

The determination for the nature of reasonable accommodations and appropriate alternate course selections rests with Rhode Island College. The Disability Services Center will review the request and supporting documentation to determine eligibility. If approved, the Disability Services Center will forward the student’s personal statement and a request for reasonable accommodation to the Associate Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. The Associate Dean, in consultation with the student’s Academic Advisor, will select two (2) appropriate alternate courses encompassing culture, communication, and/or linguistics that may be allowed to fulfill the second language requirement.

The selected courses will **not** be permitted to fulfill (“double-count” toward) any other requirements within the General Education curriculum or the student’s major. The student must pass both courses with a **grade of C or better in each**, after which the Associate Dean’s office will notify the Records Office that the Second Language Requirement has been completed.

## Program Accommodations

### **Reduced Course Load (Enrollment Status) Policy**

Some students with disabilities may be eligible to take a reduced course load while maintaining full-time status. Students who are approved for a reduced course load with full-time status are entitled to many of the rights, privileges, benefits, and responsibilities of a full-time student for various programs and services including:

- Verification of full-time registration status for health insurance purposes,
- On-campus housing, and
- Academic honors (i.e. Dean's list).

However, if a particular program of study requires that specific courses be taken at the same time, and a less than full-time enrollment results in a fundamental alteration of the curriculum, a reduced course load may not be permitted. Similarly, Rhode Island College will not be able to reduce the course load for students whose financial aid, veteran's benefits, or student visa requires a minimum course load.

All requests for Reduced Course Load status must be submitted to the Disability Services Center **before the add/drop period of the semester.**

- **Requests for a reduced course load apply to Fall and Spring semesters only.**
- **Students living in the residence halls must enroll in no less than eight credit hours per semester. All other students must enroll in no less than six credit hours per semester.**
- **Students cannot drop below these minimum levels without placing their full-time status in jeopardy.**

*For financial aid and billing purposes*, the reduced course load will result in an adjustment to tuition, fees, and financial aid based on the actual number of credit hours for which the student is registered. Specific information regarding a student's financial aid should be obtained from the RIC Financial Aid Office, (401) 456 - 8033.

Under NCAA rules, *student-athletes* are required to be full-time and matriculating. Any deviation from this policy must be appealed to the RIC Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation.

The Disability Services Center forwards recommendations for Reduced Course Load Status to the Vice President of Academic Affairs for final approval. Once the list is approved, the Disability Services Center notifies the Financial Aid, Bursar, Records, and Residential Life & Housing offices of the names of students with this accommodation.

## **Program Accommodations (continued)**

### **Priority Registration**

Some students may be eligible to register for classes before the college's general course registration period begins. In order to receive this accommodation, the student must be a matriculated degree candidate and his/her documentation must clearly indicate why priority registration is an appropriate accommodation for the student.

If approved, approximately two weeks before the general course registration period for the upcoming semester begins, instructions for completing the priority registration process will be sent to the student's Rhode Island College email address.

**Students are solely responsible for checking their RIC student e-mail account for the priority registration instructions and also ensuring that there are no holds/negative service indicators on their MyRIC account** (e.g. Universal Advising Hold, Financial Hold, Library fine, Athletic Equipment Fine, Immunization hold) that will prevent them from registering during the priority registration period. Please visit <http://www.ric.edu/advising/students.php> for more information. For assistance with course selection, students must consult their appropriate Academic Advisor.

## **Housing Accommodations**

Students requesting accessible housing accommodations should register with the Disability Services Center as soon as possible upon paying their enrollment deposit to the College.

Next, the Disability Services Center will verify to the Office of Residential Life and Housing the student's need for accessible housing.

Housing assignments are made *based on availability*. It is the student's responsibility to submit his or her housing deposit and complete all paperwork required by the Office of Residential Life and Housing in accordance with all applicable deadlines. For more information, please see [www.ric.edu/residential-life](http://www.ric.edu/residential-life) .

Examples of requests that cannot be accommodated include:

- **Roommate requests:** Roommates will be assigned to students with disabilities in the same manner as other residential students
- **Specific Building Requests:** A specific building-request is not considered a reasonable accommodation.

## **Accommodations for Students with Physical Disabilities**

Students needing Physical Accessibility accommodations should request accommodations as soon as possible but no less than two weeks before the beginning of the semester.

**Accessible Classrooms/Room Changes** -- With the help of the Records Office, the Disability Services Center can determine the accessibility of classrooms and make appropriate accommodations.

**Furniture** -- Students who are unable to use existing desks in the classrooms may request alternative furnishings.

**Equipment Failure & Snow Removal** – Students should immediately report the non-operation of automatic doors, chair lifts, elevators, or concerns regarding snow removal etc. to the Physical Plant Office at 456-8262, or in the event of an emergency or concern after hours, to the Campus Police at 456-8021. After the student has reported the concern to Physical Plant or Campus Police he/she should also notify the Disability Services Center at 456-2776. Students should use their own best judgment regarding their safety and well-being when deciding to attend classes during inclement weather.

**Accessible (Handicapped) Parking** -- Students requiring accessible parking must display State-issued Motor Vehicle Handicapped Parking Placards appropriately in, or on, their vehicle. Any vehicles parked in Handicapped Parking spaces without the State-issued placard appropriately displayed will be ticketed and/or towed at the owner's expense.

**On-Campus Shuttle** – Rhode Island College offers an accessible public shuttle service for on-campus travel. Please visit <http://www.ric.edu/shuttle/> for more information.

## **Accommodations for Students with Life-Threatening Environmental Allergies**

Students with life-threatening environmental allergies must submit to the Disability Services Center documentation that clearly states the student's allergy and the time, distance, and/or procedures that are needed for the student to avoid exposure to the allergen.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the college will attempt to reasonably accommodate these students by avoiding any activities that may trigger an allergic reaction in the buildings and/or interior areas where the students' academic activities (i.e. classrooms, laboratories) are located, as long as such accommodations will not pose an undue hardship on the college.

Students with life-threatening environmental allergies are asked to completely avoid all other buildings and/or interior areas of the campus. If a student must enter another building and/or interior space on campus, he/she **must** contact the Disability Services Center at least 24 hours prior to the need. Disability Services will contact Physical Plant staff and all other relevant offices/departments to determine if any allergens have been used in the building and/or interior area within the student's possible exposure period. If it is determined that a student must avoid a particular resource on campus (i.e. computer lab, library, activity, event, etc.), the Disability Services Center will attempt to provide the student with a reasonable accommodation.

When conducting construction/renovation projects in all other buildings on campus, Physical Plant and all other offices/departments/groups will require its staff and contractors to place notices at all building entrances when such activities involve the documented allergens. Since there are many offices/departments/groups on the RIC campus that may hire contractors or conduct their own construction/renovation activities, the Disability Services Center will send an email notice to Faculty and Staff at the beginning of each semester and when a new student with an environmental allergy registers with the Center. The notice will state the student's allergy, the buildings in which the student's classes, labs and other academic activities will take place and the time, distance, and/or procedures that are needed for the students to avoid exposure to the allergen.

### **Accommodations for Students with Food Allergies and Sensitivities**

College Dining Services is committed to making reasonable accommodations\* to meet the food service needs of individuals with documented food-related allergies and sensitivities. Students seeking accommodations for these conditions should self-identify upon enrollment to the College and must:

1. **Register with the Disability Service Center.**
2. **Provide current documentation** from the student's treating physician that clearly describes the student's specific food allergy or sensitivity and recommended accommodations, as detailed in the Disability Services Center's *Food Allergy and Sensitivity Information Form*.
3. **Sign a *Release of Information Form*** allowing the Disability Service Center to provide the Dining Services Registered Dietitian with a copy of the Food Allergy Information Form to verify registration and eligibility for accommodations.
4. **Meet with the Dining Services Registered Dietitian** for a consultation and / or explanation of dining services available, based upon the verified medical needs of the individual.
5. **Provide updated documentation** each subsequent semester the accommodation is requested.

**\*Note:** College Dining Services cannot provide for dietary *preferences*, but provides students with information about menus, recipes and ingredients, how to navigate the dining facilities (Donovan Dining Center, The Café, or The Galley) for options, and the resources to assist in making a meal plan work. For more information please visit: <https://www.ric.edu/collegedining/nInformation.php> .

## **Accommodations for Nationally Certified Exams**

Any student registered with the Disability Services Center that requires assistance in requesting accommodations on nationally certified exams (e.g. *The Praxis Series*, ACT, MTEL, NCLEX, etc.) should make an appointment with the Disability Services Staff a semester before the student plans to take the exam. The student should bring to this appointment all completed application materials needed to register for and request accommodations during the exam. Such materials are usually found on the examiner's website.

The Disability Services Center will review the student's Disability Verification Documentation to confirm that it is complete and up-to-date. Once this has been verified, the Disability Services Center will complete the Rhode Island College portion of the exam application package and notify the student that their materials are ready for pick-up. It is the student's responsibility to submit the proper materials to the examiner. Examiners can take six to eight weeks to process materials.

## **Accommodations for College Sponsored Events**

The Disability Services Center is generally responsible for providing accommodations for RIC students, only for RIC credit-bearing courses or course-related academic activities.

The host of any Rhode Island College sponsored event, which is not directly related to RIC courses that result in college credit and course-related academic activities, is responsible for providing accommodations for the event. Public announcements of or advertisements for college sponsored events should include an ADA statement regarding accessibility and contact information to request accommodations. Example statement: "***If you require disability-related accommodations, please contact Name of Event Host a minimum of one week prior to the event.***"

Students with disabilities should contact the sponsor of the college event at least one week before the scheduled event to arrange accommodations. The Disability Services Center will serve as a consultant to the event host as needed.

## **Sign Language Interpreter Policy**

- The Disability Services Center is responsible for the hiring and payment of sign language interpreting services for eligible RIC students for RIC courses that result in college credit and/or course-related academic activities. The host of any other Rhode Island College sponsored event, which is not directly related to RIC courses resulting in college credit and course-related academic activities (e.g. entertainment, workshops, orientations, meetings, social events, administrative interviews/appointments, productions, invited lectures, etc.) and/or that is not for a RIC student, is responsible for providing sign language interpreters (hiring and payment) for the event.
- Students needing Sign Language Interpreter services for courses should request accommodations from the Disability Services Center as soon as possible but no less than two weeks before the beginning of the semester.
- If an interpreter cannot be found, the student may need to drop the course or the Disability Services Office may offer the use of CART (Computer Aided Real-time Transcription) as an accommodation.
- At the first student/interpreter meeting, students and interpreters should exchange email addresses and/or telephone numbers for notification of an emergency resulting in an inability to attend class.
- Before the first class, the Disability Services Center will notify professor(s) that the student will be using an interpreter and send guidelines to help professors understand the needs of a student who is deaf or hard of hearing.
- Students are expected to fulfill their responsibilities: to attend class and be on time, and notify the Disability Services Office and the interpreter if they will be late or cannot attend class.
- After two unexcused student absences (without notification), the sign language interpreter services will be suspended until the student meets with the Disability Services Center to review the use/misuse of the service.
- Students should notify the Disability Services Center immediately if a scheduled interpreter does not attend the class and does not send a substitute.

## Assistive Technology Lab

Students with documented disabilities may use the Assistive Technology (AT) Lab in Adams Library. **Prior to gaining access to the lab, students must be trained on the proper use of the lab equipment.** Students should contact the Disability Services Center for information regarding the current training schedule.

The AT Lab currently contains the following equipment: 4 desktop computers with large screen monitors, a network printer, adjustable computer tables, and a Clearview Optelec enlarger.

The Lab also offers the following specialized software, in addition to the software found in the other computer labs on campus:

- *Kurzweil 3000 Personal Reader*, comprehensive reading, writing, and learning software for struggling readers. To improve student's reading comprehension and retention, Kurzweil:
  - ◆ reads aloud the student's reading materials in clear, humanlike, synthetic speech, while a highlighting feature adds visual reinforcement;
  - ◆ facilitates active reading via study skills tools which include highlighting, text circle tools, annotations, bookmarks, and voice notes; and
  - ◆ allows the student to extract text and create outlines, study guides, or word lists.
- *Dragon Naturally Speaking*, speech recognition software.
  - ◆ Dragon allows students to use their voice to dictate and edit documents and control software applications.
  - ◆ Because most people speak over 120 words per minute, Dragon allows students to create documents about three times faster than the average typing speed of 40 words per minute.
- *Inspiration*, a thinking and learning tool for visual mapping, outlining, writing and making presentations.
  - ◆ Brainstorm ideas, structure your thoughts and visually communicate concepts to strengthen understanding with the Diagram and Map Views,
  - ◆ Take notes, organize information, and structure writing for plans, papers and reports using the integrated Outline View, and
  - ◆ Transform your diagrams, mind maps and outlines into polished presentations that communicate ideas clearly and demonstrate understanding and knowledge with the Presentation Manager.
- *Jaws*, screen reading software.
- *MAGic*, screen magnification software.

## **E-Text and Audio Books**

Students with documented print disabilities and certain mobility impairments may request their course materials in audio, electronic or other alternative format.

Students must purchase or rent a physical copy of each book and fill out an *E-Text and Audio Books Request Form* for all materials requested in alternative format.

Students must also sign an *Agreement on Use of Alternatively Formatted Course Materials*, which asks students to

- Allow RIC to release limited “directory” information to publishers or related agencies to facilitate the request for the materials, and
- Agree not to share, copy, or reproduce the alternatively formatted materials.

If the requested alternatively formatted course materials are unavailable from the publishers or other resources, the Student may request that RIC convert (via digital scanning) the text to an electronic format for him/her. This requires the Student to:

- Allow RIC to remove and replace the book’s binding with the understanding that RIC assumes no responsibility for damage to the book that may occur during this process, and
- Acknowledge that the altered book may or may not be bought back by the RIC (or another) bookstore.

Requests are processed in the order they are received. Since it can take more than 2 weeks to receive the requested materials from publishers and/or via the on-campus scanning process, it is in the best interest of the student to **make these requests to the Disability Services Center as early as possible.**

Therefore, it is recommended that students ask their professors about textbook selection for courses *before the beginning of the semester*. Textbook selection information may also be found in the “Textbooks” section of the RIC Campus Store website: <http://campusstore.ric.edu/home.aspx> .

## **Equipment Loans**

The Disability Services Center offers the following equipment for loan to eligible students. Quantities are limited, therefore equipment is loaned on a first come, first served basis. Equipment must be returned to the Disability Services Center at the conclusion of the borrowing period (which shall be no longer than one semester).

While the student is borrowing the equipment, he/she assumes all risk for damage to or loss of the equipment and its components. Failure to return all borrowed materials or to compensate the college for the full replacement value of the materials constitutes a failure to meet the student's financial obligations to the College (e.g. tuition, damage, charges, fines, etc.). As such, Rhode Island College may cancel the student's enrollment, deny his/her enrollment, or place an administrative "hold" on his/her record, preventing the issuance of grade reports or transcripts.

### **Digital Voice Recorders**

The Sony ICD-PX820 digital voice recorder offers 2GB of built-in flash memory, so that up to 535 hours of voice-quality audio can be recorded in LP mode. Its USB connectivity also allows the transfer of the audio files to a Mac or PC.

### **Smartpens**

The Livescribe Echo smartpen records while the user takes notes on accompanying dotted paper. Recorded content is replayed by tapping the notes. Notes and audio content can then be transferred to a computer via USB cable.

### **iPads**

The iPad 4 tablet computer offers many features that are easy to use for everyone. iPad includes the following accessibility features, which are designed to make it easier for users with visual, auditory, or other physical disabilities to use: VoiceOver, Zoom, White on Black, Mono Audio, Speak Auto-text.

### **MP3 Players**

The Sandisk Sansa Fuze 4 GB media player offers 24 hours of battery life and the capacity to hold over one hundred hours of audio. The player supports audio files saved in MP3, secure and unsecured WMA, WAV, Audible, and Overdrive file formats.

### **DAISY CD Players**

The Victor Reader Digital Talking Book Player plays audio and MP3 CDs with full DAISY functionality.

### **FM Assistive Listening Devices**

The Listen Tech LT 700-072 portable FM transmitter and LR 400-072 digital FM receiver operate in the 72 MHz frequency range with 57 available channels. These units have an operating range of 150 feet and offer SQ technology which provides the highest audio quality available in this product category.

## **Student Responsibilities**

Regardless of the type or severity of a disability, all Rhode Island College students must adhere to the policies, procedures, and rules on student conduct as described in *The Student Handbook*. For more information visit:

<http://www.ric.edu/studentlife/pdf/RICStudentHandbook.pdf>

## **Complaint Resolution**

The Disability Services Center is available as a resource to students with disabilities to provide general information about:

- Rights of students with disabilities
- Responsibilities of students with disabilities
- Successful Communication and Self-Advocacy Strategies
- Referrals to other student services, supports, and resources

## **Discrimination Complaints**

Students who feel they have experienced discrimination may institute a complaint in accordance with the Rhode Island College Complaint Resolution Policy. Students are encouraged to first seek an informal resolution of their complaint by discussing the issue to the Dean of Students and/or the ADA Coordinator in the Office of Human Resources. This informal procedure is intended to encourage communication between the parties involved, either directly or through an intermediary, in order to facilitate a mutual understanding of what may be different perspectives regarding the complained of action or behavior, and to find a solution.

If the informal complaint resolution process does not result in a solution that is satisfactory to the student, the student may utilize the formal complaint procedure. (Please visit [www.ric.edu/administration/complaintRes.php](http://www.ric.edu/administration/complaintRes.php) for more information.)

## **Academic Complaints**

Purely academic complaints shall be handled in accordance with the College's academic grievance policies that are outlined in the *College Handbook – Chapter 3 – Academic Policies and Procedures*. (Please visit:

[http://www.ric.edu/academics/pdf/College\\_handbook\\_Chapter\\_3.pdf](http://www.ric.edu/academics/pdf/College_handbook_Chapter_3.pdf) for more information.)

## **Directory of Additional On-Campus Resources**

**OASIS (Tutorial Services/Academic Development)**: Phone: 456-8083, <http://www.ric.edu/oasis/>

**Writing Center**: Phone: 456-8141, <http://www.ric.edu/writingcenter/>

**Mathematics Learning Center**: Phone: 456-9763, <http://www.ric.edu/oasis/mlc.php>

**Counseling Center**: Phone: 456-8094, <http://www.ric.edu/counselingctr/>

**Learning for Life**: Phone: 456-6320, <http://www.ric.edu/learningforlife/>

**Career Development Center**: Phone: 456-8031, <http://www.ric.edu/careerdevelopment/>

**Campus Police**: Phone: 456-8201, <http://www.ric.edu/campuspd/>

**Health Services**: Phone: 456-8055, <http://www.ric.edu/healthservices/>

**Residential Life and Housing**: Phone: 456-8240, <http://www.ric.edu/residential-life/>

**Office of Student Life**: Phone: 456-8061, <http://www.ric.edu/studentlife/>

**Veteran Resource Center**: Phone: 456-8449, <http://www.ric.edu/studentveterans/>

**Sherlock Center on Disabilities**: Phone: 456-8072, <http://www.ric.edu/sherlockcenter/>

**Unity Center**: Phone: 456-8791, <http://www.ric.edu/unitycenter/>

**Student Activities**: Phone: 456-8034, [http://www.ric.edu/student\\_activities/](http://www.ric.edu/student_activities/)

**Directory of Student Organizations/Clubs**: [http://www.ric.edu/student\\_activities/sorganizations.php](http://www.ric.edu/student_activities/sorganizations.php)

**Office of Undergraduate Admissions**: Phone: 455-8234, <http://www.ric.edu/admissions/>

**Graduate Studies**: Phone 456-9723, <http://www.ric.edu/graduatestudies/>

**Records Office**: Phone: 456-8213, <http://www.ric.edu/recordsoffice/>

**Financial Aid Office**: Phone: 456-8033 <http://www.ric.edu/financialaid/>

**Bursars Office**: Phone: 456-8130 <http://www.ric.edu/bursar/>

**Campus Map**: <http://www.ric.edu/campusmap/>

**Campus Shuttle Service**: <http://www.ric.edu/shuttle/>

**Adams Library**: Phone: 456-8216, <http://www.ric.edu/adamslibrary/>

**College Dining Services**: 456-8207, <http://www.ric.edu/collegedining/index.php>

## References

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, As Amended, effective January 1, 2009.

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U.S. Department of Education: Office for Civil Rights, Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities, <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html> , 2011