

# Instructor Guide

Providing Test Accommodations  
for Students with Disabilities



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**CHICAGO**

**Student Disability  
Services**



## ACCESS MATTERS AT UCHICAGO

**The University is committed to facilitating the full participation of students with a disability in the life of the University.**

Reasonable academic adjustments and accommodations are necessary to ensure an equal educational opportunity for many students with disabilities. The University is required to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities.

Student Disability Services approves disability-related accommodations according to the provisions of these laws and ensures students have met appropriate standards for receiving such accommodations.



## The Role of Students

Students enrolled in the College who have been approved for testing accommodations by Student Disability Services (SDS) are responsible for notifying instructors of their accommodations in a timely manner (no fewer than seven days). Students are instructed by SDS to discuss testing arrangements early in the quarter or as soon as they receive notice of their approval.

Students will notify their instructors of the accommodations they will use in the course by requesting that an Accommodation Determination Letter (ADL) be sent via the AIM student portal, an online portal for requesting accommodations. The ADL lists the approved accommodations for the course in the current term.

## The Role of Instructors

Instructors play a vital role in providing accommodations to students with disabilities. A best practice is to take equal access into consideration while planning courses to minimize the need to retrofit your course to be accessible after the quarter has begun.

## Benefits of the Instructor Administering Testing Accommodations within the Course

- Students will receive exam instructions in a manner that is comparable to their peers.
- Students will receive corrections, modifications, and clarifications in a timely manner.
- Students will have an equitable opportunity to ask questions and receive an immediate response from the instructor or a designee.
- Students will feel a sense of inclusion by testing within the course.

# Best Practices for Facilitating Testing Accommodations



**1 Include an accessibility statement in your syllabus so that students are aware of the accommodation procedure in your course.**

**Example:**

The University of Chicago is committed to ensuring equitable access to our academic programs and services. Students with disabilities who have been approved for the use of academic accommodations by Student Disability Services (SDS) and need a reasonable accommodation(s) to participate fully in this course should follow

the procedures established by SDS for using accommodations. Timely notification is required in order to ensure that your accommodation(s) can be implemented. Please meet with me to discuss your access needs in this class after you have completed the SDS procedures for requesting accommodations.

**To Contact SDS:**

disabilities.uchicago.edu | 773-702-6000 | disabilities@uchicago.edu

**2 Respect the students' right to confidentiality of their disability status.**

- Discuss accommodations with students in a private setting, such as during office hours or by appointment.
- Communicate with a group of students about the exam arrangements by using the blind copy email option.
- Focus your discussion on the implementation of the exam/quiz arrangements. You may not make inquiries into the nature of the students disability.

**3 Provide the accommodations that are listed on the Accommodation Determination Letter (ADL).**

Refer students who request accommodations without an ADL to SDS.  
(Exception: an academic advisor from the Dean of Students office may reach out to instructors to share information regarding students with acute, temporary medical needs.)



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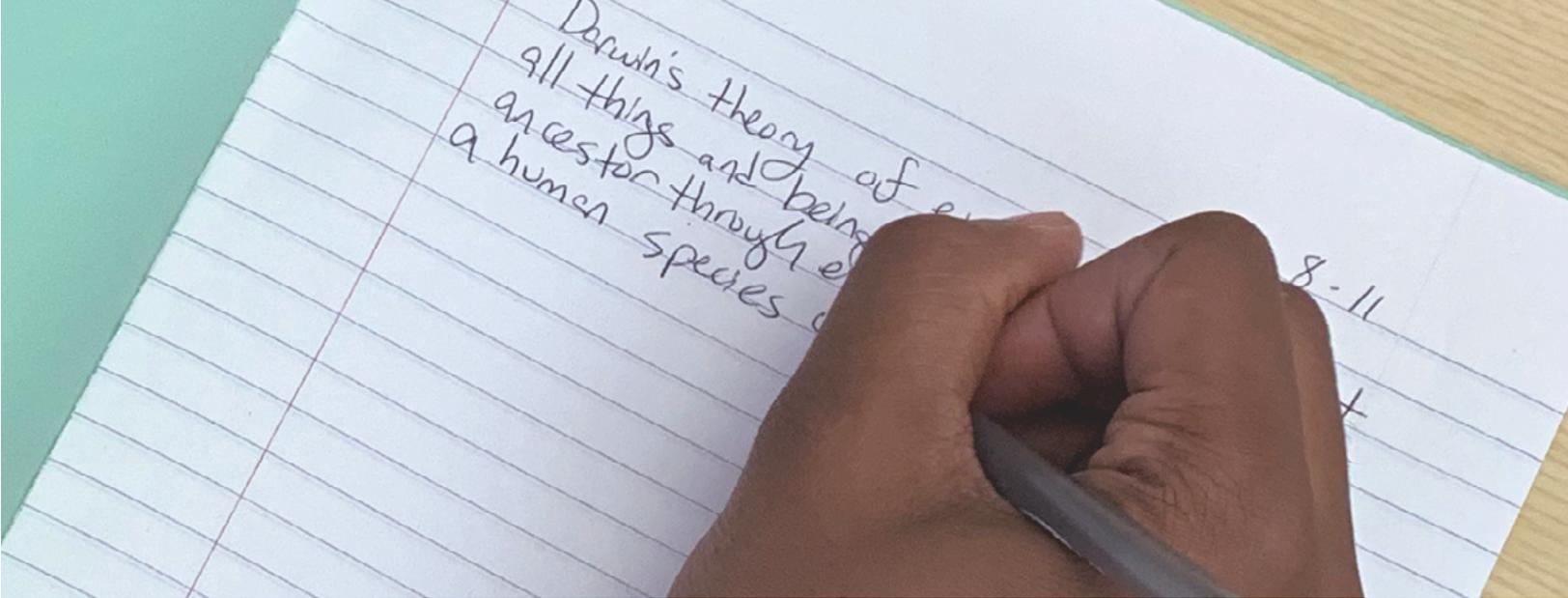
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**4 Course instructor and/or support staff arrange an alternative testing space and a proctor(s) to administer the most frequently used accommodations. These include:**

- Extended time for test-taking (e.g., 1.25x, 1.5x, 1.75x, 2x)
- Reduced-distraction testing environment
- Stop-the-clock breaks to use the restroom, eat a snack, or administer a medical test
- Use of a computer for word processing or the use of assistive technology

**Helpful hints and essential practices:**

- Prepare two versions of an exam so that one version can be used as a makeup exam. Existing course policies to drop the lowest exam or quiz score are not considered a reasonable accommodation for a make-up exam or quiz.
- It is recommended that instructors discuss testing location arrangements with students and confirm if a separate testing location is needed at least a week prior to the exam/quiz date.
- When exams are administered during class, keep in mind that students using extended time may have a class directly before or after the exam. Instructors may not require students to miss other classes to use their accommodation.
- Quizzes also require accommodations. Plan to give quizzes at a time during the class that will allow for extended time.
- Students taking language exams/quizzes may need to hear oral portions of the assessment more than once. It may be necessary to administer individual assessments.
- All updates and clarifications made during an exam should also be provided to students with testing accommodations.
- Consult with SDS about concerns of academic integrity and/or additional prep work required to accommodate students.

# Academic Accommodation Descriptions



## 1 Extended Time

Extended time is calculated based on the length of time that the class is given to complete an assessment. For example, if the class is given 50 minutes to complete an exam, students with a time-and-a-half accommodation would be given 75 minutes, and students with double-time accommodations would be given 100 minutes.

Please note that the extended-time accommodation may only apply to a certain type of assessment, which will be noted on the ADL.

### Types

- Time-and-a-quarter
- Time-and-a-half
- Time-and-three-quarters
- Double

## 2 Reduced-Distraction Testing Environment

Most exams are administered in a quiet environment. However, some students need an environment away from the larger group and free of interruptions (e.g., paper-shuffling, students leaving the room, and talking inside the room).

For these students, a separate testing room near the classroom will often meet the accommodation requirement. Multiple students can share the same room as long as

there is sufficient space to ensure that students are not sitting right next to each other. Students approved for reduced-distraction individual testing must be placed in a private room with a proctor.

Students may choose to wear earplugs to further reduce distractions.

### Types

- Reduced Distraction (Small Group)
- Reduced Distraction - Individual Testing (Private)

## 3 Alternative and Accessible Formats

Assessments in accessible formats enable students who use assistive technology, such as screen-reading software, speech-to-text software, braille, or larger font size.

The instructor should provide a copy of the exam in an accessible format, or coordinate with SDS to supply one.

Depending on the auxiliary aid, coordination may include providing the student with a separate space to take the exam.

### Types

- Alternative format: electronic copies or large print
- Audio description of visual content
- Alternative to scantron
- Braille

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## 4 Accessible Test Locations and Equipment

Occasionally, students will require specialized equipment or furniture in the testing environment. A consultation between the student, SDS, and the instructor is required to ensure the successful implementation of this accommodation.

If an exam is held in a location other than the classroom, it will be necessary to assess whether the testing space is accessible and/or

can accommodate the specialized configuration used by the student.

Students with medical conditions such as diabetes may use equipment to administer medications during exams. Mobile phones are commonly used to monitor blood sugar levels and may be needed by a student during an exam.

### Types

- Access to medical equipment
- Physical accommodations during the exam (e.g., lying down, stretching)
- Accessible testing location
- Adjustable furniture (e.g., desk, chair)

## 5 Auxiliary Aids

Students use a variety of aids to read and complete an assessment. The most commonly approved aid is a computer for essay-based exams or quizzes. SDS can provide a laptop that is blocked from access to the internet. SDS laptops cannot be reconfigured for foreign language exams and/or department-specific applications.

Non-graphing calculators are an accommodation approved for assessments when simple calculations are not an essential learning objective.

### Types

- Computer
- Reading software programs
- Scratch or graph paper
- Non-graphing calculator

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## 6 Breaks

Students are approved for various types of breaks during exams/quizzes.

The type of break will be determined by the impact of the disability and noted in the ADL. Unless specified in the ADL, students are not allowed to leave the testing location during their break(s). Students with medical conditions may use equipment to administer medications during exams.

Students approved for stop-the-clock breaks are to be given additional time at the end of the exam to account for the time used on breaks during the exam.

### Types

- Stop-the-clock breaks
- Breaks between exams
- Breaks during exam

5501 South Ellis Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60637

Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

General: [disabilities@uchicago.edu](mailto:disabilities@uchicago.edu) Phone: (773) 702-6000



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