
Classroom and Campus Accommodations at SPS

Disability Services at Columbia University

[Columbia Health Disability Services \(DS\)](#) oversees accommodations for all students at the University. They serve over 2,700 students annually across campus, from first-year undergraduates to doctoral candidates completing their dissertations. Disability Services supports students with all types of conditions including physical/mobility, mental, and learning disabilities; blindness/low vision; deafness/hard of hearing; Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD); temporary and chronic medical disabilities.

DS partners closely with medical providers to determine eligibility for accommodations and services; they aim to support the full participation of students with disabilities in all aspects of University life. Accommodations are approved after thoughtful analysis of the student's disability-related needs, the University's programs and curricula, and the University's legal obligations under the amended [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) and Section 504 of the [Rehabilitation Act](#). The intent of all reasonable accommodations is to provide students with disabilities equal opportunity, not to lessen or undermine academic standards or course requirements.

Columbia University accommodations and support services include, but are not limited to:

- Exam modifications (e.g. extended time, scribes, reduced capacity environment)
- Communication accommodations (e.g. sign-language interpreters, assistive technology, textbooks in alternate format)
- Note-taking services and/or audio recording for lectures
- Accessible classrooms and transportation services

The School of Professional Studies (SPS) works closely with Disability Services, students, and faculty to ensure that accommodations are being met in the classroom and throughout campus. Graduate students enrolled at SPS work with the [SPS Disability Services liaison](#) to arrange accommodations with faculty in the classroom.

How to Register for Accommodations with Disability Services

Students seeking reasonable accommodations (academic, housing) or support services are required to [register through DS](#) and include [supporting documentation](#) verifying the disability and need for accommodations. DS will review each request and determine eligibility after the completed registration form and documentation are received. Note that enrollment is NOT automatic; services received in high school or at other universities do not automatically transfer to Columbia University.

Students are strongly encouraged to register immediately upon enrolling at the University as the review of medical documentation and approval from DS may take up to three weeks. Any requested accommodations will not be shared with faculty until approved by DS and an official notification letter is received by the DS liaison. Approved accommodations are not retroactive for past assignments and evaluations.

Once approved by DS, accommodations will be sent to the SPS liaison who will work with the student and faculty to ensure they are appropriately arranged. Any questions or concerns about the approval process or accommodations can be sent to the [SPS DS liaison](#).

Student Accommodations for Online Courses

As COVID-19 continues to evolve, and as teaching and learning have moved to online platforms, DS and SPS will work with students and faculty to ensure that the University continues to provide the appropriate accommodations. Students concerned about accessibility and/or testing environments in the online classroom should reach out to the SPS liaison to discuss their concerns and appropriate next steps in order to register for accommodations.

Examples of accommodations for the online classroom include, but are not limited to:

- Exam modifications (e.g. additional time, rest breaks)
- Note taking services
- Sign-language interpreting services
- Speech-to-text software
- Captioning services
- Electronic textbooks and course materials

Students registered with Disability Services for the current semester and future semesters will continue to have their accommodations provided without interruption in service. Students should refer back to the accommodations letter they received from DS to confirm all of their approved accommodations.

Students interested in registering for accommodations with Columbia Health Disability Services should visit their [registration page](#) to learn more about the process. Questions or concerns about this process can be sent to the SPS DS liaison at sps-studentservices@columbia.edu.