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ASSIGNMENT ACCOMMODATION POLICY

For students with conditions that are episodic in nature or that impact their ability to devote sufficient time to the assignment, strict assignment deadlines and punitive grading on late assignments can prevent them from demonstrating their full mastery of class content. The purpose of reasonable accommodations is to ensure access, and this extends to providing flexibility within class policies to ensure students with disabilities are not disproportionately penalized for exacerbations in their condition, as they may be unpredictable and inevitable despite ongoing health and time management practices.

Assignment accommodations need to be established in advance with Accessibility Resource Center and cannot be applied retroactively.

The accommodation should be provided unless the accommodation *significantly* compromises the integrity of the course as offered. If you believe assignment extensions are not possible, then instructors should consult with an Accessibility Specialist to determine the reasonability of the request within the specific context of your class. ARC staff will consult with instructors using the following questions to determine the reasonability.

The student is responsible for fulfilling the essential requirements for the course. We have developed the following questions to use as guidelines in determining whether or not attendance is an essential requirement for the course:

1. What does the class description and syllabus say about assignment deadlines or late work?
2. How is the final class grade calculated? To what extent are assignments factored into the final grade? Are there any alternative grading schemes for assignments (i.e. one assignment grade may be dropped, etc.)?
3. Are assignment deadline policies consistently applied? (i.e., Have any exceptions made to the policy for non-disabled students, such as for athletic travel or religious observances? If so, then these exceptions must also be granted to students with disabilities.)
4. What is the purpose of the assignment? Is it necessary to have it completed before an exam? Before a discussion?
5. Is the material being learned in the class sequentially? Does each week's material build on the material learned in the previous week(s)? (This may shorten the window of time in which an extension can reasonably be granted.)

6. Are assignments used as class content when they are due? Are students required to actively participate in class discussions/activities based off of the assignment? (e.g. problem sets reviewed as the first lecture on that content)
7. Are answer sets released that would impact a student's ability to request an extension? If so, how important is the timeliness of providing the answer sets to student learning and course sequencing?
8. Are there other lab or class sections the student could attend to catch up on missed material?
9. Does the assignment involve teamwork? Would failure to complete the assignment on time compromise the educational experience of other students in the class?
10. Is it possible for students to "work ahead" in this class?

Considerations When Implementing Assignment Extensions

- Limits are reasonable; provide clear limits to the number of extensions allowed and the length of such extensions. This is not a "free pass" for students to turn in late work. Agreed upon extensions should be specific and limited to a specific amount of time.
- The instructor's class policy on late work (e.g., 10 points off a grade for each day late) will remain applicable even to students with Assignment Extensions accommodation if they fail to meet the agreed upon disability-related extension, or if they miss deadlines for other non-disability related reasons.
- Students are never required to provide doctor's notes to justify use of this accommodation.
- Accommodations are not retroactive; instructors are not obligated to adjust previous penalties for late work if accommodation letter is provided after-the-fact.

Once instructors have been notified of eligibility for accommodations, instructors should determine the extent to which they can reasonably grant assignment extensions without fundamentally altering the learning objectives. ARC staff is available for consultation if you have questions regarding how the accommodation interacts with essential elements of the class and determining if or what adjustments are reasonable.

Assignment Accommodation Policy and Agreement: Questions to Discuss

Students are accommodated with the Assignment Accommodation when they have documentation that their disability that requires a need for flexibility in attendance. The Accessibility Resource Center (ARC) require students with this accommodation to meet with their faculty member(s). Following this meeting, the student and instructor should have a clear understanding of what accommodations can be made for a disability related absence. To facilitate this discussion, the following document should be reviewed and completed so that all instructions are clear.

1. What is the assignment deadline policy as stated in the syllabus?
2. How many day(s) after the due date does the student have to submit the assignment for full credit? (please be as specific as possible and avoid vague language)
3. In the case of flare-up/impact of the student's condition, what is the best way the student should notify the professor that the extension of assignment accommodation will be used?
4. Are there key assignments in this course (i.e.; timely message board posts etc...) for which an extension is not a reasonable accommodation? If so, please articulate below.
5. Please list any other parameters or requirements related to reasonable assignment deadline extensions.

This agreement is valid with an approved disability–related assignment accommodation and only when the student and instructor have discussed these questions, and the student submits their agreement in the ARC Portal. If necessary, Accessibility Resource Center staff, the department chair or other administrator may also be included in the conversation. Both the instructor and student will receive a copy of the final agreement via email once the student completes. If the maximum number of days past due date is exceeded, the student is subject to all penalties as stated on the syllabus for missed or late assignments.

If it is thought that any assignments can be justified as an integral part of how the course is taught and/or how learning is to be demonstrated and measured, there can be a point at which disability-related extensions on assignments cannot be reasonably accommodated. If at any point the faculty member or student have any questions, please contact ARC so they can address and work to resolve them.