

80.90.003 ACCOMMODATION POLICY

Accommodation Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define the rights of Graduate Students and ensure equal access and reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities or disabling conditions at the St Jude Children's Research Hospital Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences ("Graduate School").

SCOPE

This policy applies to all students enrolled in the Graduate School.

STAKEHOLDERS AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

Stakeholders affected by this policy include all Graduate School students and faculty.

POLICY

1.1 Equal Access

1.1.1 Embedded in the core values of the Graduate School is a commitment to ensure equal access to a quality higher education experience for a diverse student population. The Graduate School recognizes disability as an aspect of diversity that is integral to society and the Graduate School community. The Graduate School serves as a partner in fostering an inclusive and equitable environment for all Graduate School students.

1.1.2 The Graduate School is committed to providing equal access to educational opportunities for qualified students with disabilities or disabling conditions, in accordance with state and Federal laws. To ensure equality of access for students with disabilities or disabling condition, reasonable accommodations, including auxiliary aids and services, are provided case-by-case through an interactive process with the Graduate School ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, the Director of Student Affairs, Dr. Brittney Jackson, (IA1206 Marlo Thomas Center, 901-595-1504 or cell 901-738-3528). As a student with a disability receiving accommodation, it is important to know your rights and responsibilities outlined below.

1.2 Graduate Students Have the Right to:

1.2.1 Equal access to Graduate School courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities with or without an accommodation.

1.2.2 Reasonable accommodations, as determined on a case-by-case basis through an interactive process between the student and the Graduate School ADA/Section 504 Coordinator.

1.2.3 Appropriate privacy and confidentiality of all records regarding their disability and, except as permitted by law, the choice of whether to disclose information related to their disability or disabling condition to course leader(s), lecturer(s), or anyone else.

1.3 Graduate Student Responsibilities:

1.3.1 Notify the Graduate School ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, in a timely manner, of the need for a disability-related or pregnancy accommodation and complete the Student Accommodation Request Form if applicable.

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1.3.2 Submit appropriate documentation from a qualified professional verifying the current nature of the disability, the current functional limitations resulting from the disability, and the medical justification for the specific requested accommodation. The qualified professional must also complete the medical portion of the Student Accommodation Request Form. The student is also responsible for submitting any subsequent or additional information necessary to assess eligibility and/or continuation of accommodations and services.

1.3.3 Once an accommodation is approved, submit the Accommodations Notification Letter in a timely manner to the desired course lecturer(s) or lecturers. Should a student feel uncomfortable having this discussion with a particular lecturer, the student should contact the Graduate School ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, or designee, to request assistance.

1.3.4 Meet with the desired course leader(s) or lecturer(s) to discuss accommodations in their courses.

1.3.5 Requests submitted without reasonable advance notice for each requested auxiliary aid and/or academic adjustment may result in delay and/or inability to coordinate and/or implement the service requested. Contact the Graduate School ADA/Section 504 Coordinator immediately regarding any issues, concerns, disputes, or delays in receiving approved accommodations, or if you believe you have been discriminated against.

1.3.6 Notify the Graduate School ADA/Section 504 Coordinator immediately when discontinuing an accommodation (e.g., note taking) or dropping a course for which alternate format materials are required.

1.3.7 Meet the same academic, technical, performance and behavioral standards expected of all Graduate School students.

1.4 Graduate School's Rights and Responsibilities. Students should be aware that the Graduate School has the right and responsibility to the following:

1.4.1 Act in accordance with the Graduate School's academic standards.

1.4.2 Request current, comprehensive documentation to verify a student's need for reasonable accommodations in the higher education setting.

1.4.3 Discuss a student's need for reasonable accommodations with the professional source of their documentation (with the student's signed consent authorizing such discussion).

1.4.4 Discuss the nature of course, curriculum, program, or degree requirements with Graduate School's personnel responsible for the particular course, curriculum, program or degree.

1.4.5 Discuss the nature of course, curriculum, program, or degree requirements and any submitted documentation, including medical information, with the Graduate School's Accommodation Committee, which is responsible for reviewing accommodation requests.

1.4.6 Coordinate with faculty and staff to ensure recommended accommodations are reasonable on a case-by-case basis in each particular situation and if so, that such accommodations are subsequently implemented.

1.4.7 Share information regarding a student's disability adjustments and/or modifications with Graduate School faculty and/or administrative staff on a need-to-know basis, in order to facilitate the interactive process and assess reasonable accommodations.

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1.4.8 Designate a student's adjustments from a range of reasonable accommodations, including, equally effective alternatives.

1.4.9 Periodically review recommended reasonable accommodations to ensure their continued necessity and/or reasonableness in a particular program, course of study, classroom setting or environment, and access to other Graduate School programs, services, or benefits.

1.4.10 Deny a request for services and/or specific accommodation if:

- The requested accommodation is found to pose a direct threat to the health and safety of the student or others.
- The requested accommodation fundamentally alters a course or program.
- The requested accommodation is found to be an undue burden.
- The request is not communicated directly by the student.
- There is no identifiable relationship between the requested adjustment and the limitations of the disability.
- The necessary information required as part of the interactive process is inadequate and/or not provided in a timely manner, or
- If an equally effective accommodation is identified as a reasonable alternative to the requested accommodation.

PROCEDURE

2.1 Requesting Accommodations

2.1.1 To request an accommodation under this policy, students must notify the Graduate School ADA/Section 504 Coordinator via the Office of Student Affairs. Upon notification by the student, the Graduate School ADA/Section 504 Coordinator will provide the requisite forms to the student for completion. The student must then complete the Student Accommodation Request Form and have a qualified professional complete the Medical Provider Documentation Form and submit any necessary documentation and/or information to the Graduate School ADA/Section Coordinator or designee for review. Information and documentation of the disability should be timely and from appropriate professionals licensed to diagnose the student's particular disability. Medical documentation will be retained by the Graduate School ADA/Section 504 Coordinator and will be kept private and confidential.

2.1.2 Requests for accommodations should be made far enough in advance to allow staff adequate time to receive and review the necessary information and documents, as well as to coordinate needed services. Generally, it is best to request needed services before a semester begins or as soon as a disability becomes known.

2.1.3 After submission of the necessary information and documentation, the Graduate School ADA/Section 504 Coordinator and the Graduate School ADA Committee will review the information and documents submitted, request any additional information and documents needed to evaluate the accommodation request, and either the Graduate School ADA/Section 504 Coordinator or designee will meet with student and/or the student's qualified professional to discuss the requested accommodation.

2.1.4 Once a student has been approved for an accommodation, the student will receive a Student Eligibility Letter for their records that encompasses the options and an Accommodation Notification Letter that the student can provide to individuals of their choice. It is the student's responsibility to provide faculty with the Accommodation Notification Letter for those courses, laboratories, or other academic activities in which the student wishes to

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utilize the approved accommodation. Once faculty have been notified, they will work to find proper means to meet the accommodation. If faculty members have a concern about providing the requested accommodation, they should reach out to the Graduate School ADA/Section 504 Coordinator. Faculty members are expected to discuss approved accommodations privately with the student and disclose information about the accommodation only to those individuals with a legitimate need to know.

2.1.5 In some circumstances, requested accommodations may not be reasonable in specific courses. If this arises, the Graduate School ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, or designee, will engage with faculty and determine what is reasonable. In cases where, based on the nature of the course, a requested accommodation is not reasonable or otherwise unable to be provided for a lawful reason, the coordinator may explore alternatives if an access barrier is still present.

2.2 Requesting Additional Accommodations

2.2.1 Students are responsible for notifying the Graduate School ADA/Section 504 Coordinator if approved accommodations are not being provided in an effective and timely way, if the provided accommodation is not sufficient, or if the student wishes to request additional accommodations. If an accommodation is not implemented in a test-taking or similar situation, the student should address that with the course leader(s) or proctor immediately. If the information provided is found to be true, the amount of time should be added back to the test time such that the student is not disadvantaged.

2.2.2 Accommodations are approved initially based on the needs and access barriers the student is encountering at that time. However, needs and barriers can change and/or evolve as a student progresses through an academic program. If a student encounters new barriers, emergent needs, or seeks to modify a current accommodation, the student can request additional accommodations by notifying the Graduate School ADA/Section 504 Coordinator and completing a new Student Accommodation Form and Medical Accommodation Request Form, after which the Graduate School ADA/Section 504 Coordinator will review and reengage in the interactive process.

2.2.3 Grievance Procedures

2.2.4 A student who has been denied an accommodation and believes they have been subject to disability discrimination may file a complaint pursuant to the Graduate School's Student Complaint Policy. Those policies and related procedures constitute the Graduate School's Section 504 Grievance Procedures.

DEFINITIONS

- **ADA** – Americans with Disabilities Act
- **Accommodation** – Accommodations are tools and procedures that provide equal access to instruction and assessment for students with disabilities.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

N/A

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FORMS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

- Student Accommodation Form
- Student Accommodation Form: Medical Provider Documentation Form

POLICY DETAILS

Policy Type	Policy Revision
Policy Number	80.90.003
Policy Category	Administrative Policy
Policy Sponsor	Stacey Schultz-Cherry
Approval Authority	Dean of the Graduate School
Policy Effective Date:	July 1, 2023
Policy Owner (Contact Info)	Stacey Schultz-Cherry (stacey.schultz-cherry@stjude.org)
Policy Alternate	Stacey Schultz-Cherry
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Next Scheduled Review Date	By June 1, 2026

REVISION HISTORY

- V1.0 – May 23, 2023
- V2.0 – August 19, 2024
- V3.0 – February 12, 2025
- V4.0 – March 27, 2026

APPROVALS

- Dean of the Graduate School – Approved on May 23, 2023
- Dean of the Graduate School – Approved on August 19, 2024
- Dean of the Graduate School – Approved on February 12, 2025
- Dean of the Graduate School – Approved on March 27, 2026