North Idaho College

Disability Support Services 2014 2015

Start here... Go anywhere!
Welcome!

The North Idaho College Disability Support Services (DSS) Office facilitates reasonable accommodations, services, and access for students with qualifying disabilities to ensure they have equal access to all NIC programs, services, and activities. DSS also provides disability services to students attending the North Idaho Consortium of Higher Education campuses of Boise State University, Lewis-Clark State College, and Idaho State University in North Idaho.

DSS provides services in accordance with The Americans with Disabilities Act and the ADA Amendments Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Services are available on all NIC and North Idaho Consortium of Higher Education campuses.

DSS services are designed to support you throughout your academic career. This Student Handbook will guide you through services and assistive technology offered by DSS, how disability and eligibility determination is made, how accommodations are identified and implemented, and your rights and responsibilities. You will also find sections in this handbook that may be helpful to parents and families, high school personnel, and counselors and support advocates.

DSS is made up of trained and caring staff and we look forward to working with you! If you have any questions, please contact us.

We are here to help!

Sincerely,
Tim Gerlitz, Director
Mission Statement

The North Idaho College Disability Support Services (DSS) Office, in partnership with college and community resources and in full compliance with applicable law, is committed to ensuring that students with documented disabilities are able to fully participate in all academic programs, services, and activities. DSS also works toward building and supporting an academic community whose members have diverse cultures, backgrounds, and life experiences. In this way, DSS supports student success through their pursuit of lifelong learning and further works to help uphold and maintain the dignity and well-being of all students.

Staff Directory

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**Helpful Information**

**NIC Disability Support Services**

www.nic.edu/dss

Seiter Hall, Room 100
475 N. College Drive
Coeur d’Alene, Idaho 83814

Phone  (208) 665-4520
Fax    (208) 676-7202

**Location**
The NIC Disability Support Services Office is located on the North Idaho College campus in the Seiter Hall Building, Room 100 (main floor). Seiter Hall is situated in the southeast corner of the NIC campus.

**Hours**
Monday through Thursday from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

**Parking**
Handicapped parking is conveniently located in the Faculty Parking Lot on the south side of Lee-Kildow Hall next to Seiter Hall. A North Idaho College map that identifies all handicap parking on the college campus is located at www.nic.edu/about/parkingMap.pdf. An NIC parking permit is required and a handicap permit number must be registered with the Parking Services Office. Temporary handicap permits must be obtained from the Department of Motor Vehicles. North Idaho College does not issue those permits. More information is available at www.nic.edu/parking.
Confidentiality of Records

The North Idaho College Disability Support Services Office maintains student disability information separate from the student’s academic records. Student records are protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, (FERPA), and health information and records are protected by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

Helpful Information and Resources

For more information about the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, (HIPAA), visit the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services website, “Health Information Privacy – Guidance Materials for Consumers”

www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/consumers/index.html

For more information about the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, (FERPA), visit the U.S. Department of Education website, “FERPA General Guidance for Students”

www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/students.html

When DSS notifies an instructor that academic accommodations have been approved for a student, no information specific to the student’s disability or health record is disclosed to the instructor without the student’s consent.

Parents, Family Members, and Community Support

Please note that DSS cannot release information to parents, other family members, or community support professionals such as counselors and case managers unless a Release of Information is signed by the student allowing DSS to disclose specific information. The DSS Release of Information form is available in the DSS Office, on the DSS website, and in the appendix section of this student handbook.
Steps to Apply for Accommodations and Supports

1. **Intake:**
   As a first step, you are encouraged to visit the Disability Support Services Office as soon as possible and pick up a Student Intake Packet, (the Intake Packet is also available on the DSS website or the packet can be mailed to you if you call the DSS Office and request it). The Intake Packet includes an application for services and instructions on how to complete the disability documentation process. If you visit the DSS Office to pick your packet up, this is also a good opportunity to visit with DSS staff for a few minutes to learn more about the intake process and what services are available to students with disabilities.

2. **Disability Determination:**
   More information on how the Disability Determination process works is on page 9. After DSS receives your completed Intake Packet, a Disability Determination is conducted and a decision is made whether the Americans with Disability Act disability criteria has been satisfactorily met (this process usually takes 5-10 days).

   If additional information is needed in order to make a decision, DSS will contact you and schedule an individualized assessment to determine next steps. If disability determination results in a denial because of inadequate documentation or other factors, you will be formally notified in writing of the decision and will also be informed of your options to include the appeal process.

3. **Accommodations:**
   More information about accommodations and supports can be found on page 10. Once Disability Determination has been completed and you are found eligible for services, an Access Specialist will contact you and schedule an appointment. When you meet with the Access Specialist for the first time, the Access Specialist will conduct an individualized assessment and discuss specific academic accommodations that might be helpful to you in your courses, whether you might benefit from assistive technology services, and determine if you need assistance accessing college events and activities related to your disability.
4. **Notifying Instructors:**
   Once your accommodations are finalized, DSS will email an Academic Accommodation Letter to each instructor listing the accommodations you have been approved to receive, (note that accommodations may be different for each class you are attending). The letter notifies the instructor that you have been found eligible for services and lists what specific accommodations you may receive, (the letter does not disclose any information about your disability). It’s your responsibility to contact the instructor and make the necessary arrangements to implement each accommodation.

5. **Fine Tuning Your Accommodations and Services:**
   If you experience any difficulties related to your accommodations or services, notify your DSS Access Specialist as soon as possible. Your Access Specialist will review your accommodations with you and explore other options that may be more helpful. In some instances, DSS will arrange a support meeting that includes you, your instructor, and others you invite to discuss how to best adjust accommodations and services so they are as supportive and helpful as possible. Including your instructor in these discussions is recommended and can be extremely helpful.

6. **Arranging Accommodations for Your Next Semester:**
   Because academic accommodations are approved specific to each class you are taking, you must contact the DSS office to request services for each semester you are registered for. Your DSS Access Specialist will schedule an individualized assessment again to identify reasonable accommodations and services.

*If you experience difficulties or challenges with any part of the Intake or Accommodation process, please contact the DSS Office at (208) 665-4520. We are here to help!*
Determining Eligibility for Services

The first step in the Student Intake Process is to provide documentation of disability to the North Idaho College Disability Support Services Office.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as amended states:

(1) Disability. The term “disability” means, with respect to an individual
  a. A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more
     major life activities of such individual;
  b. A record of such an impairment; or
  c. Being regarded as having such an impairment

Additional information related to the ADA definition of disability can be found in
the following regulations:

  ADA, Title 42, Chapter 126, Section 12102

It is your responsibility to self-identify to Disability Support Services that you meet disability requirements and that you are requesting accommodations or other services. As part of the application process, you will need to submit assessments, evaluations, or other documents completed by appropriate professionals that establish your disability. Examples of documentation might include, but are not limited to, medical assessments, psychological evaluations, correspondence from counselors or physicians, and/or high school Individual Education Plans (IEPs) that reflect your diagnosis, barriers, and limitations.

If you believe you may have a disability that has not been previously diagnosed, you are encouraged to meet with DSS staff for an individualized assessment to discuss options. Even though North Idaho College does not provide medical or psychological testing services nor pay for those services, DSS may be able to refer you to community resources that may be helpful in establishing whether a disability is present, (at the student’s expense).

In instances where the nature of the disability is apparent, (for example, if the student is blind, deaf, in a wheelchair due to a permanent medical condition, etc.), less documentation may be necessary to establish eligibility for services.
**Reasonable Accommodations and Supports**

For eligible students, accommodations, (also called academic adjustments), are determined based on disability and individual needs. Accommodations help to remove barriers and to “level the playing field” for students with disabilities. Accommodations might include auxiliary aids and services, and modification to academic requirements ensuring equal educational opportunity.

Examples of accommodations might include, but are not limited to:

- Priority class registration
- Sign Language Interpreter services
- Text to Speech software
- Test-taking accommodations
- Approval to use recording devices in classrooms
- Preferential seating in classrooms
- Large print material
- Flexibility in attendance
- Lecture Capture, (recorded lectures)

Students with disabilities who require assistance accessing college events and activities should contact their Access Specialist at least one to two weeks ahead of time so that adequate arrangements can be made.

**Limitations**

Colleges are not required to lower or substantially modify essential class requirements. For example, although you may be allowed an accommodation of extended time to take a test, the college is not required to change the substantive content of the test. Additionally, colleges do not have to make adjustments that would fundamentally alter the nature of a service, program, or activity that would result in an undue financial or administrative burden to the institution.

Finally, colleges are not required to provide personal attendants, individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or other devices or services of a personal nature such as tutoring or typing.
**Accommodation Differences Between High School and College**

There are important differences between high school and college disability services that you should be aware of.

The U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights published a guide in March 2007 that provides detailed information about these differences. A link to the guide is below:


*A side by side comparison of differences between high school and college are in the following chart:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>High School</strong></th>
<th><strong>College</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Applicable Laws</strong></td>
<td>• IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Act).</td>
<td>• ADAAA (American with Disabilities Act, 2008).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Section 504 (Rehabilitation Act, 1973).</td>
<td>• Section 504 (Rehabilitation Act, 1973).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Required</strong></td>
<td><strong>Documentation</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• IEP (Individualized Education Plan and/or 504 Plan.</td>
<td>• High School IEP and 504 may not be sufficient to determine eligibility for</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• High School provides evaluation and testing at no cost to the student or</td>
<td>disability services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>family.</td>
<td>• Documentation guidelines require information is needed for each disability.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Documentation focuses on determining whether student is eligible for services</td>
<td>• Student must provide their evaluation and testing if relevant at their own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>based on specific disability categories in IDEA.</td>
<td>expense. The college does not provide testing or evaluation services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parental Role</strong></td>
<td>• Parent has access to student records and can participate in the accommodation</td>
<td>• Parent does not have access to student records without student’s written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>process.</td>
<td>consent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Parent advocates for student.</td>
<td>• Student advocates for self.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High School</strong></td>
<td><strong>College</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Advocacy</strong></td>
<td><strong>College</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The student is identified by the high school and is supported by parents and teachers.</td>
<td>• Student must self-identify to College Disability Services.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Primary responsibility for arranging accommodations belongs to the school.</td>
<td>• Primary responsibilities for self-advocacy and requesting accommodations belong to the student.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Teachers approach the student if they believe he or she needs assistance.</td>
<td>• Instructors are open and helpful, but expect the student to initiate contact if assistance is needed.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Instruction</strong></td>
<td><strong>Instruction</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Teachers may modify curriculum and/or alter pace of assignments.</td>
<td>• Instructors are not required to modify curriculum design or alter assignment deadlines.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Students are expected to read short assignments that are then discussed, and often re-taught in class.</td>
<td>• Students are assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing which might not be directly addressed in class. Rule of thumb is 3-4 hours of reading and study for every 1 hour of class.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Students might not need to read assignments more than once, and sometimes listening in class is the primary assignment.</td>
<td>• Students are expected to review class notes and text material regularly.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grades and Tests</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• IEP or 504 plan may include modifications to test format and/or grading.</td>
<td>• Grading and test-format changes are generally not available.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Testing is frequent and covers less information.</td>
<td>• Accommodations relating to how tests are given (extended time), are available when supported by disability documentation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Makeup tests are often available</td>
<td>• Testing is usually infrequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers often take time to remind students of assignments and due dates.</td>
<td>• Makeup test are seldom an option.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Instructors expect students to consult the class syllabus regarding due dates and tests.</td>
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Frequently Asked Questions

1. Where is the Disability Access Services Office (DSS) located?
   The Disability Access Services Office is located on the North Idaho College Coeur d'Alene campus in Seiter Hall, Room 100 on the main floor. Seiter Hall is located on the southeast corner of campus behind Lee-Kildow Hall.

2. Who do I contact if I have questions?
   You can contact the DSS Intake Specialist at (208) 665-4520.

3. How long does it take to complete the Application for Services?
   If you already have disability documentation, then the application process should only take 1-2 weeks.

4. What happens after I submit my application?
   You will be contacted by phone and/or email by your Access Specialist. Your Access Specialist will schedule an office meeting with you in order to discuss your specific classes and then identify which supports and accommodations would be appropriate and most helpful.

5. I'm attending classes in Sandpoint/Bonners Ferry/Kellogg. Are disability services available in those locations too?
   Yes, all disability services are available regardless of your campus location. Your Access Specialist will arrange to meet with you in person at your remote campus and video conferencing is also available using any available free video conferencing software.

6. What is a disability? How is it defined?
   Refer to Page 9 of this student Handbook for detailed information about disability definition and disability determination. Additional information can be found at the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) website.
   ADA, Title 42, Chapter 126, Section 12102
7. **For disability documentation purposes, is my High School Individual Educational Plan (IEP), adequate?**

Disability Support Services will accept your IEP if it includes a specific diagnosis, how the disability impacts areas of major life functioning, and includes a signature of a school psychologist or other professional.

8. **What happens if my application for disability services is not accepted?**

Students will receive a formal letter stating why their application could not be accepted, what additional information is needed, and what their appeal rights are. A DSS Access Specialist will also meet with you and discuss additional options that may be beneficial and helpful to you.

9. **I haven't been diagnosed before, but think I might have a disability. Will North Idaho College pay for testing and assessment?**

North Idaho College does not offer or pay for medical, psychiatric, or other testing and assessment. However, you are encouraged to meet with Disability Support Services to discuss options.

10. **Is “test anxiety” a disability?**

Most students experience test anxiety, which is an uneasiness or apprehension experienced before, during, and/or after an examination because of concern, worry, or fear about test performance. Usually, relaxation techniques, learning new test taking strategies, and counseling can be helpful in overcoming test anxiety. However, in instances when anxiety is seriously interfering with your performance and grades, it is recommended that you seek medical and/or psychological evaluation for other possible causes and issues. Depending on your diagnosis, you may be eligible for disability services. Contact the DSS Office for additional information.
11. I have a disability and I am having difficulty accessing a particular NIC related class, class location, event, and/or activity or I have encountered an architectural barrier on campus limiting my mobility and access. Can the Disability Support Service Office help me?

Yes, contact the DSS Office if you have difficulty accessing any location, event, or activity on campus.

12. Are my disability records confidential?

Yes. The Disability Support Services Office complies with all federal and state confidentiality requirements including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Your disability records are secured and maintained separately from your academic records.

13. Can my family access my records without my permission?

No. Your records are confidential and may only be released to another party with your permission.

14. Do my instructors know what my disability is?

When the DSS Office approves accommodations for you and notifies the instructor, the instructor knows that you are receiving services from the DSS Office but details about your diagnosis are not disclosed. Of course, students may self-disclose any information about their disability they so desire.

15. I have been approved to receive an accommodation allowing for extra time for testing. Who is responsible for making those arrangements?

Students are responsible for contacting their instructor to make necessary arrangements for all accommodations. For “extended time for testing” it is recommended that you contact your instructor at least one to two weeks prior to the test date(s) to insure there is sufficient time to make the necessary accommodation arrangements.
16. **What should I do if my accommodations don’t seem to be working for me?**

Your DSS Access Specialist as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations and review other possible options.

17. **Is it ever too late to request accommodations?**

Eligible students may request accommodations at any time. However, accommodations may not be provided retroactively in a class and it is the student’s responsibility to coordinate accommodation logistics with their instructors. It is recommended that you request accommodations as early as possible.

18. **Do I have to use my accommodations?**

No. Whether you use an approved accommodation or not is your choice. A student who was approved for “extended time for testing” in a specific class may discover that they are able to complete the tests within the time allowed and not need the accommodation. However, if a student chooses not to use an accommodation in class, they may not retroactively use it for past work. For example, if a student decides not to use their “extended time for testing” accommodation and performs poorly on the test, they may not request to take the test over using the extended time.

19. **Can I request accommodations directly from my instructor instead of making the request through Disability Support Services?**

No. Disability determination eligibility and accommodation approval is only arranged through the DSS Office.

20. **What should I do if I have a conflict with my instructor over an accommodation?**

Contact your DSS Access Specialist. They will work with you and your instructor toward resolution.
21. **What kind of assistive technology options does DSS provide and make available to students?**

DSS offers a variety of hardware and software options to students with disabilities. Some options include text to speech software, recorders, noise cancelling headsets, enhanced keyboards, FM systems for persons who are hard of hearing, e-textbooks, braille text and tactile graphics for students who are blind or sight impaired, lecture capture technology, and much more. Please contact DSS for additional information. DSS also has limited study space available with assistive technology equipped computers on a first come first served basis and AT equipped computer stations are available throughout all NIC campuses. Contact DSS for more information.

22. **Do behavior standards apply to students with disabilities?**

Yes, all students are expected to abide by the NIC Student Code of Conduct. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) does not require colleges to accept threatening or disruptive behavior from students.

23. **Does DSS provide tutoring?**

Disability Support Services does not provide tutoring services. However, Peer Tutoring is available at the NIC College Skills Center.