

# DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION POLICY OF SENATE

## PROCEDURES for Policy 159: Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

---

### 1. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The University supports the notion that developing and implementing individual accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared responsibility that functions best as a respectful, collegial, collaborative process. Each participant should be prepared to engage, cooperate and contribute meaningfully, share relevant information, and be willing to jointly explore flexible, creative accommodation solutions for students. Designated participants in the process have the following responsibilities:

#### 1.1. Students

Students with disabilities are key advocates for communicating their academic accommodation needs and therefore are essential contributors in developing, and facilitating the implementation of their individualized accommodation plans. Students eligible to receive academic accommodation support will;

- 1.1.1. agree to proactively consult with Academic Accommodation Support, the instructor, Department or Faculty, as soon as feasible, including prior to enrolling in a course/program when possible, on any concerns they may have about their ability to meet the essential academic requirements of a course/program.
- 1.1.2. register with Academic Accommodation Support (AAS) as early as possible to determine necessary accommodation(s) for meeting academic obligations as provided in the course outline(s) (see Policy 166, Procedures section. 7) as well as for non-course degree requirements. Examples include;
  - receiving course curriculum and materials;
  - participation in course activities and assessments including but not limited to; tests, assignments, quizzes, labs, due dates, etc.
  - other demonstrations of mastery of course content and skills through evaluation and assessment.
- 1.1.3. provide Academic Accommodation Support services with appropriate disability related documents that are reasonably requested by the University, and;
  - keep such information current for the period of their accommodation, and;

- consent to the University making use of this information on a need-to-know basis for appropriate University purposes, including the administration of this policy.
- 1.1.4. collaborate with Academic Accommodation Support, instructors, and others (for example, academic advisors, graduate supervisors, Chairs/Directors, Deans, Library staff etc.) by identifying learning needs to develop an appropriate accommodation plan.
  - 1.1.5. acknowledge that the process for assessing and providing appropriate academic accommodations involves careful consideration of individual circumstances and must take into account;
    - the complex nature of implementing some required accommodation(s);
    - the timelines for implementing accommodations during the academic term;
    - the realistic possibility that some academic accommodation remedies may not be possible or available in specific cases.
  - 1.1.6. proactively communicate their academic accommodation plan to all course instructors where the student has an expectation of receiving academic accommodation in that course or to their program director in the case of non-course degree requirements. Students will;
    - send accommodation letters to each instructor through the online accommodation support system used by Academic Accommodation Support as early as possible in the semester;
    - understand that choosing not to use an approved accommodation while completing a course or non-course degree requirement may impact any appeal made on the basis of disability in that course or non-course degree requirement.
    - follow their academic accommodation plan as designed and as needed, notify AAS immediately when their academic accommodation(s), or plan no longer supports their academic needs.
  - 1.1.7. follow Academic Accommodation Support procedures with regard to registration, renewing registration, booking quizzes, tests and exams, and the provision of accommodation and supports.
  - 1.1.8. request, if appropriate, that their eligibility for university awards, scholarships or other opportunities be considered on the basis of their accommodation (e.g. reduced course load).

## **1.2. Academic Accommodation Support (AAS)**

Academic Accommodation Support works with students to create and implement

individualized academic accommodation plans so students can more fully participate in their studies. Developing academic accommodation plans will vary from student-to-student depending on individual disability-related needs. For students with an expectation of receiving academic accommodation support, AAS will partner with students, faculty, instructors, staff and other professionals to facilitate academic accommodations for students with disabilities by;

- 1.2.1. facilitating the academic accommodations process for students with disabilities by coordinating the requests for and assisting in the development and provision of academic accommodations.
- 1.2.2. informing students with disabilities of their obligations as AAS-registrants;
- 1.2.3. receiving and verifying all documents regarding a student's disability related circumstances.
- 1.2.4. requesting and obtaining any additional documents regarding disability reasonably required by the University and per the requirements outlined in the Ontario Human Rights Code.
- 1.2.5. ensuring that all student information and all documents regarding disability are treated with the highest degree of confidentiality and security.
- 1.2.6. reviewing all documents related to the student's circumstances and in consultation with the student;
  - 1.2.6.1 providing problem-solving support to students with disabilities when applicable and/or
  - 1.2.6.2 making the necessary recommendations for an individualized academic accommodation plan where appropriate.
- 1.2.7. consulting with instructors and faculties/schools, as needed, on academic accommodations to ensure an accommodation(s) does not impinge upon the essential requirements of their program of studies.
- 1.2.8. providing confirmation, upon request and with the consent of the student, confirming a student's registration with Academic Accommodation Support and outlining the student's academic accommodation requirements.
- 1.2.9. acting as the trusted resource by assisting and providing information and expertise pertaining to academic accommodations to instructors,

Chairs/Directors, Deans and other administrative staff;

- 1.2.10. educating, when appropriate, students, faculty, and administrative staff as to their rights and responsibilities under this policy.
- 1.2.11. ensuring that tests and exams held in Academic Accommodation Support are conducted and invigilated in accordance with University policy and procedures.
- 1.2.12. ensure confidential and timely delivery of tests or exams according to Academic Accommodation Support procedures.
- 1.2.13. engage in the Dispute Resolution Process in these Procedures.

### **1.3. Graduate Supervisors, Instructors and Teaching Assistants**

Graduate supervisors, Instructors and teaching assistants have a duty to inform themselves about disability related issues, to interact with students in a respectful and inclusive manner, to engage in the accommodation process, and to provide appropriate academic accommodations. Graduate Supervisors, Instructors and teaching assistants will;

- 1.3.1. work in collaboration with students, Academic Accommodation Support (AAS) services, and other University stakeholders, to support students who are registered with AAS and have a current academic accommodation plan in place. Address any concerns regarding individual academic accommodations as soon as possible.
- 1.3.2. advise students of available accommodation supports, and the process by which these resources may be accessed. When necessary, refer students who identify as having a disability or suspected disability who are requesting disability-related academic accommodations to AAS services as soon as possible
- 1.3.3. collaborate with AAS and the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, and the Yeates School of Graduate Studies, as appropriate, to ensure that alternative approaches and possible accommodation solutions are investigated and designed into course curriculum, activities and materials while preserving the essential academic requirements of the course or non-course degree requirement.
- 1.3.4. embed by design course content including but not limited to; teaching methods, textbooks, printed materials and audio/video resources so that any necessary academic accommodations can be in place as early as possible to the

beginning of the academic term.

- 1.3.5. be responsive to alternative forms of accommodations should the current academic accommodations be insufficient based on the impact of the student's disability and/or the nature/type of course or non-course degree requirement;
- 1.3.6. work in collaboration with the Test Centre to ensure timely delivery of assessment information and materials that enable the student to demonstrate their learning in a course/program.
- 1.3.7. Seek guidance from the Chair, Graduate Program Director, Associate Dean, Dean and AAS, when needed.
- 1.3.8. Ensure that the environment is inclusive and that all students treat one another with respect.
- 1.3.9. Engage in the Dispute Resolution Process in these Procedures.

**1.4. The Department/School/Program Chair/Director or designate shall:**

- 1.4.1 provide an opportunity for all faculty members to familiarize themselves with this policy;
- 1.4.2 assist faculty in ensuring that course instruction, materials and activities are accessible to develop an inclusive learning environment for students;
- 1.4.3 provide resources to support approved academic accommodations;
- 1.4.4 consult with students and Academic Accommodation Support, as required, when an accommodation request is in question and/or is denied by the instructor or graduate supervisor (in the latter case, see dispute resolution below);
- 1.4.5 discuss with Academic Accommodation Support concerns about how accommodations relate to the essential academic requirements of the course/program, communicate findings with the student;
- 1.4.6 ensure accommodations for entrance exams are in place/scheduled as soon as possible and communicated to students with accommodations. Consult with Academic Accommodation Support if there are concerns to provide accommodations for university entrance requirements, (e.g. proficiency tests);

1.4.7 review, upon a student's, instructor's, graduate supervisor's, and/or Academic Accommodation Support's request, concerns with the recommended accommodation plan and assist in developing alternatives; ensure this matter is addressed in a timely manner;

1.4.8 ensure that Experiential Learning Placements (e.g., field placements, practica) are informed of, and able to respond to, accommodation requirements of students with disabilities in a timely manner prior to assigning students to a specific placement setting; where possible include any timelines for ensuring accommodations are in place when a student is accepted into an Experiential Learning placement;

1.4.9 ensure the provision of accommodations for students with disabilities is outlined in the Department/School student handbook in accordance with the Course Management Policy.

1.4.10 Engage in the Dispute Resolution Process in these Procedures.

#### **1.5 Deans shall:**

1.5.1 work with the Department/School Chairs/Directors to ensure that all instructors and graduate supervisors are made aware of this policy and that the practices associated with the delivery of accommodations are consistent with this policy;

1.5.2 assist faculty, chairs, and directors in ensuring that course instruction, materials and activities, and non-course degree requirements are accessible in order to develop an inclusive learning environment for students;

1.5.3 provide resources as appropriate to implement approved academic accommodations; and

1.5.4 Assess decisions not to provide any academic accommodation or a particular academic accommodation;

1.5.5 ensure that academic accommodations received by students will not be a barrier to eligibility for university honours or opportunities.

1.5.6 engage in the Dispute Resolution Process in these Procedures.

#### **1.6 The Convocation and Awards Office**

1.6.1 shall make accommodations for convocation ceremonies, in conjunction with

Academic Accommodation Support as appropriate, with advance notice from the student or other relevant parties.

### **1.7 Registrar's Office**

1.7.1 in accordance with the Equalization of Tuition for Students with Disabilities per Senate Policy #159 , shall maintain a process for fairly assessing tuition fees where a reduced course load is an appropriate academic accommodation.

### **1.8 Library Services**

1.8.1 shall make efforts to provide access to information for students with disabilities;

1.8.2 collaborate with the instructor, Academic Accommodation Support and other campus stakeholders to provide information in accessible formats to students with disabilities;

1.8.3 collaborate with CCS and other campus stakeholders to provide adaptive technology within the library to improve accessibility.

### **1.9 Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching**

1.9.1 provide resources to faculty members related to universal design for learning, inclusive design, and accessible delivery and evaluation methods;

1.9.2 in collaboration with AAS, VPFA and others, provide information and training for instructors related to academic accommodations specifically for students with disabilities.

### **1.10 Student Financial Assistance**

1.10.1 shall collaborate with Academic Accommodation Support and other key stakeholders as needed in the administration of specialized funding according to Ministry guidelines.

### **1.11 University Application Process:**

1.11.1 Applicants are strongly encouraged to declare that they have need of accommodation(s) in the process of application to Ryerson. For University programs that require on-site attendance for auditions, interviews, essays, tests, and other like non-academic criteria, advance notice is recommended to ensure appropriate accommodation can be arranged within the critical admission

timelines.

- 1.11.2 Upon request, the University will provide admission information to applicants in accessible formats within a reasonable timeframe.
- 1.11.3 If questions arise during the application process pertaining to the ability of an applicant to fulfill the essential requirements of a program, even if accommodated, the issue will be discussed by Admissions, Academic Accommodation Support, the Chair/Director of the department, and the Dean of the applicant's prospective Faculty (where appropriate). The Chair/Director shall work with the applicant and Academic Accommodation Support to determine academic accommodations which may enable the applicant to meet the essential academic requirements.
- 1.11.4 In the event that the Chair/Director, in conjunction with the Dean, determines that no accommodation would enable the student to meet the essential academic requirements, Admissions shall inform the applicant and other options can be reviewed.
- 1.11.5 Admission into a program does not guarantee that an applicant will, in fact, be able to meet the essential academic requirements of the program or any specific course.

## **2. RESOLUTION OF DISAGREEMENTS**

### **2.1. Review of Accommodation Plan if Not Accepted:**

- 2.1.1. If the student with a disability, Academic Accommodation Support, and the instructor cannot agree on the academic accommodations to be provided, the instructor or Academic Accommodation Support Manager (or designate from Academic Accommodation Support) shall discuss the matter with the Chair<sup>1</sup> of the Department<sup>2</sup> promptly after it becomes clear that there will be no agreement on the provision of academic accommodations.
- 2.1.2. The Chair shall review all relevant information and will consult with others as appropriate. The Chair may request additional information from the parties. If the Chair agrees with the student's requested academic accommodations, the Chair shall direct in writing that those academic accommodations be provided. If the Chair does not agree that the academic accommodations requested by the student are appropriate, or if the professor/instructor refuses to apply the

---

<sup>1</sup>Chair includes Director or designate of either a Chair or Director, as appropriate

<sup>2</sup>Department includes School or other division of the University, as appropriate



accommodation(s) as directed, the Chair shall engage the academic accommodation review committee, and forward all relevant information to this group for their review.

2.1.3. The academic accommodation review committee shall review all relevant information and will consult with others as appropriate in order to resolve the matter. The review committee may request additional information from all parties. If the review committee agrees with the student's requested academic accommodations, the review committee shall direct in writing that those academic accommodations be provided. If the review committee does not agree that the academic accommodations requested by the student should be provided, the review committee shall provide their decision and the reasons for that decision in writing to the student, the instructor, the Chair, and AAS.

2.1.4. If the student is not satisfied with the review committee's response, they may write to the Vice Provost Academic within 10 (ten) business days from the date of the committee's letter.

2.1.5. The Vice Provost Academic, in consultation with the Vice Provost Students, or the Vice Provost and Dean, YSGS (for graduate students) shall review all relevant documentation and will consult with others as appropriate in an effort to resolve the matter. The Vice Provost Academic may request additional documentation from all parties. The Vice Provost Academic will render a final decision on the matter.

2.1.6. There shall be no review of or appeal from the decision of the Vice Provost Academic.

## **2.2. Accommodation Pending Review**

2.2.1. The University recognizes that decisions involving academic accommodations must be made expeditiously. In the event that a request for accommodation is under review, the instructor and Academic Accommodation Support shall review the accommodation plan to determine what portion, if any, of the plan it is appropriate to implement immediately.

2.2.2. Where a student has been accommodated, pending the final outcome of all reviews, and the final result is that the academic accommodation should not be granted, the Chair may, at their discretion, recommend that a student be retroactively withdrawn from a course.