

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES MISSION

In conjunction with the College's core values and overall mission, the Disability Support Services office leads the campus community in its commitments to recognize and appreciate disability as a valued aspect of diversity, to design more welcoming and inclusive environments, and to ensure that all aspects of campus life are universally accessible.

TO ACCOMPLISH ITS MISSION, THE DSS OFFICE:

- Provides institution-wide advisement, consultation, and training on disability-related topics, including legal and regulatory compliance, universal design, and disability scholarship;
- Provides individual services and facilitate accommodations to students with disabilities;
- Collaborates with partners to identify and remove barriers to foster an all-inclusive campus that is physically, programmatically, and attitudinally accessible to all students with disabilities; and
- Engages and supports the campus community in progressive system change to promote an accessible and inclusive climate for all students with disabilities.

VISION STATEMENT

The Disability Support Services (DSS) office envisions a College community that is universally accessible to all members of the campus community; an environment in which all offices and departments share the responsibility of providing an equal opportunity to students with disabilities; and a community where everyone is recognized for their talents and abilities to be a contributing member.

RockValleyCollege

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)

3301 N. Mulford Road | Rockford, IL 61114-5699

(815) 921-2371 | Fax: (815) 921-2379

RockValleyCollege.edu/DisabilityServices

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ELIGIBILITY

INTAKE APPOINTMENT

Students with disabilities should contact the DSS Office to set up an initial appointment, or intake. At the intake the student and the **Accommodations Specialist** will discuss the nature of the student's disability; the barriers that are impacting the student's ability to successfully participate in or complete a program or activity; and possible solutions, such as reasonable accommodations.

DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

The DSS Office uses the definition of disability as outlined in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the ADA of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008. Students should be able to discuss what the nature of the disability is, how the disability limits one or more activities of daily living, and how this impact has been addressed previously. If the disability is new or the student has not had disability-related educational services in the past, the student and the **Accommodations Specialist** will review areas of concern and identify potential resources.

DOCUMENTATION

Students who request accommodations through the DSS Office should be prepared to provide documentation that describes their disability and its likely impact on educational experiences. Documentation varies depending on the nature of the disability, but generally includes information about what the disability is, how it was diagnosed, who made the diagnosis and when, and the history of how the disability has impacted the student's educational experience. If no disability exists, or no documentation is available, students are encouraged to meet with the **Accommodations Specialist** to discuss what documentation may be necessary and options, if appropriate for obtaining it.

Students should be aware that other colleges and universities may have different documentation guidelines and that testing agencies (such as the Regional Office of Education and state testing boards) may require different or additional documentation.

The Association on Higher Education and Disability® (AHEAD) has provided professional guidance regarding disability documentation in higher education. Rock Valley College uses AHEAD's professional guidance as a framework when using documentation to establish disability and support accommodation requests. You may review AHEAD's document entitled Supporting Accommodation Requests: Guidance on Documentation Practices at: AHEAD.org/Resources/Documentation-Guidance.

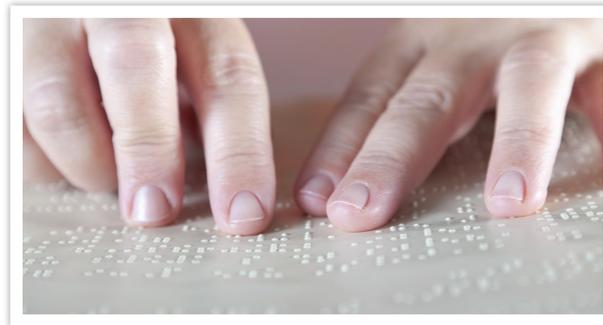
DETERMINING REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a service, program, course, activity, or facility that allows a qualified student with a disability to have an equal opportunity as their non-disabled peers.

Reasonable accommodations are granted on a case-by-case basis and may not fundamentally alter the nature of a course or program. If an accommodation is deemed inappropriate, equivalent accommodations will be suggested.

Some examples of reasonable accommodations include, but are not limited to:

- Textbooks in alternate format (audio, electronic, Braille, etc.)
- A peer note-taker
- Assistive technology and/or software
- Priority registration
- Advance notice of assignments
- Recording of lectures
- Accessible rooms and/or seating
- Sign Language interpreters
- Alternative ways to complete assignments



TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

Testing with accommodations is an appropriate service for many students with disabilities. This type of testing allows the student to accurately demonstrate their knowledge and achievement as opposed to measuring the impact of a particular disability. To ensure that all testing needs are met, students should inform the testing administrator and course instructor of their disability and need for accommodations prior to taking the exam.

SOME TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS THAT MAY BE PROVIDED INCLUDE:

- Extended time
- Testing in a reduced distraction environment
- Use of a scribe to record answers
- Use of a reader and/or audio version of the test
- Tests in alternate format (Braille, audio, electronic, large print, etc.)
- Assistive technology
- Alternative ways of recording answers

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS AND/OR TO SCHEDULE A TEST, CONTACT:

Testing Center

Student Center, Ground Floor, Room 0120

Phone: (815) 921-2380

Website: RockValleyCollege.edu/Testing

Email: Testing-Center@RockValleyCollege.edu

FOR DISABILITY-RELATED INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE CONTACT:

Disability Support Services

Student Center, Ground Floor

Phone: (815) 921-2371

Fax: (815) 921-2379

Website: RockValleyCollege.edu/DisabilityServices

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