

Disability Services Office (DSO): Supporting Students with Disabilities at RIT

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Setting the Stage: Disability, identity, and stigma

- 94% of students with a learning disability received accommodations in high school
- 17% received accommodations in post-secondary education
- 43% who didn't receive accommodations in post-secondary reported that they wished they had
- **DSO priorities:** procedural clarity, student-centeredness, cross-campus partnership, creating a **welcoming/empowering culture** (for students as well as faculty and staff!)

Students with disabilities *belong* at RIT.

Our Mission

The DSO is dedicated to facilitating **equitable access to the full RIT experience** for students with disabilities. We value **disability as diversity** and work in collaboration with campus partners to foster a welcoming, diverse, and inclusive campus community. All enrolled RIT students with disabilities may register with the DSO and request accommodations.

Who does the DSO support?

Any enrolled RIT or NTID student who identifies as having a permanent or temporary disability is welcome to register with the DSO and request accommodations. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Lifelong or acquired disabilities
- Hidden disabilities (e.g. learning disabilities or mental health disabilities)
- Chronic illness
- Veterans with service-related disabilities
- Pregnancy and related disabilities
- Students of size
- Students with temporary disabilities (e.g. students with injuries or recovering from surgery)
- D/deaf and hard-of-hearing students (in partnership with NTID Access Services)
- Students facing new or changed access needs in light of Long COVID or other pandemic-related factors

Not sure if we can support you? Please reach out!

What is an Accommodation?

- Modification or adjustment to **remove an existing barrier** in the academic or co-curricular environment for a student with a disability
- Accommodations are a student's **civil right** per the ADA (as amended in 2008) and Section 504 and must be honored once approved
 - Ableism and inaccessibility have disparate impacts on students with disabilities. Accommodations **level the playing field**.
- Can be approved **at any time** while a student enrolled at RIT and **must be implemented once approved by the DSO and requested by the student** (faculty are notified whenever students request accommodations in their course)
- Involves **partnership** between faculty, student, and DSO when necessary (student conversations should be **private**)



Accommodations are NOT intended to:

- Reduce **academic rigor**
- Be **unreasonable**
 - Otherwise qualified
 - Undue burden
 - Fundamental alteration
 - Direct threat to the safety of self or others
- Be **retroactive**
- Be “**carte blanche**”
- Be offered as a **contingency**
- Mitigate **non-disability related** barriers

|| Example:

- Extended time on assignments and missed (new/accommodated) deadline
 - E-Forms and Student/Instructor agreements in MyDSO

How do students request accommodations?

1. Register with the Disability Services Office by completing our [application form](#)
2. Submit documentation of your disability
3. Meet with the DSO (We will reach out to schedule this once steps 1 and 2 are complete)
4. Receive your eligibility letter
5. Request academic accommodations via the new MyDSO Portal (This is how accommodations are communicated to faculty)

For more detail on this process, including documentation guidelines and tips for preparing to meet with the DSO, visit [our website](#).

It's okay to have questions.

- Not sure if you have a disability?
- Not sure which accommodations are appropriate for you or your student?
- Not sure what documentation is necessary to receive accommodations?
- Feel uncomfortable or uncertain discussing disability?
- Want to make your course, event, or project more accessible?
- Want to learn more about disability, inclusion, and accessibility?
- Have an accessibility concern or question?

We are here to support all members of the RIT community.
Contact us anytime at dso@rit.edu.

Q&A

