

The Access Office

Detail of the Confidential Letter to Instructors

Master Letter: A copy of the “Confidential Letter to Instructor” is mailed to each of your instructors before the first day of class in order for the instructor to be prepared for your arrival. In cases when the instructor has not been assigned, the letter will be mailed to the instructional department chairperson who will give it to the assigned instructor. It is a good idea to introduce yourself to your classroom instructor on the first class day so that they can quickly get to know you. Ask her/him if they have received a copy of the confidential letter outlining the approved accommodations. If the instructor has not received it, please contact the Access Office immediately so that another letter can be prepared. The Access Office will give you the letter so that you can hand deliver it to the instructor. The instructor may have additional questions which you can answer, or if needed, refer them to the Access Office.

Extended Exam Time When Needed: If you are approved for extended exam time, your instructors will give your exams to the Testing Office (Assessment Office). Your instructor will depend on you to **tell him/her each and every time** that you are requesting that exam accommodation. Otherwise, the instructor will assume you are taking the exam in the regular classroom during the regularly scheduled class day and time. It is your responsibility to remind the instructor **several days in advance** of the exam by taking a copy of the “Exam Information Form” to your instructor with the top portion completed already. You may find a supply of these forms in the Testing Office (Assessment Office). The instructor will deliver the completed form and the exam to the Testing Office before to the assigned time.

If the exam is not in the testing office when you go to take the exam, you will need to contact your instructor to find out what to do. You can re-schedule to take the exam in the Testing Office during the days and times available.

It is not permissible for you to take part of your exam with the class and then to continue the exam in the testing office. You will take the **entire exam** at one setting in the Testing Office. You will not go to your own class that day, and your instructor will know where you are. Some instructors are uncomfortable with you taking the exam too early or too late since portions of the exam material might be shared among students who have not yet taken the exam. You and your instructor will negotiate an appropriate **window of time** in which you should test in order to protect the integrity of the exam. The instructor will indicate on the form whether the exam is to be returned in campus mail to the instructor or whether he/she will pick it up themselves in the Testing Office.

Some exams are delivered and **administered electronically** in the testing office. The instructor may forward the exam via an email attachment for you to take when you arrive. Also you may be approved to perform all essay portions of the test on a word processor. These accommodations must be approved.

If you are approved a **reader and/or scribe** for your exam, then you must notify the Testing Office at least four working days before the test so that they will have a person available for you. This must always be a different person from the student who has normally volunteered to perform reader or writer services for you in your classes.

Use of Tape Recorder:

Students should provide their own tape recorder however; the Access Office has these **recommendations** if you decide to purchase one. Usually students find that a small battery operated recorder is best, and it is recommended that you purchase one which uses regularly sized cassette tapes rather than the mini-cassettes. This allows you to play the tapes on alternative machines and perhaps in your automobile. A counter on the recorder is particularly useful so that you can easily locate specific or important information covered during your class. For example, you might put in your notes that the test review began at count 350 so that you can find it quickly when you begin your study session. Students have also found that a recorder with an AC adapter is best so that you can use a regular electrical plug at home and save the batteries for the classroom. Batteries get to be expensive.

The Access Office requests that you exercise good **judgment and sensitivity** in your use of your tape recorder. This accommodation is intended to help students in their ability to be successful at school, but it should never be used to intimidate or blackmail instructors or other students. If your instructor is uneasy about this arrangement, you might write an informal agreement with them about when and where the recordings will be used. Classrooms often include many stated opinions from both students and instructors, so respect for diversity and differences is important. Also, you should be sensitive to other students' statements of personal material. It might be best to simply turn off the tape recorder after the lecture while student/teacher discussions are taking place so that others privacy is protected. If issues cannot be resolved, please notify the Access Office.

Volunteer Note Taker:

Students are asked to **find their own note taker**, but usually it is advisable to wait until at least the second week of class when the students are more comfortable and you have had time to check out the qualifications of your classmates. You will want to find a classmate who is responsible, detailed in their note taking, has good handwriting, and who has an agreeable personality. Once you have decided on a likely prospect for your note taker, a **letter of introduction** (see purple handout) is provided for you to give to the student. It is usually better for you, the student, rather than the instructor to find a note taker for you. Instructors might not take care in protecting your confidentiality, and you will wish to select someone who is best suited to your personality. However, instructors might give you tips on who would be a good choice from students they have taught in the past.

Students are usually happy to be a note taker for at least two reasons. First, most instructors appreciate this service and give the note taker **extra credit** or exemption from

a final exam. You can negotiate an appropriate reward for your volunteer note taker with your instructor. Secondly, being a note taker is simply not a difficult chore! The Access Office provides you with **carbonized paper** so the note taker simply takes the notes one time and hands you a copy. You will want to show your note taker how to place a sheet of thin cardboard behind the first two pages so that the notes will not appear on the next seven pages!

If you need copies of notes from the first two weeks of class or if your note taker misses a day, the Access Office can photocopy another student's notes for you.

A Reader or Scribe:

As with the note taker, if a reader and/or scribe is an approved accommodation, you will select a classmate to be your volunteer reader and/or scribe. The student, the reader/scribe, and the instructor will then negotiate an appropriate reward for this volunteer service.

Student May be a Few Minutes Late to Class Due to Walking Difficulties:

Some students require a greater amount of time to get to classes and they are granted accommodations for this disability. This is not intended as an excuse to be lazy or irresponsible with required class attendance. Please do not abuse this privilege! You are still responsible for whatever information you missed when you arrive late to class.