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TO: All Faculty and Teaching Academic Staff

FROM: Laurie Petersen, Director
Student Accessibility Center (SAC)

The Student Accessibility Center (SAC) is charged with the mission of creating an accessible University campus and climate for students with disabilities which fosters the development of each student's full potential. We appreciate and rely on faculty and staff collaboration in providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. UWM could not meet its legally mandated obligations without your individual commitment. Your efforts are vital as we work together to provide an inclusive academic environment for all students. We offer the following suggestions to all instructors who are teaching students with disabilities. We appreciate your efforts to assure that reasonable accommodations are made available to students with disabilities. *Please respect a student's confidentiality in all aspects of accommodation coordination!*

1. VERIFICATION OF DISABILITY:

SAC uses a form called a VISA (Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations) to verify disability and to assist students in their communications with faculty and staff regarding accommodations. The VISA indicates what accommodations the student is eligible to receive, although it is up to the student to identify which of these accommodations are needed for each individual course. Students are responsible for communicating directly with you and can give you a copy of their VISA form for your reference. The VISA is **confidential** and must not be shared without the student's permission. In some instances students may elect to have SAC staff also prepare specific correspondence regarding accommodations. A copy of the VISA form is attached for your reference. We use this form to encourage student responsibility and self-advocacy. Please note the name and contact information of the SAC counselor listed on the VISA as well as the expiration date. For questions you may have concerning a student and/or a VISA form, please contact the SAC counselor listed on the form. We encourage you to contact SAC staff with questions you may have since this information is **confidential; it is not appropriate to discuss it with the student in public or in the classroom when others are present.**

2. CLASS STANDARDS:

Academic accommodations are provided in the spirit of equalizing opportunity rather than lowering standards or waiving requirements. With reasonable accommodations, students with disabilities are to be held to the same educational standards as other students. Together we are charged with the legal responsibility to assure that students with disabilities are not precluded from educational opportunities when reasonable accommodations are available.

3. ALTERNATIVE MATERIALS for STUDENTS with PRINT IMPAIRMENTS:

Students should order alternative text and class materials six weeks prior to the beginning of the semester. Your cooperation is essential, and it is critical that you make every effort to comply with these time frames.

In addition, it is vital to prepare handouts, diagrams, boardwork, videos, etc., in accessible format. SAC can assist in preparation of these materials when given appropriate notice.

If books are ordered from other than the Bookstore, please leave information with your department staff on where the book may be obtained.

When writing (ex. Math, Economics), please verbalize the material that you are presenting. Class videos can be improved by offering descriptions of information not offered in the dialogue. Please provide clear and legible copies of written material. SAC can enlarge this print for students who would benefit by it.

When materials are not made available in a timely manner, students cannot be held responsible for this information in examinations. But more importantly, inaccessible information diminishes the student's academic experience and is contrary to law.

4. TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS:

Students registered with SAC may need accommodations for exams and quizzes. These include accommodations which you arrange in your department (extra time, taking the exam in a separate quiet room) and accommodations which need to be arranged by SAC (use of adaptive equipment). Students eligible for these accommodations are expected to talk with you during the first three weeks of classes. In addition, their VISA form will confirm testing accommodations needed; you may request a copy from the student.

If students without a VISA tell you that they need extra testing time because of a disability, please refer them directly to SAC. We require proper documentation of a disability from them. Based on this documentation the Student Accessibility Center will determine what testing accommodations are appropriate.

If exams are to be proctored by SAC, the student will meet with you to fill out an Alternative Testing Request Form. Please provide the student with the necessary information as soon as possible and have the student return the Alternative Testing Request Form to our office. It is the student's responsibility to return the completed form to our office to schedule the exam. Do not send it through campus mail or have your Teaching Assistant (TA) drop it off.

Please note that all tests must be forwarded to SAC 24 hours in advance. Following these guidelines is critical to ensure that the student can receive alternative testing in SAC. Electronic versions of tests can be sent to **SACHelp@uwm.edu**.

Please share this information with your TAs. Students often schedule testing with TAs, and it is essential that TAs understand and follow the procedures involved.

The Student Accessibility Center has established procedures to safeguard exam security and protect the integrity of the exam process. Please contact our office should you have any questions or concerns regarding this. We will be pleased to work with you to resolve any concerns.

5. NOTETAKERS

If you have received communication from a SAC student or the SAC office requesting your assistance in finding a classmate to take notes in class, please discuss with the student how the request should be communicated. Following discussion, this may be accomplished by making a class announcement requesting a volunteer notetaker, sending an email to your class list, approaching an individual student, or giving the student lecture notes prepared by faculty or TAs. Notetakers are paid. Notetakers can be essential to the success of students who require this accommodation. Be sensitive to the student's privacy in requesting notetakers – all accommodation needs are confidential.

6. INTERPRETERS & CAPTIONISTS:

SAC provides sign language interpreters and captionists to facilitate communication between the student, instructor and classmates. Sign language interpreters and captionists have completed intensive education and training programs to ensure complete and accurate communication for all involved. As with all students, please communicate directly to students utilizing these services (please avoid saying, "Tell him/her"). Sign language interpreters and captionists abide by a strict code of ethics and professional conduct. They are precluded from providing any other services or assistance other than direct interpreting. This means students are responsible for their own performance and attendance in class. Please note: in order to be fully accessible, all videos and films shown in class should have captioning or subtitles available. For more information regarding captioned or subtitled media, please contact Cassie Franklin, DHH Disability Counselor - csmanuel@uwm.edu.

7. SYLLABUS:

Please include the following statement in your syllabi: "If you will need accommodations in order to meet any of the requirements of this course, please contact me as soon as possible." Please avoid placing deadlines for such requests on your syllabi. Suggestions to contact the instructor within the first few weeks are acceptable.

8. WEB PAGE:

The SAC Web page (www.sac.uwm.edu) provides information and resources for faculty and staff. Visit our website for assistance and answers to your questions.

Providing access to a diverse student population is imbedded in the philosophy of UWM. We recognize disability as an aspect of diversity that is integral to society and to the campus community. To this end, SAC collaborates with students, faculty and staff to create an equitable and inclusive learning environment. We promote and facilitate awareness and access through training, partnerships, innovative programs and accommodations. SAC is available to provide training to departments and individuals as requested.

For more information, contact the Student Accessibility Center at 229-6287 or Laurie Petersen at 414-229-5822 or lauriep@uwm.edu.

Begins: _____ Expires: _____



VISA

(Verified Individual Services and Accommodations)

Student ID: _____ Email/Phone: _____

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UWM is strongly committed to maintaining an environment that guarantees students with disabilities full access to its educational programs, activities and facilities. Current federal law (Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act) and UW-System Board of Regents Policy 96-6, **require the University** to make reasonable modifications in order to ensure there is no discrimination against qualified students with disabilities. The following accommodations are recommended for this student by the Student Accessibility Center (SAC). Services are effective through the expiration date listed. Revisions may occur pending additional information, changes in disability status, or periodic review. For questions/concerns regarding the provision of these accommodations contact the SAC staff member listed or the SAC main office at 229-6287.

This document and the information contained within MUST remain confidential

Instructional Accommodations and Services

Alternative Testing Services

- Adaptive Technology Computer Use _____
- Scribe/Reader _____
- Print Enlargement (Elec., CCTV, paper) _____
- Braille Exam _____
- Electronic Exam (audio, Braille, etc.) _____
- Minimally Distracting Environment _____
- Extended Time
- Other: _____

Supplementary Services

- Assistive Listening Device
- Sign Language Interpreter
- Speech-to-Text Services
- Captioned Audio-Visual Materials
- Taped Lectures
- Preferential Seating
- Braille or Large Print Text and Materials
- Electronic Text and Materials
- Laboratory Assistance
- Priority Registration
- Notetaker
- Other: _____

Library Assistance

- Adaptive Technology
- Reader/Runner
- Study Room

Other Services

- Counseling/Advising
- Advocacy/Liaison

Mobility Assistance

- Accessible Chair/Table
- Other: _____

Course Modifications - This must be coordinated between student and instructor and in consultation with SAC staff if necessary

- Assignment Due Date Extension
- Attendance Flexibility
- Other: _____

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I understand that provision of these services may involve SAC staff disclosing disability and/or medical record information provided by me with appropriate university personnel participating in the accommodation process.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

SAC Staff Signature _____ Date _____

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