



## Office of Accessibility Services

### Frequently Asked Questions for Students

#### What is the Office of Accessibility Services?

The Office of Accessibility Services (<https://info.bryant.edu/accessibility-services>) is responsible for reviewing accommodations requests from students with disabilities. Students may request accommodations at any time, but most students will begin the process during the Spring and Summer months in preparation for the Fall semester. Many first-year students have had individualized plans (IEPs or 504s) that helped them to be successful in high school and some elements of those plans might be approved as accommodations at the university level. OAS staff will review documentation from a medical provider and facilitate an intake appointment with the student to learn more about their previous experiences and determine reasonable accommodations.

#### What are accommodations?

Accommodations provide equal access to all programs, services, and spaces to students with disabilities. They “level the playing field” so they have the chance to live and learn in the way that their peers do. Accommodations DO NOT guarantee success. They do not require instructors to lower expectations or assign less work. They require that instructors implement OAS-approved accommodations in their classrooms, which may require instructors to adapt existing assignment rubrics, recruit note takers for the student, change font size, accommodate a wheelchair user, or work with the Academic Testing Center if the student requires extended time on testing or an alternate test-taking space. We also support housing and dining accommodations.

#### Why are students approved for accommodations?

The OAS exists because the law requires all colleges and universities who receive federal funding to uphold Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008.



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*“The ADA is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public. The purpose of the law is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else.”*

<https://adata.org/learn-about-ada>

Therefore, private institutions of higher education that receive federal financial aid funds on behalf of qualified students must abide by these laws.

## **How do I request accommodations for the first time?**

There are several steps to requesting accommodations for the first time. You will first need to register with the Office of Accessibility Services through our online system, ClockWork ([New Student Registration](#)). After you have registered, you will then book an appointment with an OAS staff member to discuss your request ([Book an Appointment with OAS](#)). After your accommodations have been approved you will then use the *Request Accommodations This Semester* tab on the ClockWork main page to formally request your accommodations ([Request Accommodations This Semester](#)).

## **How do I renew my academic accommodations each semester?**

If you do not require any changes to your current accommodations, you can request your accommodations through ClockWork using the *Request Accommodations This Semester* tab on the ClockWork main page ([Request Accommodations This Semester](#)). An in-person meeting with an OAS staff member is not required if you are not making any changes to your accommodations. If you would like to make any changes to your accommodations or discuss your current accommodations, please book an appointment with OAS ([Book an Appointment with OAS](#)).

## **What are my responsibilities as a student with approved accommodations?**

Your responsibilities as a student include:

Requesting your accommodations each semester. Academic accommodations do not automatically transfer from one semester to the next.



Communicating with your professors regarding your accommodations at the beginning of the semester.

Communicating with OAS. If issues arise with your accommodations in or out of the classroom, please contact the OAS office as soon as possible so we can find a solution in a timely manner.

## **How are my professors notified of my accommodations?**

Professors are notified of accommodations in two ways. First, they receive an accommodation letter from the Office of Accessibility Services when your accommodation is approved. Second, when you speak to your professor at the beginning of the semester to discuss how your accommodations will be implemented. If you do not discuss using your accommodations with your professor, then the professor will assume you are not using your accommodations for their class. Please keep in mind that accommodations are not retroactive and will only be given to you from the date you speak to your professor about using them.

## **How can I communicate with my professors about my accommodations?**

It is recommended that you speak to your professors in person, however emailing your professor is sufficient, if you receive a confirmed response and the request is made in a timely manner. Disability information is confidential, and you do not need to speak to your professor about your disability. You are welcome to share what you feel comfortable sharing, but it is not required to disclose your diagnosed disability. Professors are expected to maintain confidentiality and are asked to speak with students about their accommodations privately. However, if your professor does ask about or discusses your disability publicly, please inform OAS as soon as possible.

## **How do I use the Academic Testing Center?**

Students with approved testing accommodations are welcome to use the Academic Testing Center for all quizzes, tests, mid-term exams, and final exams. All tests must be booked through ClockWork at least two business days in advance ([Book a Test in the ATC](#)). Students must initiate the booking process and communicate with their professor their intention to use the ATC. It is highly recommended that you book your tests as soon as you are made aware of the testing date.



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## **What do I do if I feel like I have been discriminated against due to my disability?**

If you feel comfortable, begin by speaking with your professor about the situation. If after having the conversation you continue to have concerns or if you do not feel comfortable from the beginning, please contact the Office of Accessibility Services to discuss the situation as soon as possible.

## **What do I do if my accommodation request is denied?**

It is your right to know why your accommodation request is denied and you have a right to appeal that denial. Please refer to the Grievance and Appeals Process for more information or contact Marie Saddlemire (contact information listed below).

## **Why do I need to sign a confidentiality agreement?**

It is important that all students understand the limits of confidentiality as well as their rights to privacy.

## **Why do some accommodations require me to sign a class recording agreement?**

It is important that academic integrity is maintained in the classroom, while all students are allowed equal access to the curriculum. Some accommodations include lecture recording devices that record other people's voices. The class lectures as presented are the intellectual property of the professor, and comments made by my classmates are their own intellectual property, and/or may be subject to protections under federal or state law.

## **How do I contact OAS?**

[Accessibilitysvcs@bryant.edu](mailto:Accessibilitysvcs@bryant.edu) 401-232-6830, M34 - Uniststructure

Marie Saddlemire – Director, Office of Accessibility Services, 401-232-6532, [msaddlemire@bryant.edu](mailto:msaddlemire@bryant.edu)

Room 275 – Uniststructure, Academic Center for Excellence

Deb Arenberg – Program Administrator, Academic Testing Center, 401-232-6851,

[darenberg@bryant.edu](mailto:darenberg@bryant.edu) M34 - Uniststructure



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Jay Caliri – Office Coordinator, Academic Testing Center. 401-232-6853, [jcaliri@bryant.edu](mailto:jcaliri@bryant.edu)

M34 - Unistructure

The Office of Accessibility Services also operates the [Academic Testing Center \(ATC\)](#) where OAS is housed. The Center, located in M34 of the Unistructure, has a large, distraction-reduced room with privacy carrels, individual testing space, lockers for secure storage of personal items, a waiting area, and an accessible bathroom.