

Student Disability Services

Policies and Procedures for Students with Disabilities

Georgia Military College is committed to the full and total inclusion of all individuals providing equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from all programs, services and activities. Georgia Military is also supportive of individual rights and responsibilities.

As a public institution receiving Federal funds, Georgia Military College adheres to the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008. In accordance with all pertinent federal and state legislation the institution will ensure reasonable accommodations are provided for students with disabilities through the Office of Student Disability Services.

Institutional policy ensures that reasonable accommodation be made on an individualized case-by-case basis. However, it is the responsibility of the student to identify and disclose their disability and make their needs known. With the assistance of the institutions' staff appropriate and reasonable accommodations will be provided once the student has been verified by the Office of Student Disability Services.

Definitions:

An individual with a disability is defined as a person who 1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more life activities, 2) has a record of such impairment or 3) is regarded as having such impairment.

"Accommodations" are those adjustments to structure, location or mode of access to the educational environment. Accommodations are to be reasonable, not altering academic standards or expectations and not to place undue financial or administrative hardship on an institution.

Contact Person:

The Manager of Student Disability Services is located at the main campus of Georgia Military College at Milledgeville, 117 Zell Miller Hall, phone: 478-387-4902. At other GMC campus locations please contact the disability coordinator or the Assistant Dean.

PLEASE NOTE THAT DISABILITY WILL NOT BE FACTOR IN QUALIFYING FOR COLLEGE ADMISSION.

Rights and Responsibilities

To ensure full translation of this policy for access of individuals with disabilities, two important areas of rights and responsibilities have to be considered: a) the right of the individual with a disability to be included on the basis of criteria that do not unfairly discriminate because of the disability and b) the right of the institution to set and maintain standards for admitting and evaluating the progress of students.

Rights and Responsibilities of the Institution

Georgia Military College recognizes that its basic responsibility is to identify and maintain the academic and technical standards that are fundamental to providing quality academic programs while ensuring the rights of individuals with disabilities. To meet these obligations, Georgia Military College recognizes the following rights and responsibilities:

- Georgia Military has the right to request and receive documentation that supports a request for accommodation. The institution has the right to deny a request if the documentation demonstrates that no accommodation is necessary or if the individual fails to provide such documentation;
- Georgia Military has the right to select among equally effective accommodations for individuals with a disability;
- Georgia Military has the right to refuse an unreasonable accommodation or one that imposes an undue hardship on the institution.
- Georgia Military has the responsibility to ensure that its recruitment information and activities are available and accessible;
- Georgia Military has the responsibility to evaluate applicants based solely on their abilities and qualifications. If an evaluation method or criterion unfairly discriminates against an applicant with a disability, the college will seek reasonable alternatives.
- Georgia Military has the responsibility to ensure that all of its academic programs are accessible and usable;
- Georgia Military has the responsibility to adjust, substitute or waive any academic requirements which unfairly discriminate against students with disabilities and that are not essential to the integrity of students' academic programs;
- Georgia Military has the responsibility to make reasonable accommodations for a student with a disability in the delivery, instructional method, and evaluation system of a course;
- Georgia Military has the responsibility to inform its applicants and students about the availability of auxiliary aids and the range of possible accommodations as well as the procedures for requesting them;
- If a request for accommodation is denied, Georgia Military has the responsibility to inform the individual of his or her right to appeal the decision and the procedures for initiating an appeal;

Rights and Responsibilities of the Individual

An individual with a disability has a right to an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs offered at Georgia Military College. To ensure this right, individuals with disabilities at Georgia Military must identify and disclose a disability to the Office of Student Disability Services, by contacting the Manager of Disability Services, Katie Johnson, at the Milledgeville campus or the Disability Coordinator at the campus they are attending. The following rights and responsibilities are placed on the individual:

- Individuals with disabilities have the right to an equal opportunity to learn. They have a right to reasonable accommodations in aspects of their educational experiences such as location, delivery system, or instructional methodologies that limit access, participation, or ability to benefit;
- Individuals with disabilities have the right to an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from the academic community. This includes access to services and co-curricular activities when reviewed in their entirety, which are comparable to those provided any other student;
- Individuals with disabilities have the right to confidentiality of all information and have the right to choose to whom information about their disabilities will be disclosed;
Individuals with disabilities have the right to information regarding the availability of auxiliary aids and possible accommodations as well as procedures for making requests for either;
- Individuals with disabilities have the right to be informed of procedures for initiating an appeal of a decision by the institution regarding auxiliary aids or accommodations;
Individuals with disabilities have the right to be informed of procedures for initiating further appeal of an institutional decision through external channels. This typically would be done through filing a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights or filing a case through the civil court system;
- Individuals with disabilities have the same responsibility as any other student to meet and maintain the institution's academic standards;
- Individuals with disabilities have the responsibility to advocate for their own individual needs and to seek information, counsel, and assistance as necessary to be effective self-advocates;
- Individuals with disabilities have the responsibility to demonstrate or document how their disabilities limit their ability to benefit from a particular delivery system, instructional method, or evaluation criteria when they make a request for accommodation;
- Individuals with disabilities have the responsibility to follow published procedures for making such requests and to do so in a timely fashion;
- Individuals with disabilities have the responsibility to follow published procedures for filing an appeal;

Verification Process

The Verification Process will be determined by the Office of Student Disability Services.

Process for Students Applying for Accommodations

1. A student requesting accommodations for a disability must complete the online intake application on our website www.gmc.cc.ga.us/disability. Students may attach any documentation they have (ex. IEP, 504 Plan or Psychological Evaluation) if they are unable to attach they can submit the documents to the Disability Coordinator of their local campus. All documentation is scanned and sent to the Manager of Student Disability Services.
2. Once the applicant completes the application the Office of Student Disability Services will contact the student to schedule an interview. The interviews will be conducted face-to-face or phone. The initial interview with the student is to gain the student's perspective of how their disability impacts their academic performance in the classroom and educational environment.
3. Following the interview the Manager reviews the documentation and keeps it on record. He/she then develops the accommodation plan for the student and contacts the student to request a meeting be scheduled.
4. The disability specialist or disability coordinator meets with the student and reviews the accommodation plan explaining accommodations and answers questions. The student can choose to sign the plan accepting the accommodations or decline. If the student is not satisfied with the accommodation plan, then the student may contact the Manager of Disability Services. The Manager will request documentation of the disability and discuss this with the student.
5. Following this meeting the students will access accommodations through the Accommodate program. Students can make their request for Instructor Notification Letters each quarter in Accommodate and will receive a copy of the letter in email when the request is complete.

Verification Status

The Office of Student Disability Services will assign the student a verification status depending upon the type of disability a student has been diagnosed with and/or the completeness of the documentation submitted:

On- Going – A student who receives an on-going verification has submitted current, complete documentation that clearly exhibits an impact from a disability which is stable, not expected to change over time, and supports the need for accommodation. These students will not be expected to submit additional documentation unless they request an accommodation that has not already been approved and is not supported by the previously submitted documentation.

Annual Renewal – An annual renewal verification is approved for those students who have a diagnosed disorder or condition, in which the impact may change over time. These students will be required to

submit updated documentation on an annual basis to allow The Office of Student Disability Services to adjust the verification status and approved accommodations if necessary.

Temporary – Temporary verification status may be approved for students who have submitted some documentation which may state a diagnosis but may not be complete or is out-of-date. These students may be verified on a temporary, basis, allowing them time to gather the necessary documentation. A temporary verification status may also be given, as resources allow, to students who receive a temporary injury and may need accommodations until the injury is sufficiently healed. These students are verified for the length of time recommended by the treating physician.

Denied – A student may be denied verification for a number of reasons, including but not limited to: (1) submitted documentation which does not support the presence of a diagnosed disorder, (2) a diagnosed disorder that does not rise to the level of being disabling, (3) updated or additional documentation requested that is not submitted, (4) an applicant who is not admitted as a student at the College, or (5) required verification meetings that are not attended by the student and contact from the student has ceased.

Procedure for Requesting Accommodations Each Term

It is the responsibility of the verified students to request accommodations each term if needed. The Office of Student Disability Services does not automatically implement accommodations each term. Students choosing to use accommodations should log in to their Accommodate account and submit their quarter request providing appropriate information. **It is the responsibility of the student to meet with each instructor to discuss the Notification Letter and the desired accommodations.** Students must request the Notification Letters with **Timely Notice** prior to the need of the accommodation. Instructors are not required to provide classroom accommodations until they have received the electronic letter and are not required to provide accommodation retroactively. Therefore, it is encouraged that the students request accommodations early in the term.

Procedure to Request a Change of Approved Accommodations

Students who have been verified as eligible for accommodations may request additions to or deletions from their previously approved accommodations. Requests must be submitted in writing with a detailed description supporting the need for any changes. The Manager of Student Disability Services will review the request along with all documentation on file to determine any changes. Additional documentation or student interview may be required to facilitate any changes. Disability Services may also contact the student to gather more information about the reasons for the request.