

Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion
University of Miami School of Law
Policies and Procedures
Effective September 19, 2012
Updated July 27, 2018

- 1 [Student Responsibilities](#)
- 2 [Section 1: Purpose and Philosophy](#)
- 3 [Section 2: Federal Laws and Legal Precedents](#)
- 4 [Section 3: Confidentiality](#)
- 5 [Section 4: Eligibility for Services](#)
- 6 [Section 5: Accommodations](#)
- 7 [Section 6: Supportive Services](#)
- 8 [Section 7: Accessibility of the Campus](#)
- 9 [Section 8: Access to Housing](#)

Student Responsibilities

Self-identifying a disability and asking for accommodations, are personal decisions. If a student requests accommodations at the University of Miami School of Law, he or she is responsible for completing the process of registering with Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion.

Location: Office of Student Affairs and Academic Services
Suite A212

Director: Ms. Jessie Howell, Esq
Phone: 305-284-9907

Email: jhowell@law.miami.edu

The student must take the initiative and remain actively involved in the accommodation process. If there are concerns about this process, or advice is needed in coming to a decision as to whether to seek accommodations, the Office of Student Accessibility and Inclusion encourages students to call or stop by for a confidential review of the options available to them. Should a student then prefer not to self-identify, that decision will be respected and supported. Students seeking reasonable accommodations should be aware that it is their responsibility to:

1. Register with the Office of Student Accessibility and Inclusion to make appropriate request for accommodations. Supply supporting clinical documentation to the Office of Student Accessibility and Inclusion as set forth below at Section 4.1 in advance of the applicable semester to determine appropriate services and accommodations.
2. Request a notetaker accommodation from the Office of Student Accessibility and Inclusion by the first 2 weeks of classes each semester. If less notice is given, every effort

will be made to provide reasonable accommodations, but accommodations are not guaranteed.

2. Promptly notify the Office of Student Accessibility and Inclusion whenever there are concerns, questions or a change in needs.

3. Check your UM e-mail account routinely, this e-mail is the default form of communication for the Office of Student Accessibility and Inclusion . If you are using a private e-mail source, forward your UM account to avoid missing pertinent information and deadlines.

4. Request exam accommodations each semester by the deadline posted on the Office of Student Accessibility and Inclusion website www.law.miami.edu/disability-services. If you need assistance accessing the website, please contact Jessie Howell at jhowell@law.miami.edu. For first-time applicants, the Accommodations Committee generally takes 4-6 weeks to process requests.

5. Confirm the schedule for final exams no later than one week before the first day of the reading period.

Overview of Policies and Procedures:

Section 1 Purpose and Philosophy

The purpose of the Office of Student Accessibility and Inclusion is to assist University law students by providing procedures for assuring that students with disabilities have equal access to University courses and programs.

1.2 Philosophy

The University of Miami is committed to providing equal educational opportunity for all students who have met the academic admission requirements and who have been admitted to the University.

1.3 Association for Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD)

AHEAD is an international organization of professionals founded in 1977 to act as a resource to postsecondary institutions and their offices for disability services. The University of Miami maintains an institutional membership in AHEAD.

1.5 The University's Office of Disability Services coordinates disability services and policy for students in all parts of the University. The Law School Office of Student Accessibility and Inclusion will cooperate as appropriate with the University's Office of Disability Services to evaluate requests for accommodations and to ensure appropriate delivery of services.

Section 2 Federal Laws and Legal Precedents Related to Disability Services

Two primary federal acts affect the provision of services for students with disabilities at colleges and universities. They are: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the

Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990. In addition to these federal acts, continuing legal opinions and interpretations of the law may establish precedents which also affect the provision of services. Disability services providers also use the findings of the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) to develop services.

Section 3 Confidentiality

The Office of Student Accessibility and Inclusion preserves the confidentiality of student records as provided in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Information concerning students who receive disability services is kept confidential unless a release of information is authorized by the student.

3.1 Upon registering with the Office of Student Accessibility and Inclusion, a student is asked to sign a Release of Information form giving the Office of Student Accessibility and Inclusion permission to speak with those offices and individuals which are most appropriate in the process of providing reasonable accommodations. The Office of Student Accessibility and Inclusion will seek a waiver to permit that the documentation provided pursuant to Section 4.1 below will be reviewed by the University's Office of Disability Services, and as appropriate, by the Student Health Center or the Student Counseling Center or other medical professionals. Additional offices and individuals are included on the Release of Information form on an individual case-by-case basis. A student may amend the Release of Information form and the Office of Student Accessibility and Inclusion may also ask the student to sign an amended form as circumstances require.

3.2 Exceptions to the confidentiality provisions will be made in situations involving harm to self or harm to others or as provided in state law.

Section 4 Eligibility for Services

A student who is admitted to the University may be eligible for disability services provided that:

The student identifies him/herself to the Office of Student Accessibility and Inclusion and requests services;

The student provides current, complete, and appropriate documentation of a disability as disability is currently defined by law; and

The student registers with the Office of Student Accessibility and Inclusion by completing registration forms and signing the Release of Information form.

Eligibility for services is determined by the Office of Student Accessibility and Inclusion. Decisions on accommodations will be communicated to the student by the Director of Student Accessibility and Inclusion

A student who has received services or accommodations from another institution or agency may not always be eligible for the same services or accommodations at the

University of Miami School of Law.

4.1 Standards for Documentation

The standards for submitting documentation to address a range of accommodations for disabilities are set forth at this link: <https://camnercenter.miami.edu/disability-services/documentation/index.html> under the heading “Documentation.”

Section 5 Accommodations

Academic accommodations are adjustments that provide equal academic opportunity for students with disabilities. Academic accommodations are designed to provide equal access to courses and programs, but they do not guarantee an outcome or a level of achievement.

Academic accommodations shall be reasonable. They need not be provided when the accommodation would result in a fundamental alteration of the program or impose an undue financial or administrative burden on the institution. Furthermore, accommodations are not required to address a personal need such as: an attendant, an individually prescribed device, a reader for personal use or study, or other devices or services of a personal nature.

Requests for accommodations which would fundamentally alter the nature of a program or which would alter the academic standards of a course or program will not be granted.

Accommodations must be requested by a student in a timely manner which will allow the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion to receive and review documentation, determine eligibility, determine the appropriateness and reasonableness of the accommodation, and establish the accommodation. Accommodations will not be granted retroactively.

Information about Accommodations

Each accommodation is evaluated and granted individually; accommodations are not granted as a package. Accommodations are based on the functional limitations specified in the documentation submitted by the student.

In-class accommodations may be provided by the instructor in the classroom or within the department. Instructors should consult with the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion as soon as possible if there is any question or concern about an accommodation or how it should be provided. If an instructor has a concern that a specific accommodation may fundamentally alter the nature of the course, the instructor should contact the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion as soon as possible so that the concern may be addressed.

The Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will consult with instructors when necessary to clarify the fundamental nature of a course or the manner in which accommodations may be arranged.

5.1 Testing Accommodations

EXTENDED TIME

Extended time does not mean "unlimited time" or "untimed tests." Increments are based on functional limitations described in the medical documentation.

Extended time applies only to in-class examinations, quizzes, and assignments. Some faculty in the School of Law utilize take-home examinations instead of in-class examinations and/or writing assignments or projects that are completed out of class. Extended time applies to take-home examinations that are 24 hours or less in length.

Exams proctored by the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion typically will be administered on the same day unless prior arrangements have been made between the student and the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion . Examination may vary as to time.

Student Responsibilities:

* Students should note on their course syllabus the dates of tests, exams, or quizzes. Students must inform the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion of all of these dates if they expect to take the exams or quizzes through the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion .

* Students must request exam accommodations each semester by the deadline posted on the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion website www.law.miami.edu/disability-services if they expect to use testing accommodations through the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion . The Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion may not be able to provide accommodations if sufficient notice is not given to make arrangements for testing accommodations.

* Students must arrive on time for exams or face the sanctions as set forth for all law students in the Student Handbook.

The Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion Responsibilities:

* the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will provide testing accommodations as appropriate.

* the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will schedule a student's exam in a testing room provided that the student has requested accommodations by the deadline posted on the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion ODS website.

* the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will contact the Registrar's Office prior to the exam date to obtain instructions on how an exam is to be administered (e.g. "notes allowed," "open book," "calculator allowed", etc.) and how an exam is to be returned to the Registrar's Office.

- * the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will obtain the exam from the Registrar's Office (or instructor/faculty assistant in the case of a quiz).
- * the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will provide testing accommodations in accordance with the teacher's instructions.
- * the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will not allow students to have on their person books, backpacks, notes, calculators, hats, or cell phones for closed book exams
- * the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will provide any scratch paper which may be necessary for an exam and will collect the scratch paper after the exam and return it with the exam to the Registrar.
- * the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will return exam to the Registrar's Office immediately after it is completed, or in the case of a quiz, to a faculty assistant as soon as possible within 24 hours.
- * the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will report any variances in exam administration to the Registrar's Office

BREAKS

If a student's documentation supports the need for breaks, the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will provide timed breaks to the student during examinations, quizzes and in-class assignments. The time allotted for taking the exam will not run while you are out of the room on a break. The clock for the time allotted to take the exam will be restarted when you return from a break. The student is responsible for signing themselves in/out from breaks.

QUIET TESTING LOCATION

The Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will provide a quiet testing location. The Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion has a limited number of testing rooms and access to them is provided when sufficient notice has been given by a student to schedule their use.

The responsibilities of students and the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion are the same as those listed above for extended time. If a student feels that a testing location is not reasonably free of distractions, the student should notify the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion immediately so that adjustments can be made.

USE OF A COMPUTER

Student may be allowed the use of a computer for examinations if a student's documentation describes functional limitations which warrant typing essay-format exams on a computer. Students with computer accommodations must furnish their own computers.

SCRIBE

If a student's documentation supports the need for a scribe, the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will provide a scribe who will type the student's answers on a computer. Scribes will type only what is dictated to them by the student.

Students must notify the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion by the deadline posted on the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion website www.law.miami.edu/disability-services if they need this accommodation. For first-time applicants, the Accommodations Committee takes approximately 4-6 weeks to process requests.

READER FOR EXAMS

If a student's documentation supports the need for a reader for exams, the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will provide a reader. Students must notify the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion by the deadline posted on the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion website www.law.miami.edu/disability-services if they need this accommodation. Readers for exams will read only the material on the exam. Readers are not legally-trained nor are they able to answer any substantive or procedural questions. Students may ask the reader to re-read, as needed. Any and all procedural and substantive questions must be posed to the proctor and/or the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion .

5.2 Other Accommodations

NOTE-TAKERS

For many disabilities, access to an additional set of class notes is a reasonable accommodation. If the student's documentation supports this need, this accommodation may be provided in one of several ways:

- a) volunteer student note-takers from among students enrolled in a particular course. To arrange for volunteer student note-takers, the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion checks the rolls for a course and contacts those students to ask if one will volunteer to share notes with an accommodated student. This process usually takes at least two weeks at the beginning of each semester since students may be making schedule changes during that time.
- b) in instances when it is not possible to provide a volunteer note-taker, the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will contact the instructor to discuss any possible alternative accommodation.

All note submissions are done through email. Handwritten notes are scanned and also sent through email.

Accommodated students who are allowed this accommodation are responsible for notifying at least once each week if they have not received copies of notes.

Receiving class notes is not a substitute for attending class. All accommodated students are responsible for attending their classes.

RECORDED TEXTBOOKS

Students who use books on tape should register with Learning Ally (formerly RFB&D) the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion can give students information on how to register if a student has not already registered with Learning Ally.

Since it can take 8 weeks or more to obtain a recorded textbook, students are encouraged to contact Learning Ally in sufficient time to obtain services.

Students who use books on tape are strongly encouraged to plan ahead for recorded materials they will need for the next semester. The Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion advises students to consult with their Academic Advisor and their Faculty Advisor at the middle of the current semester to discuss what courses the student may need to take in the next semester.

ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS

If a student's documentation supports the need for electronic textbooks, the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will assist the student in obtaining a PDF version of the textbook. Proof of purchase is required. The student is responsible for contacting the publisher and requesting an electronic version of the textbook. If the publisher does not have an electronic version available, the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will create a PDF version of the textbook by scanning the entire textbook. Students must submit their request at least 4 weeks before the beginning of each semester.

SERVICE ANIMALS

The Americans with Disabilities Act recognizes the use of "service dogs" which are specially trained to assist persons with visual disabilities, hearing impairments, or mobility impairments by performing specific tasks. The University follows the provisions of the ADA with regard to service dogs as an accommodation. The ADA does not specify the use of "therapy animals" as a reasonable accommodation.

Students who register with the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion and who use a service animal must submit documentation regarding the service animal. This documentation is to include: a proper license by the city and county; a written up-to-date health record with verification of vaccinations provided by a licensed veterinarian. Documentation must also include verification that the animal meets the minimum training standards prescribed by Assistance Dogs International or another animal training organization which is recognized by the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion.

The owner/partner/handler of a service animal is responsible for the safety and care of the animal. A service animal may be excluded from the campus when that animal's behavior poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others. The owner/partner/handler of a service animal must maintain the animal on a leash at all times and must be in full control of the animal at all times. The animal should wear an identification symbol which is commonly recognized as indicating a service animal.

Disputes regarding service animals will be addressed in accordance with the Grievance and Appeal Policy.

Section 6 Supportive Services

There are other services which are not accommodations in and of themselves, but are considered supportive services. These would include the Use of the Academic Achievement Program which has many services for all law students, including the Dean's Fellow Program and the Writing Center. For more information on the AAP, visit <http://www.law.miami.edu/aap> or call 305-284-2281.

Section 7 Accessibility of the Campus

Responsibility for the accessibility of the campus at the University is shared by Facilities Administration, the academic units, and the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion.

With regard to existing structures, if it has not been reasonable or feasible to provide direct access, then programs or services housed in an existing facility may be made accessible by other means. Alternative means of access might include: re-locating a class, arranging meetings in an accessible location, using adapted equipment or electronic means of access, etc.

With regard to new construction, each facility is to be designed and constructed in such a manner that it complies with the ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG).

The Director of the University's' Disability Services is available to provide input regarding ADA and patterns of student use of buildings to any University department.

7.1 Accessibility Committee

The Accessibility Committee meets once each year to review the status of accessibility of the campus. The Committee lists areas which need accessibility up-grades and establishes a priority list for the completion of projects.

Members of this committee are:

Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and University Administration

Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs

Assistant to the Vice President, Division of Student Affairs

Assistant Vice President, Student Affairs

Assistant Vice President, Director of Student Life and University

Center
Assistant General Counsel
Dean of Students, School of Law
Director, Physical Plant
Director, Student Health Service
Director, Academic Development Center
Director of Equality Administration
Director, Disability Services
President of Student Government
Graduate Student Representative
Undergraduate Student Representative

The annual meeting of the Accessibility Meeting is convened by the University's Director of Disability Services. The Graduate Student Representative and the Undergraduate Student Representative are appointed by the University's Director of Disability Services.

7.2 Facilities and Physical Plant

The University's Director of Disability Services is available to provide information to Facilities Administration regarding disabled students and their patterns of use of campus facilities.

The Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will complete an Accessibility Request Form when notified about a problem with access to University facilities or events.

The Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will take appropriate action when contacted about problems with accessibility of campus facilities. The Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will contact the Physical Plant Customer Service Desk if a problem requires a repair. The Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will initiate a work order for problems which can be readily addressed, for example: requesting new signs to indicate accessibility. For problems which are broader in scope, the Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will bring them to the attention of the Vice Provost for Administration and/or the Accessibility Committee to be addressed.

Section 8 Access to Housing

Students enrolled in the School of Law typically do not receive on campus housing. The Office of Student Accessibility & Inclusion will address special housing accommodation requests on a case-by-case basis.