

## **Students with Disabilities: Accommodation Policy and Guidelines**

Pacific School of Religion strives for consistent and equitable student access to educational opportunities. In particular, it addresses a student's ability to fulfill degree and certificate course and program requirements. The policy covers student advising, classroom activities and requirements, program exams, GTU library use, and capstone experiences such as theses and dissertations. It does not address extracurricular events sponsored by GTU member institutions, student housing, and administrative activities (e.g. registration, access to facilities, etc.). Accommodations are not intended to give students with disabilities an unfair advantage, but to remove barriers that prevent students from learning and from demonstrating what they have learned in the context of their formal degree or certificate program.

The Director of Community Life and Spiritual Care along with the Assistant Dean for Academic Programming serve as the Disabilities Resource Officers (DROs). As needed, the DROs will work with Students with Disabilities Program staff at UCB to verify accommodation eligibility and recommend accommodation options.

***Student Request:*** The student is responsible for fully participating in the process and exercising due diligence to ensure that the provision of accommodations is successfully accomplished. The student who wishes to request accommodations with their academic work submits the request form to the Student Accessibility Services page on the PSR website. The student needs to include **official written documentation with the form from a professional who has the credentials and expertise to diagnosis the student's condition** (a form for this step is available on the website or in the OCL). The student is responsible for incurring any cost associated with the documentation.

***The Timing of a Student Request:*** **The student should request accommodations early in the semester, well in advance of when the accommodation is needed.** The student needs to factor in the amount of time required to secure written documentation from an appropriate professional. It can take time for the review process and verification and recommended accommodations.

Students eligible for academic accommodations will normally have their request reviewed and, if appropriate, approved no more than two weeks after submitting the request.

***Decision:*** The DRO will finalize accommodation options in the context of institutional resources and culture and to assure consistency and equity. An accommodation is not "reasonable" if it will necessitate modifications of the essential nature of a program or activity or would place undue financial or administrative burdens on the institution.

The DRO conveys the official decision and, if appropriate, recommended accommodations to the student by email, who then uses written confirmation to work with appropriate staff and faculty on the implementation of accommodations. The DRO also sends a communication to the faculty on the list of enrolled courses the student provides. ***This list needs to be provided each semester accommodations are needed.***

**Implementation: Accommodations will apply to all educational events described in the DRO's email for up to three years.** Students should present the DRO's email to faculty and staff to arrange accommodations as needed.

**Appeal:** The student and/or faculty involved with the student may not agree with the DRO's decision for accommodations. If a faculty member disagrees with and/or refuses to provide the recommended accommodations, the DRO and institutional contact should work with the faculty member to resolve her/his concerns. The DRO can consult with UCB's Students with Disabilities Program and their section 504 compliance officer for advice on ways to resolve the conflict with the faculty member. If a resolution is impossible, the student can seek remedy from the faculty member's school's academic grievance policy.

If a student disagrees with the DRO's decision and/or recommended accommodations, they can appeal the decision through her/his own school's academic grievance policy. Again, the DRO and institutional contact should work with the student first to find ways to resolve concerns.

