

PROVIDING REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS TO QUALIFIED STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

**FACULTY SENATE PRESENTATION
FEBRUARY 8, 2011**

**EILEEN GOLDGEIER
CHERYL BRANKER**

FEDERAL LAW (ADA AND §504)

- Provide reasonable accommodations
- Qualified students
- Documented disability
- Interactive process
- No requirement to lower course standards, waive course requirements or fundamentally alter a course

U.S. Department of Education, OCR (2010)

“Although a professor may be an integral part of the interactive process, he or she is not qualified to solely determine what the requesting student may be entitled to under federal law, including whether the requested accommodation constitutes a fundamental alteration of the course.”

Request for extensions for homework, due dates and deadlines – old practice vs. new practice

- *Old practice* - DSO refers student to the faculty member
- *New practice* – DSO determines whether or not student is eligible to receive the accommodation based on medical documentation; DSO then facilitates interactive process between student and faculty member

Purpose of interactive process for these requests?

- Determine whether or not the request for extensions for homework, due dates or deadlines would **fundamentally alter the course or lower academic standards**

Who should participate in the interactive process?

- Student
- Faculty member
- DSO representative
- Department head/director/dean

Deliberative process involves:

- Consideration of alternatives for essential requirements of the course
- What is the feasibility, cost and effect on program of the proposed alternatives?
- Can essential requirement in question be modified for a specific student?

Whether timely completion of course assignments is an essential requirement of a course/program of study

- What is the purpose of the course?
- What methods of assessing student outcomes are absolutely necessary? Why?
- What are acceptable levels of performance on these student outcome measures?
- What skills, knowledge and abilities (SKAs) are an integral part of the learning objectives of the course?
- Is learning in each class dependent on preparation and the timely completion of homework assignments?
- Are homework assignments and classroom participation closely correlated to the SKAs being measured by the course?
- Is timeliness of homework completion reasonably necessary for the satisfaction of the course objectives?
- Is the sequence of assignments with classroom learning essential for meeting the course objectives?
- Would there be significant consequences to the learning objectives of the course if homework was not completed in a timely manner?

When the request for extension DOES NOT fundamentally alter the course -

- Determine a reasonable accommodation for the student
 - Ex. extra time to complete assignment, merge smaller projects into larger project with longer timeline
- How much extra time is reasonable?
 - case-by-case determination based on requirements of the course
 - look to medical provider for guidance about this particular student
 - Baseline for daily assignments: extra 1 to 2 days

Questions?

- Office of General Counsel 515-3071
- http://www.ncsu.edu/general_counsel/index.php
- Disability Services Office 515-7653
- <http://www.ncsu.edu/dso/>