An Introduction to Disability Resources at Oberlin College

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Before we Begin

As academic adjustments and accommodations are determined on a case by case basis which consists of a multistep iterative process, Please keep in mind this information is presented as general information. If you have a specific question, please let us know.
The primary charge for Disability Resources (DR) is to insure equal access to programs, courses, activities, without altering the fundamental nature or goals of the program, or the pedagogy of a course or the institution.

Disabilities must be documented by a qualified professional. e.g. Psychologist for mental health disabilities, Cardiologist for cardiac disabilities.

Expected documentation guidelines can be found here: https://www.oberlin.edu/disability-resources/eligibility (located at the bottom of the page)
To reduce frustration please read the Expected Documentation Guidelines carefully before submitting your request.

Regardless of the age of Psychoeducational/Neuropsychological testing, Adult scales are required.

IEP can be helpful as secondary documentation, but they do not constitute sufficient documentation in and of themselves.
Accommodations must be supported not simply by a recommendation from a provider e.g. “live off campus”, “Single”, Leniency, or “be released from the board plan requirement”, but show specific medical/psychological rational, and supportive data that support that specific recommendation is a necessity, as well as why it cannot be ameliorated in any other way.

Most dining concerns can be addressed through a student conversation with dining services.
What is the Process for Submitting your Request

- Oberlin college utilizes AIM (Accessible Information Management) which is our online portal.
- Step by step instruction are on our website
- Students may request accommodations once they have received their Obie ID (T number) and their College email address. This is usually late May.
- In most cases you will receive an initial response, not necessarily a determination, within one week, and usually sooner.
- Please be sure to use your Oberlin email when you register in AIM, and please check your email often.
What's Different from High School

- Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) goes away, as do most subparts of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, therefore some academic adjustments are not appropriate in higher education.
- There is no “504 plan” or “IEP”.
- Students are not eligible for individually designed instruction.
- The alteration to the fundamental pedagogy of a course, degree requirements, or residential program are not required of the institution.
- Students no longer have a teacher of service or record.
- Students must self identify and be the primary contact with Disability Resources (DR).
Some Academic Adjustments and What They Mean

- Attendance Leniency: This rare accommodation grants some occasional flex with class attendance; this does not cover things like participation points. As all courses are different in their structure, students are required to meet with the professor to determine the number of absences appropriate in that course, and in some courses it is not possible. Students are responsible for all information missed, and some assignments cannot be made up.

- Possible reasons for requesting this accommodation would be if you are undergoing chemotherapy, or are diagnosed with a chronic and or relapsing/remitting illness e.g. MS, Lupus, Chronic migraines.

- Generally, ADD/ADHD, Anxiety, Depression, and Neurodiversive disabilities do not qualify. In many cases this accommodation is time limited e.g. one semester, 6 months.
Due Date Leniency

- This is similar to Attendance Leniency with many of the same restrictions.
- Also generally reserved for severe health conditions e.g. chemotherapy, MS, Lupus
- Students are cautioned that most students find, counterintuitively, that this makes their academic life far more stressful. Historically speaking, students are more likely to need to request an incomplete(s) at the end of the semester. This is because things tend to “snowball” quickly, and students can find themselves chronically behind.
It is important to note that Oberlin College considers participation in residential life to be a required part of the Oberlin experience. This participation is an integral part of a student’s development, and the college pedagogy is based on the understanding that having students living and dining together fosters community, discourse, and debate, therefore it is a requirement of a residential program.

Disability Resources will always first seek to address a student’s housing and dining needs through one of Oberlin’s many residential and dining options and reserves the right to suggest an alternative accommodation offering similar benefits.
There are big differences between Emotional Support Animals (ESA) and Service Animals.

- ESA’s are covered under The Fair Housing Act and apply to housing only. Animals are not to be in public areas or classrooms, and many other rules apply. Animals are not permitted on campus until official approval is given. Please check with our office for specific questions.

- Services Animals are under the ADA, and must be a dog or in very rare cases a miniature horse and must be trained to perform a specific task or set of tasks. Service Animals are permitted to be virtually anywhere.
Executive Function Support Services

- Productivity Programming Workshops
  Offers help mapping out tasks, minimizing procrastination, and tackling assignments and emails
- Individual appointments though Academic Support Center
- Project LEAD (Learning Enhancement Across the Disciplines) course LEAD 180: Building Habits for Success