

## EQUITABLE TREATMENT OF STUDENTS

It is imperative that all your students receive equitable treatment. You should present a comprehensive syllabus at the beginning of the term and apply it consistently. Reasonable accommodation of disabled students is not considered inequitable treatment.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities, as defined by law, have protections afforded to them as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Recognizing that the university may not discriminate on the basis of disability, it must ensure that the programs and academic courses it offers, including extracurricular activities, are accessible to students with disabilities. FIU provides access to students with disabilities by providing architectural access, providing aids and services necessary for effective communication, and by modifying policies, practices and procedures. All programs and services must be provided in an integrated setting.

### **Disability Resource Center (DRC)**

For a student to receive accommodations based on a disability, the student must register with the FIU [Disability Resource Center](#) (DRC). It is a student's responsibility to make his/her needs known so that necessary support can be provided. It is then the faculty's responsibility to work with the student and the DRC to make reasonable modifications or provide appropriate services in a timely manner.

DRC can assist faculty with the modification of classroom policies or practices for students with disabilities. The modifications needed are rarely substantive. Some examples are rescheduling classes to an accessible location, early enrollment options for students with disabilities to allow time to arrange accommodations, substitution of specific courses required for completion of degree requirements, allowing service animals in the classroom, providing students with disabilities with a syllabus prior to the beginning of class, clearly communicating course requirements, assignments, due dates, grading criteria both orally and in written form, providing written outlines or summaries of class

lectures, or integrating this information into comments at the beginning and end of class, and allowing students to use note takers, or to record lectures.

Modifications will vary based on the individual student's needs. Modifications of policies and practices are not required when it would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity.

The DRC provides American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters, captioning services, qualified readers, electronic text book access, Braille materials, large print materials and magnification equipment (CCTV), and adapted computers and specialized screen reading software (JAWS). These are examples of auxiliary aids and services that support effective communication and reduce participation barriers for students with disabilities.

Faculty are responsible for providing tests that are accessible to students with disabilities. While each student's needs are individual, examples of testing accommodations include extended time to complete a test or providing a distraction-free space, sign language interpreters, readers, or alternative test formats. The purpose of providing testing accommodations is to enable students with disabilities to demonstrate their mastery of the subject matter being tested, not to provide lesser academic or professional standards for students with disabilities. Accommodations may affect how a test is taken, but not what it measures. The DRC provides test administration support for undergraduate courses and consultative support on graduate programs and professional school examinations' accessibility standards.

Attendance requirements vary. Programs and courses have attendance policies which may not be flexible. Attendance modifications requested based on a disability are vetted through the DRC. A reasonable amount of time must be afforded to students with disabilities so as to complete course work missed during their absence. For additional information regarding attendance for DRC students, please visit the DRC's website: <http://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/getsupport/disability-resource-center/>.

If you are not familiar with the requirements of ADA or Section 504, or the purpose of accommodating students with disabilities, or feel classroom or 57 testing accommodations give students with disabilities an unfair advantage over other students, the DRC is available for educational and compliance-based

training which addresses the legal standards, purpose of accommodations and, to assist with the logistics of providing accommodations.

### **Service and Emotional Support Animals on Campus**

Florida International University allows students to have service and emotional support animals with the appropriate documentation in allowable areas on campus. Pets and non-research animals are always restricted on university property and therefore not covered under this policy. Under federal law, service animals are allowed in public areas in the university so long as they meet the guidelines set forth in this policy. In addition, Emotional support animals are only allowed in university housing on campus with prior approval. [FIU Policy #2509.002](#) provides detailed information regarding this area.