

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION POLICY FOR FACULTY AND STAFF

SLT 9.5

Date of Last Update:

July 29, 2024

Approved By:

- Senior Leadership Team

Responsible Office:

Inclusion and Equity

POLICY STATEMENT

Grand Valley State University is committed to the fundamental academic principles of equity and accessibility by providing all faculty, staff and students with access to the University's programs, services, events and activities. The aim of this policy is to support an inclusive academic environment by incorporating design concepts that reduce or remove barriers. University faculty or staff members who are persons with a disability are not required to identify themselves as persons with a disability or to request an accommodation. However, the University cannot accommodate an individual who does not inform the University about his/her disability and his/her need for an accommodation. A faculty or staff member seeking an accommodation must request it by submitting their request to the Accessibility Resources Office (ACCESS) following its procedures.

PROCEDURES

The Accessibility Resources Office Accommodation Process

To request an accommodation, a University faculty or staff member must:

- A. Self-identify as a person with a disability by application to the Accessibility Resources Office (ACCESS). It should be noted that The University conducts a survey of faculty and staff for statistical purposes and this does not constitute a method of self identification consistent with this policy. If a faculty or staff member requests an accommodation, the supervisor/unit administrator should refer the faculty or staff member to ACCESS or its web site at <http://www.gvsu.edu/dsr/>

B. Provide documentation of the disability; and

C. Indicate in the application to the Accessibility Resources Office, his/her need for accommodation and provide supporting medical documentation from an appropriate professional, if requested by the Accessibility Resources Office. The medical professional must have first-hand knowledge of the condition and a familiarity with the physical, emotional and cognitive demands of the disability.

Once an application has been submitted to ACCESS, an ACCESS advisor will review the application and may contact the faculty or staff member who submitted the application. The advisor will contact the supervisor/unit administrator and discuss whether an accommodation is warranted, explore possible accommodations, and assess the effectiveness each would have in enabling the faculty or staff member to perform his/her job including the following:

A. The essential job functions of the position. The essential functions are the fundamental job duties of the employment position at issue. To be qualified for a position, an individual must be able to perform the essential functions of the job, with or without a reasonable accommodation.

B. The faculty or staff member's ability to perform essential job functions with or without a reasonable accommodation; and,

C. Possible types of reasonable accommodations, if any are needed.

Reasonable accommodations vary depending on the circumstances of each case. In evaluating alternatives for accommodation, the preferences of the individual are considered, but the ultimate decision regarding what type of accommodation, if any, will be provided is made by the University. Nothing in this document shall be construed to waive the University's right to contest whether a faculty or staff member is disabled or is entitled to an accommodation.

Medical documentation, as well as other related materials, will be maintained by ACCESS. Such documentation is kept confidential, except as necessary to administer the accommodation process or otherwise permitted by law. Such documentation may be shared only with those individuals involved in the accommodation process on an as needed basis.

During the accommodation request process, ACCESS may:

A. Request additional documentation;

B. Consult with Human Resource Office;

C. Evaluate whether any accommodation is needed and, if it is, whether an accommodation is reasonable and should be made (this evaluation may include

preparing cost estimates);

D. Assess various accommodations;

E. Identify alternative accommodations or solutions;

F. Provide information from resources about the capabilities of persons with similar disabilities and the tools/techniques they use;

G. Determine a reasonable accommodation, if appropriate;

H. Provide a written determination to the department/unit and faculty or staff member;

I. Explain the department/unit's responsibility to fund an accepted accommodation or seek alternative funding, if needed;

ACCESS makes a determination regarding implementation of accommodations. ACCESS will consider each request for reasonable accommodation and determine: (1) whether the accommodation is needed, (2) if needed, whether the accommodation would be effective, and (3) if effective, whether providing the reasonable accommodation would impose an undue hardship.

Appeals

If a faculty or staff member or supervisor/unit administrator disagrees with ACCESS determination, the decision may be appealed to the Vice President of Inclusion and Equity, in writing to:

Vice President of Inclusion and Equity
4035 James H. Zumberge Hall
Allendale, MI 49401
Office number: (616) 331-3296

Retaliation

Retaliation against a faculty or staff member who requests an accommodation is prohibited. Individuals who feel that they have experienced retaliation may contact the [Division of Inclusion and Equity](#)

Refer Questions to:

Accessibility Resources
4015 James H. Zumberge Hall
Allendale, MI 49401
616/331-2490
616/355-3270 (TDD)

616/331-3880 (Fax)

[Website: www.gvsu.edu/dsr](http://www.gvsu.edu/dsr)
