Accommodations for DVM Students
With Learning Disabilities
Effective April 2000 (Modified March 2015)

Information on Disabilities and Procedures

Learning disability
A Learning Disability is defined as a persistent condition of presumed neurological dysfunction which may exist with other disabling conditions. To be categorized as learning disabled, a student must exhibit:

- Average to above-average intellectual ability;
- Severe processing deficit(s);
- Severe aptitude-achievement discrepancy(ies); and
- Measured achievement in an instructional or employment setting.

Among the kinds of documentation sought to establish a learning disability is evidence that a student’s level of intelligence and level of academic achievement are several standard deviations apart. This “discrepancy model” type of documentation demonstrates that the student’s ability to achieve the level of academic performance typically associated with his or her level of intelligence would be impaired if the applicant’s disability were not accommodated.

ADD/ADHD
ADD/ADHD is a disorder with symptoms including difficulty in staying focused and paying attention, difficulty in controlling behavior, and hyperactivity.

LD and ADD/ADHD Testing
Since there is no single test to determine whether someone has these disorders, there can be great variance in the diagnoses from one specialist to another.

Psychological Disorders
These are any of the psychological disorders listed in the DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) IV, diagnosed by a professional.

Test Anxiety
Test Anxiety is a form of debilitating anxiety around test/exam taking that significantly impacts exam performance. Symptoms of test anxiety:

- Perspiration
- Headache
- Upset stomach/nausea
• Rapid heart beat
• Difficulty reading/understanding questions on the test/exam
• Difficulty organizing thoughts
• Do poorly on tests/exams even though he/she knows the material
• Mental blocking – going blank on questions or remembering the correct answers as soon as the test/exam is over

Test anxiety is not considered a disability by itself (there is no diagnosis of test anxiety in the DSM IV). Some people may have an anxiety disorder, with part of this disorder manifested as test anxiety.

Procedures for Receiving Accommodations:
Accommodations related to disabilities are distinct from those enacted for personal circumstances or illness. For information regarding the latter, please refer to absence and/or leave policies on the DVM Student Resources page: http://csu-cvmbs.colostate.edu/dvm-program/Pages/dvm-student-resources.aspx.

Students must identify themselves as being in need of official accommodation by contacting the Colorado State University (CSU) Office of Resources for Disabled Students (RDS). In compliance with federal non-discrimination law, the CSU RDS staff is responsible for verifying the presence of a disability and for recommending accommodations to academic and other campus units. Students must contact the CSU RDS annually (before fall semester) and present documentation of (or receive testing and subsequent documentation of) the disability. In turn, the RDS office will provide certification and recommendation(s) for accommodation(s) to the CVMBS Office.

All RDS-recommended accommodations are subject to review by the Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs (AD), and any concerns conveyed to the director of RDS. Acceptable accommodations must be reasonable and must not substantially change the educational objectives of the DVM program.

At the beginning of each semester, the office of the AD will send an electronic notification on behalf of each student with a disability to all of his/her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) course coordinators. The notification provides the following information:
• Name of student with a documented disability.
• Confirmation that the college received an official recommendation for accommodation for the student.
• Accommodation memo provided to the college office by RDS.
• Statement indicating that the student should contact his/her course coordinators within the first two weeks of each semester to arrange for accommodations.
If a student requires accommodations for examinations that he/she wishes to take in a suitable room at the VTH or on main campus, arrangements should be made with the course coordinator during the initial meeting. If the needed accommodations exceed what can reasonably be managed in the VTH or main campus facilities, or if the student prefers to complete the examination at the RDS office, they must to pick up an “Exam Request Form” from the 1st/2nd year DVM Student Coordinator in the CVMBS Office or from the 3rd/4th year DVM Student Coordinator at the VTH. Students must complete the form, have it signed by the instructor or coordinator, and submit it to the testing center at least seven (7) days before the test. Students may scan and email it, fax it or deliver the form in person.

The student must then contact the testing center to make arrangements. Instructors may email the exam to the testing center, or if that is not possible, RDS will retrieve the test. The RDS testing center will deliver the test to the CVMBS office within 24 hours of completion. Exceptions to this process include laboratory examinations which will take place in the same location as the rest of the class and will not be proctored by RDS. On-campus Canvas exams requiring use of tools or adaptations located only in RDS must be scheduled through RDS as described above.

Course Coordinators Responsibilities:

- Maintain the confidentiality and privacy of a student with a disability at all times; all accommodations should be arranged privately in advance. Public/class discourse regarding a student with a disability or required accommodations are prohibited. Any activity that will unnecessarily draw attention to the identification of disabled students will be avoided.
- Meet with the student at the beginning of the semester to arrange ongoing and consistent accommodation per RDS recommendations. The student must initiate this meeting.
- Ensure that faculty/house staff/technicians providing instruction to the student that requires enactment of accommodations are aware of accommodations as pertinent.
- Consult with the AD and RDS should he/she believe that the RDS-recommended accommodations substantially alter the educational objectives of the DVM program, or that full enactment of accommodations will be limited by available college resources.

Student Responsibilities:

- Contact RDS prior to or at the start of each school year to arrange services. If a student develops a disability during the academic year or transfers into the program in the spring, the student should initiate the contact with RDS as soon as possible to ensure timely establishment of an accommodations plan.
- Meet with RDS staff annually to confirm the nature of the disability and obtain or revise accommodation recommendations.
• Verify that recommendations are received by the AD.
• Meet with each course coordinator **within the first two weeks of class each semester**. Accommodations will only be made for students who meet with the course coordinator at the beginning of each semester (unless a student develops a disability during the semester). Students cannot request accommodation on the day of an examination if prior arrangements have not been made with the coordinator.
• Make arrangements for testing accommodation directly with the course coordinator or with RDS (as outlined above).
• Limit requested accommodations to those officially recommended by RDS.
• Arrange to meet with the AD should any concerns or questions arise.