Mission Statement
The mission of Disability Services is to assist students, provide access to all college programs, services, activities, and facilities for students with disabilities. We want to provide advocacy, and support students to achieve their personal best.

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KEYS TO SUCCESS

➢ **Attitude and Self Advocacy Skills:**
The most important factors in determining your success or failure in higher education are attitude and self-advocacy. Students with disabilities need to be prepared to work collaboratively with the institution's disability services coordinator to have equal opportunity to participate in all of the programs and activities.

➢ **Understand Your Disability:**
Students with disabilities need to know the functional limitations that result from their disabilities and understand their strengths and weaknesses.

➢ **Accept Responsibility For Your Own Success:**
All students, including those with disabilities, must take primary responsibility for their success or failure in higher education. Make appointments with your instructors for monitoring your notes and progress.

**STUDENT RIGHTS**

Individuals, including students enrolled at Bethel College, are afforded certain rights under Federal legislation. Specifically, individuals with disabilities are provided rights under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and their appropriate amendments. Specifically, individuals, including students, have the right to the following:

- Equal access to courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities offered through the college.
- Equal opportunity to work, learn, and receive reasonable accommodations, both personal and academic.
- Appropriate confidentiality from all information regarding their disabilities and to choose with whom information about their disabilities are disclosed.
- Information, including text, test, and other teaching materials in accessible forms that meet their needs.

**FERPA:** in accordance with the family educational rights and privacy act 1974 (FERPA) our most current and best interpretation of the law’s requirements and rights for students are as follows:

- The right to submit a statement of their views for inclusion in the educational record should the hearing become unsatisfactory; School is not required to amend records, but to consider an appropriate request.
- The right to challenge the contents of the student’s educational records
- The right to a hearing if the outcome of the challenge is unsatisfactory.
- The right to submit an explanatory statement for inclusion in the educational record if the outcome of the hearing is unsatisfactory.
- The right to prevent disclosure, with certain exceptions - personally identifiable information

**Bethel College Grievance Policy**

- “Student who believes that his or her rights have been violated by a member of the college faculty, administration, staff or student body may file a formal complaint in writing to the vice president for student development. A formal hearing will be called and procedures followed as with any other hearing. For a more detailed outline of a formal hearing see Appeals Process under Student Conduct and Procedure”. (Ref 2013-2014 Student Handbook, page 182, paragraph 6 / pages 190–192)
- The right to secure a copy of the institutional right to file complaints with Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Bethel College to comply with provisions of the act

The name and address of the office:

1 Family Policy Compliance Office / U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S W, Washington, DC 20202 – 8520

*Advocacy, for the purposes of this document, is defined as actively supporting students in the acquisition of their support services, as well as acting on behalf of individuals with disabilities regarding issues of access, accommodation, resources and college policy.*
STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Although Federal legislation provides students with disabilities specific rights, students with disabilities also have responsibilities. According to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the ADA, and their appropriate amendments, students with disabilities have the responsibility to do the following:

- Meet qualifications and maintain essential institutional standards for courses, programs, services, jobs, and activities.

- Self-identify a disability and the need for an accommodation if they wish to receive services and to seek information, counsel, and assistance within a reasonable amount of time follow procedures for obtaining reasonable accommodations.

- Prospective students are required to meet with the disabilities services provider on Bethel campus. Students will fill out an intake application during their appointment and describe their particular barriers to education concerning their disability. Students may be asked to provide appropriate documentation concerning their disability as needed. Students can access more information regarding Bethel’s policy and procedure at the following websites: http://www.BethelCollege.edu/academics/tutoring/disabilities.html

- Students that are accommodated need to provide the instructor with their accommodation request form – professor documentation, and discuss how their academic adjustment needs will be met. Good communication and advocacy on the student’s part is the most important piece of the accommodation process.

- Colleges and Universities are not required to provide free appropriate public education (FAPE) unlike the K-12 educational system. However, colleges and universities are required to provide appropriate academic accommodations for students with disabilities. Students are responsible for their academic success, homework and their conduct.

- Students are expected to use self-advocacy skills. Students should be able to communicate about their disability and how it functionally limits a major life activity.

- Some testing can take place at the Wellness Center. Additional testing related to assessment that is requested is the student’s responsibility.

- Colleges and universities are not expected to lower or alter academic expectations within the classroom when providing academic accommodations. Colleges are also not expected to provide exemptions from graduation requirements and standards for academic programs. For example, a student with a disability may be given additional time to complete an examination; however, the content of examination will not be modified.
HOW TO APPLY FOR DISABILITY SERVICES

- The student makes an appointment with disability services at the Center for Academic Success, CAS, through the office manager, at 574-807-7460.

- During the application process with the Disability Services Coordinator, the student will complete our intake form, and sign a FERPA release. Medical documentation/IEP, will be accepted but may not be required. Documentation of a specific disability does not translate directly into specific accommodations. Reasonable accommodations are individually determined and should be based on the functional impact of the condition and impact with environment. Professional judgment is used when determining accommodations. Outside documentation may be requested. The student will be given the documentation and verification guidelines as needed.

In-take application and third party documentation serves two purposes; to establish protection from discrimination, and to determine the accommodations to which the student may be entitled.

- The time line when a student has an appointment with Disability Services and when student receives services can be from that day up to 4 weeks depending on many variables. New students should be encouraged to begin the process early.

- New and returning students receive accommodations via a form listing student’s accommodations with a checkmark beside each accommodation, their name, student number, my signature and space for instructor’s signatures. A student may decide to only show the accommodations page to some of their instructors, or may not choose to have accommodations at all for that semester.

- Students who start the process for accommodations but never complete the process translates into no services.

- Students return their accommodation forms to the CAS, and at that time it is considered active. The CAS office manager then sends a copy of the signed form to instructors through campus mail for their file. Please note: the accommodations paper will need to be returned ASAP in order to begin accommodated testing etc.

SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDENTS MEETING WITH INSTRUCTORS

Make an appointment during office hours and within the first two weeks of the semester or when accommodations are obtained.

- Inform the instructor that you have a disability and provide them with their yellow faculty notification letter
- Make a direct request for specific academic accommodations
- Discuss the details of how the academic accommodations will be met, and ask if he or she can foresee any particular difficulty implementing the accommodations. If there is a problem, contact the disability services office immediately.

Remember that academic accommodations ensure equal access to education in that they are modifications to how course content is received by students during class or expressed by students during testing.
POSSIBLE ACCOMMODATIONS THAT MAY BE RECOMMENDED
If it is determined that a student is eligible to receive services based upon their intake application and documentation these possible accommodations include, but are not limited to:

- Extra test time
- Use of digital audio recorder
- Note-taking assistance
- Distraction reduced testing
- Alternative format textbooks
- Use of a calculator on test when and if appropriate
- Audio exams
- Scribe for tests and other course work, or use of software for this purpose.
- Enlarged print for tests, hand-outs, etc.
- Copies of lectures, outlines, power points, notes on BC online, provided by professor
- Use of adaptive equipment in class: Screen reader, magnification software, textbooks on CD.
- Sign language interpreting or VRI : video remote interpreting
- Magnification software
- Screen reading software

The authority to grant students with reasonable academic accommodations rests with the Center for Academic Success-Disability Services.

AGAIN: Academic accommodations are not an alteration of course content or requirements.

Students With Temporary Physical Disabilities
Students may have short term physical disabilities that may include, but are not limited to accommodations, such as; wheelchairs, crutches, slings, and walkers. Disability Services may include temporary assistance with note-taking, use of a tape player and special software. Pregnancy alone is not a disability and does not qualify a student for handicapped parking. Students needing temporary accommodations please refer them to the Center for Academic Success-Disability Services.

Note Taking Assistance
The center for academic success will coordinate note taking assistance. When possible, note-takers will be introduced confidentially to the student for whom the services are provided. Family members are not allowed in the classroom to serve as note-takers unless they are enrolled in the same course section.

Conduct
Disability services will not be held responsible for acts of misconduct committed by any student. It is the responsibility of each student to know and abide by all Bethel college policies, procedures, rules and regulations, and disability services policy and procedure. A student who believes that his or her rights have been violated by a member of the college faculty, administration, staff or student body may file a formal complaint in writing to the Vice President for student development. A formal hearing will be called and procedures followed as with any other hearing. (See appeals process in disciplinary cases in the student planner.)
Problems With An Instructor / Grievance Policy
First, students should try to resolve the problem themselves with the other party for example; instructor, advisor or roommate. Next, the student should contact the disability services office and make an appointment. Lastly, the student should make an appointment with the chair of the department then the school dean.

Student Coursework
Each student is given a syllabus at the beginning of the semester and is responsible for his or her own work and grade in each course.

Interpreters
Students who use interpreters for sign language and captioning must notify disability services of all class scheduling 30 days prior to the start of class date. Disability services must be notified immediately if changes are made in class scheduling. Students must notify disability services 24 hours in advance that they will be absent from class. Interpreting services will be suspended if students cannot make contact with disability services representative and miss two classes consecutively. Please meet with disability services to discuss the problem. Outside events other than class, can be requested if a student submits the request two weeks prior to the event to disability services.

Communication
It is a student’s responsibility to handle communication and all personal contacts with instructors, departments and residential staff. Disability services will not contact any instructor or department with a message from a student.

Absences When Sick
Absences from class for valid reasons, including disability related medical situations, are excused only by the instructor. Students should be aware of the syllabus and work closely with instructors from the beginning of the semester to be current with course requirements. Regular class attendance is a student obligation. Student is responsible for all work, in class notes, tests, written work for all class meetings. No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent for any given number of class meetings. Students can request disability services to provide a copy of the document the student submitted to disability services, however the student is responsible for submitting a doctor statement to the instructor if absences require documentation. The instructor only has the authority to excuse the student.

Pertinent Personal Information
It is the student’s responsibility to make sure that the college has current phone numbers and address etc. Disability services will not be able to notify student about important information if the college does not have accurate, up-to-date information.

Testing
Disability services may use readers or electronic formats for testing and examinations for qualifying students.
ADDITIONAL SERVICES

To Receive Tutoring
http://www.bethelcollege.edu/learning commons

To Be a Tutor

CONTACT INFORMATION

Disabilities Services: Phone: 574-807-7462
Monday & Tuesday: 8:30 – 5:00 p.m. / Thursday: 9:00 – 1:00 p.m.

For general Information, or to make an appointment with Disability Services:
Center for Academic Success: Phone: 807-807-7460
Monday – Friday: 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Bethel College POLICY (handbook) as it relates to Disability Services
For more information on campus offices and services, please see student handbook inside the student planner.
Planners can be purchased at the Bethel bookstore.

AHEAD Association on Higher Education and Disability,
http://www.ahead.org/resources/best-practices-resources/elements

http://www2.ed.gov/print/about/offices/list/ocr/transitionguide.html

Wilmington College Disability Services Policies and Procedures, 2011.