

Holyoke Community College

Office for Students with Disabilities and Deaf Services

Student Guide

**Effective Fall 2002
Revised 2015**

The OSD/DS office is located in Donahue 147.
Main office: 552-2417 (v/TTY)

These policies and procedures are subject to change. This document is
available on our website at www.hcc.edu

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome	3
HCC'S Commitment	3
Disability Support and Deaf Services	3
Student's Responsibilities	4/5
Documentation of Disability	6
Coverage for Part Time Enrollment	7
Grievance Procedures	7
Student Records	8
Campus Resources	8/9
Community Resources	10

WELCOME

Welcome to Holyoke Community College. This guide has been prepared to assist you in obtaining the accommodations you may need to fully access the College's many programs and services. We look forward to meeting with you to discuss any areas of concern you may have related to your access. We believe you will find that Holyoke Community College has successfully nurtured a student friendly community and that our desire to support you in your college experience is accomplished through the collaborative efforts of staff, faculty and administrators working in partnership with students.

HOLYOKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S COMMITMENT

Holyoke Community College's primary goal is to educate a highly qualified and diverse student body. The College respects each student's dignity, capacity to contribute, and desire for personal growth and accomplishment. Holyoke Community College's commitment to students is based on an awareness of every student's right to full access to all college programs and services. The College fosters both intellectual and physical independence to the greatest extent possible in all of its students, and offers reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Holyoke Community College adheres to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1992 which states that "no qualified individual with a disability shall, solely on the basis of their disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity in higher education."

DISABILITY SUPPORT AND DEAF SERVICES

The Office for Students with Disabilities and Deaf Services (OSD/DS) is responsible for ensuring that the College's full-access mission is met by providing support for students with disabilities and for those who are Deaf or hard of hearing. OSD/DS is the first contact for Deaf students and students with disabilities seeking accommodations and community resources.

The ADA and Rehabilitation Act defines an individual with a disability as someone who "has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities of such an individual; has a record of such an impairment; or is regarded as having an impairment." When requesting support services or accommodations, students are required to provide documentation of disability or hearing loss to the OSD/DS. The office is located at 147 Donahue, and our staff is always welcoming to new and current students.

Holyoke Community College does not require that you accept the services of the OSD/DS office, nor will it impose an accommodation on you. Self-identifying as a person with a disability and asking for an accommodation are personal decisions. If you chose to request supportive services, you must register with the OSD/DS and provide documentation of

your disability or hearing loss. If you have concerns about this process, our staff will be glad to meet with you for a confidential review of the options available to you.

Personal equipment such as wheelchairs, personal computers, hearing aids and independent living needs such as dressing, eating, using a restroom or dispensing medication are not provided by the college or its staff (these are covered under Auxiliary Aids in A.D.A. regulations).

STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Register.

Come to Donahue 147 and schedule a confidential intake appointment with an OSD/DS specialist. We will complete a general information form, and give you an opportunity to sign a release form allowing us to coordinate services with other providers as appropriate, and allowing you to identify with whom we may share information about you. Please note that identifying yourself as a person with a disability to other college faculty or staff outside of OSD/DS does not constitute registering with OSD/DS. We need to hear from you to initiate all accommodations.

2. Provide documentation.

Supply supporting clinical documentation to OSD/DS so that we can identify the appropriate services and accommodations. Please provide this documentation at least two weeks prior to your need for services to allow us ample opportunity for review. We will evaluate your documentation and approve you for services on the basis of that documentation and our discussions with you.

3. Request accommodations.

If you choose to use the accommodations that have been offered, please share your OSD/DS approved accommodation agreement with each of your faculty. Please activate all note taking and alternative text accommodations each semester by completing an activation of services form found on the Colleges website. Go to <http://www.hcc.edu/student-services/disability-and-deaf-services/activation-of-services>. Visit <http://www.ehccbookstore.com/SelectTermDept.aspx> for all text information.

If you need particular furniture in a class give a copy of your schedule to someone in the OSD/DS main office at least two weeks ahead of time, to assure appropriate seating for your class. Do not forget to also notify us if you make a change to your class schedule. If less than two weeks notice is given, accommodations will be provided as quickly as possible but cannot be guaranteed at the requested time.

4. Order your course materials early.

If you need books in an alternative format it is important that you submit an activation of services form immediately after scheduling classes. This cannot be stressed enough, as print materials take time to process and you will need these when your class begins. After you have registered for your classes, you can find out which textbooks you will

need at the college bookstore or by using this link:

<http://www.ehccbookstore.com/SelectTermDept.aspx>. Make sure that you designate the correct class section. You may also contact your professor and request a course syllabus using the HCC email system. All HCC staff and faculty emails consist of the persons first initial, last name @ hcc.edu. Letting your professor know ahead of time what you need also allows him/her time to prepare materials in an appropriate format.

5. Schedule an appointment at the Assistive Technology Training Center.

The Assistive Technology Training Center, located in Donahue 151, provides training for all access related computing needs. Our staff will determine which software you may need and offer you ongoing training for this technology. Staff will also assist you to set up memberships with external services such as Learning Ally, Perkins, or BookShare. It is essential that you receive the training as early as possible (prior to the semester is best) to assure you are ready to utilize the available applications as classes begin.

6. Coordinate outside resources.

Pursue financial aid, scholarships or State vocational rehabilitation support for tuition and for personal equipment - such as wheelchairs, headphones, tape recorders, etc. Personal Care Assistants may be arranged through your area Independent Living Center. Speak with your Disability/Deaf Specialist about these services.

7. Share you accommodation agreement

Your OSD/DS Specialist will very likely provide you with an accommodation agreement. It is your responsibility to give this plan to each of your professors so that they know what your needs are. We strongly recommend that you approach faculty in a confidential setting, such as in his/her office during office hours, just prior to or at the beginning of each new semester.

8. Communicate.

Perhaps one of the most difficult things for some students to learn is how to become their own advocate. Ask your disability or Deaf Specialist for assistance if you are unsure of your advocacy skills. Communicating your needs is vital to your success.

If you encounter difficulties or unsatisfactory conditions regarding your accommodations, please speak with your assigned OSD/DS Specialist as soon as possible. We are here to help you.

If you are having trouble in a class, please speak with your professor and go to the tutoring center in Donahue 240 to ask for help.

If you are missing notes from a note-taker, do not hesitate to ask him/her for them or enlist the support of OSD/DS staff.

Waiting too long to ask for help sometimes makes an easily manageable situation much more difficult. Please seek help as soon as you are aware of a problem.

DOCUMENTATION OF DISABILITY

Documentation of your disability is required to determine the appropriate and necessary accommodations you are entitled to receive, and also to protect you from disability-related discrimination.

To request disability related accommodations a student should begin with an OSDDDS intake. This intake consists of an interactive dialogue between the student and OSDDDS specialist related to the student's disability and potential accommodation needs. The OSDDDS specialist will consider all self disclosed information presented in the intake, review any potential barriers to access and create an accommodation plan that addresses the needs of the individual student.

Appropriate documentation of disability is based on an individual student. OSDDDS procedures incorporate multiple avenues of review when determining appropriate accommodations for students. Accommodations are created to assure access/remove barriers to access. The process for review of disability documentation shall be based on the needs and accommodation requests of the individual student.

The initial process for documenting a disability consists of a conversation between the student and disability specialist. When needed, OSDDDS specialists may request additional information to apply appropriate interventions and specific support services.

A request for accommodations is supported by documentation that identifies and describes the student's disability and any barriers the student may encounter because of the nature of their disability or societal beliefs. Documentation should support the student's request for specific accommodations.

DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES

OSDDDS requests for specific documentation to support a request for an accommodation must be reflective of current function and should:

1. Originate from a properly credentialed professional in the field who has no personal relationship with the individual being evaluated. This should be a recognized professional individual with comprehensive training and experience in the area in which the diagnosis has been noted
2. Include a diagnostic statement and description of the disability, and a narrative interpreting this diagnosis.
3. Identify and give evidence of the functional impact of the disability, particularly the severity/extent of any limitations, and how those limitations impact the individual in daily life, and potentially also in regard to learning.

4. Where appropriate, indicate which diagnostic procedures/tests were completed to determine the diagnosis, and report the scores/findings of these tests.
5. Describe the likelihood of progression or stability of the condition.
6. Documentation may also include:
 - Descriptions of current or past interventions or accommodations.
 - Recommendations relative to accommodations or assistive technology.
 - Evidence of your having a history of being recognized or regarded as a person with a disability

COVERAGE FOR PART-TIME ENROLLMENT

In some cases, students are concerned about their ability to handle a full-time course load. If your disability documentation supports the need for a part-time load, you may speak with your OSD/DS Specialist to receive a “letter of full time equivalency” for eligibility purposes. Often times, this allows a student to be more successful and earn a higher Grade Point Average in the courses attended. It does not, however, waive curriculum requirements.

GREIVANCE PROCEDURES

If you believe you have been discriminated against on the basis of your disability, or that the College has failed to comply with disability law and college policies, you have the right to file a grievance. This is the appropriate procedure:

1. Discuss the problem in a confidential meeting with the Director of OSD/DS.
2. The Director will attempt to resolve the issue.
3. If the Director is unable to resolve the matter, she or he will present the relevant information to the ADA Compliance Officer or his/her designee.
4. The ADA Compliance Officer will review the information, meet with the student and attempt to resolve the issue.
5. If an equitable and acceptable resolution of the matter cannot be obtained through these discussions, the aggrieved party may request the assistance of the Vice President of Student Affairs or the Vice President of Academic Affairs (if the issue is of an academic nature).

6. If the matter remains unresolved, the aggrieved party may, through the Affirmative Action Officer, initiate a complaint in accordance with the provisions of the College's Grievance Procedure.
7. Every effort should be made to expedite a resolution. In general, each phase of the process should be completed within five working days.

STUDENT RECORDS

Effective Fall 2002 disability documentation will be kept by the Office for Students with Disabilities and Deaf Services for 5 years after graduation, transfer, withdrawal or departure from the college. At this time, the file and all of its contents will be destroyed. Students may request the return of their disability documentation at any point prior to the 5 year expiration date. Please consider requesting the return of your documentation if you expect to continue your education, or expect to use this document for employment accommodations. Entrance to transfer college programs frequently requires exams; and your documentation of disability may be needed to request test accommodations.

HCC CAMPUS RESOURCES

ADA COMPLIANCE OFFICER

The Holyoke Community College ADA Compliance Officer is responsible for assuring that Holyoke Community College complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in all programs and services. If you have a concern related to an access issue that is not resolved by the Office for Students with Disabilities and Deaf Services you may see the College's ADA Compliance Officer in Student Affairs Frost 224 @ ext. 2231.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY TRAINING CENTER

The Assistive Technology Center offers training and access to all academic computing programs. Open Monday through Friday during day division class hours and by appointment in the evening. The lab is located in Donahue 151 (X2156).

CAREER CENTER

Offers information and materials on careers, resume writing, job searches and training programs. Career Center staff can advise students and alumni with disabilities on a variety of job-related topics. They are located in Kittredge 322 (ext. 2597)

ENGLISH as a SECOND LANGUAGE

Services for students studying English as a second language are available in Donahue 207 ext. 2050

HEALTH SERVICES

Holyoke Community College's Student Health Services are open to all students enrolled at the College. The Health Services Office is located in Frost 105, ext. 2401

LIBRARY

The library system offers accessibility to its users through technology and programmatic assistance. The library staff work with the staff in the Assistive Technology Training Center to provide access to all library patrons.

TUTORIAL SUPPORT PROGRAM

Peer tutors are available for all HCC students. Students may apply for a tutor through the Center for Academic Support in Donahue 240 ext. 2584. Tutorial support is also offered on a "drop-in" basis through the Writing Center in Donahue 238 and the Math Center in Donahue 240

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Campus and community support for Veterans is available in Frost 221 ext. 2265. Veterans with disabilities are also eligible for support through OSDDES.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

ALTERNATIVE TEXTS (Electronic)

Registry with Perkins Talking Book Library, BookShare, Learning Ally and direct publisher requests for electronic texts can be arranged through the Assistive Technology Training Center at HCC or through the student's OSDDES counselor.

Students may meet with our Assistive Technology Specialist in Donahue 151 ext. 2156 to obtain information on these services and register for free individual memberships.

MASSACHUSETTS COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

provides several services, including sign language interpreter referral service and emergency interpreter service. MCDHH, 617 695-7500, 413 788-6427

MASSACHUSETTS RELAY SERVICE

800 439-2370 (TTY), 800 439-0183(voice),

MASSACHUSETTS COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

provide evaluations for technology and support services to eligible individuals with sight related disabilities. They can be reached at 413 781-1290 or 800 392-6450

MASSACHUSETTS VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION COMMISSION

The mission of the Massachusetts Vocational Rehabilitation Commission is the provision of resources and services to assist individuals with disabilities in their efforts to enter gainful employment. Many HCC students receive support from the Commission in their academic preparation for employment.

Springfield Office 413 736-7296 (v/TTY), Holyoke Office 413 536-8200 (v/TTY)

Greenfield Office 413 774-2326 (v/TTY), Pittsfield Office 413 499-2720 (v/TTY)

STAVROS CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

Stavros Center for Independent Living provides support and referral services for issues of concern related to Personal Care Attendant Services, housing, insurance, and advocacy.

Springfield 413 781-5555 Amherst 413 256-0473

WELL CONNECT

Holyoke Community College's counseling services are provided by WellConnect.

WellConnect provides counseling services for HCC students and their families 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Students can access counseling, legal, health, wellness and financial support services at www.wellconnect.cuthrive.com or by calling 1 800 326 6142.