

Faculty & Staff

Resources for A-State faculty and staff.

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On-Campus Resources for Faculty/Staff

Here's a list of on-campus resources available to A-State faculty and staff! We'll do our best to keep everything current, but since things can change, we recommend reaching out to the department or team directly to make sure you have the most up-to-date information.

Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

Vision

To increase the teaching, research, and service of all A-State faculty through professional development opportunities. These opportunities include:

- Providing opportunities for effective teaching
- Emphasis on best practices in teaching and learning
- Effective and appropriate integration of instructional technologies
- Course design and professional development
- Creating a dynamic resource center to satisfy multiple learning styles and needs

Mission

To provide instructional design tools, best practices in teaching and learning, and professional development by using researched pedagogical practices that empower faculty to foster academic excellence as educators, researchers, and professionals."

Visit the CETL website

Beck Center for Veterans

If you're a veteran, service member, or family member, the Beck Center is here for you. Get support with academic advising, benefits, career counseling, and rehabilitation services. They'll help you achieve your post-military goals.

Visit the Beck Center website

External (Off-Campus) Resources for Faculty/Staff

Here are some external (off-campus) resources we hope will be helpful for A-State faculty and staff! We do our best to keep everything updated, but things can change—so feel free to reach out to the organization, team, or department directly to make sure you have the latest info.

Explore Access

Explore Access is a web resource of the University of Arkansas – Partners. The resources on this site have been developed with funding from a variety of sources. Primary funding has been provided by the Southwest ADA Center, a program of the Independent Living Resource Utilization (ILRU) in Houston, Texas and a part of the ADA National Networks serving Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas.

U of A Partners serves as a regional affiliate of the Southwest ADA Center and focuses on increasing the capacity of Arkansas agencies to improve access for people with disabilities. Project staff are available to provide training and technical assistance on topics related to the ADA—physical access, programmatic access and digital access.

Some of the resources on this site are provided through other funded projects such as Increasing Digital Access in Arkansas with funding from Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Increasing Capabilities Access Network (iCAN) and Digital Access Solutions with funding from the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD).

For more information, contact Melanie Thornton at mthornt@uark.edu.

[Visit the Explore Access website](#)

ADA Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities by US Access Board

This document contains scoping and technical requirements for accessibility to buildings and facilities by individuals with disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. These scoping and technical requirements are to be applied during the design, construction, and alteration of buildings and facilities covered by titles II and III of the ADA to the extent required by regulations issued by Federal agencies, including the Department of Justice and the Department of Transportation, under the ADA.

[View the ADA Accessibility Guidelines online](#)

WAVE Web Accessibility Evaluation Tool

WAVE® is a suite of evaluation tools that helps authors make their web content more accessible to individuals with disabilities. WAVE can identify many accessibility and Web Content Accessibility Guideline (WCAG) errors, but also facilitates human evaluation of web content. Our philosophy is to focus on issues that we know impact end users, facilitate human evaluation, and to educate about web accessibility.

[Visit the WAVE website](#)

FindHelp

Findhelp can connect you with local food pantries and meal programs. You can also find resources for housing, financial assistance, health care, and more.

[Visit the FindHelp website](#)

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS)

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services' (ARS) mission is to prepare Arkansans with disabilities to work and lead productive and independent lives.

To achieve its mission, ARS provides a variety of training and career preparation programs. They have 19 field offices across the state, serving all 75 counties, where individuals can receive assistance with accessibility and training needs that can lead to successful employment.

To contact the Jonesboro office, call (870) 972-0025.

[Visit the ARS website](#)

iCan

iCAN is the Arkansas statewide Assistive Technology program designed to make technology available and accessible for everyone who needs it. Assistive technology (AT) is any kind of device or tool that helps people live, learn, work, and communicate more independently. AT can be very simple and inexpensive, like a modified knife and fork, or it can be very sophisticated and costly, like a computerized speech device.

iCAN stands for Increasing Capabilities Access Network. iCAN offers a number of services to help Arkansans of all ages find the AT tools they need for home, school, work, and getting around in the community. Some of their services include:

- Information Assistance
- AT Device Loans
- AT Device Demonstrations
- AT Device Reuse
- AT Device Exchange

- AT Training on devices and issues related to accessibility
- Presentations about iCAN and the benefits of technology
- Tours of the iCAN Tools for Life Demonstration Center
- Technical Assistance to employers, service providers, educators, and others.

The services offered by iCAN are available to all Arkansans, regardless of age, geographic area, disability, income, or eligibility for any other service.

If you would like to call, the number for those located near Little Rock is 501-666-8868, or for those outside of the Little Rock area, 1-800-828-2799.

[Visit the iCan website](#)

Entry Point!

Entry Point! is the signature program of the American Association for the Advancement of Science's Project on Science, Technology, and Disability. It was designed to increase the diversity of the science and engineering workforce by involving students and scientists with disabilities throughout all STEM education and career pathways.

[Visit the Entry Point! website](#)

Disability Rights Arkansas (DRA)

Disability Rights Arkansas is Arkansas's protection and advocacy organization. They help protect the human, civil, and legal rights of people with disabilities. Their mission is to vigorously advocate for and enforce the legal rights of people with disabilities. They envision an Arkansas where people with disabilities are equal members in their communities and can dictate the course of their own lives through self-determination.

[Visit the DRA website](#)

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

JAN helps individuals with disabilities explore accommodation ideas and provides practical suggestions for requesting and negotiating accommodations with an employer. JAN also provides basic information about the employment provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), called Title I.

[Visit the JAN website](#)

Simple Guide for Title II

Beginning April 2027, all higher education institutions must comply with the ADA's 2024 Web Accessibility Rule, which requires that digital content, including websites, learning management systems, instructional materials, and mobile apps, meet WCAG 2.1 Level AA standards.

This applies to all faculty-created digital content, including:

- Course materials in Canvas
- Documents uploaded for students
- Videos, audio, and multimedia
- Departmental webpages
- Apps or tools used in courses

Accessibility is now a legal requirement, not just a best practice.

Key Elements of the New Federal Rule (Title II)

The new Title II changes require institutions to ensure that all digital content is:

- **Perceivable:** Information must be presented in ways all users can access (e.g., alt text, captions, readable text).
- **Operable:** Users must be able to fully navigate using a keyboard, assistive technology, or alternative input.
- **Understandable:** Content must be organized logically with clear headings, labels, and instructions.
- **Robust:** Content must work with current and future assistive technologies.

The rule specifically highlights:

- Alternative text for images
- Captioning, audio description, and transcripts for multimedia
- Full keyboard navigation
- Logical heading structures
- Color contrast and readability
- Accessible document formatting (PDFs, Word, PowerPoint)
- Accessible mobile and web applications

Key Requirements

- Websites and mobile apps must meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1, Level AA.
- Electronic documents, such as PDFs, slides, and others, must be accessible, meeting standards for WCAG 2.1, level AA.

- Alternate formats of communications – including braille and reflowed large print – must be made available upon request and in a timely manner.
 - You must retain records of those who request alternative formats of communication and provide them on an ongoing basis.

Website Accessibility Requirements

Faculty who maintain departmental pages or program sites must ensure all content meets WCAG 2.1, level AA.

What the Law Requires

- Images must have meaningful alt text
- Videos must be captioned, have transcripts, and audio description (where necessary)
- Pages must be navigable solely by keyboard
- Headings must follow a logical hierarchy
- Text must meet color contrast standards
- Links must be descriptive (“Download syllabus” instead of “Click here”; **do not** post full URLs)

Canvas LMS Accessibility

Canvas is part of the institution’s digital ecosystem and must meet the same federal standards. For more detailed assistance with Canvas, contact The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

Use the Canvas Accessibility Checker

- In the Rich Content Editor, click the Accessibility Checker icon.
- Follow prompts to fix headings, alt text, lists, and contrast.

Use UDOIT

- UDOIT runs a full accessibility check on the entire course.
- For assistance using UDOIT:
 - Contact CETL for a one-on-one training session.
 - View the [UDOIT User Guide](#).

Ensure Videos Are Captioned

- All videos must be captioned and have audio description available (if applicable).
- Faculty can use Kaltura to auto-caption videos and provide audio description. For a full how-to on captioning, with images, please refer to the Resources

Structure Pages Clearly

- Use headings
- Break up long text
- Use lists instead of long paragraphs

Check Documents Before Uploading

Documents are one of the most common accessibility barriers on campus. The new law requires documents to be:

- Screen-reader friendly
- Properly tagged
- Organized with headings
- Free of scanned, image-only text
- High-contrast and readable
- Navigable solely by keyboard

To check if your Word documents, PowerPoints, etc., are accessible, you can run the Accessibility Checker. PDFs can be checked by using the Prepare for Accessibility tool in Adobe Acrobat. PDFs must be tagged and readable – **scanned images of text are no longer acceptable.**

Tips for Making Accessible Documents

- Add alt text
- Check color contrast
 - Use a free checker like [WebAIM Contrast Checker](#)
 - Minimum 4.5:1 contrast ratio
- Use built-in heading styles (H1, H2, H3)
 - **DO NOT** create headings solely by bolding or enlarging text
 - Heading styles can be modified for easy repetitive use
- Make links descriptive
 - Replace “Click here” with “Read the internship requirements”
 - Avoid posting the full URL
- **DO NOT** use Print to PDF to convert Word documents into PDFs.
 - Use the Save as Adobe PDF option in the file menu.

Detailed instructions for making accessible documents can be found in the Resources section.

Mobile App & Third?Party Tool Accessibility

Any app or tool used in a course must meet accessibility standards.

- Apps must be usable with screen readers.
- Buttons and controls must be labeled.
- Content must be navigable without a mouse.
- Color contrast must meet WCAG 2.1, level AA standards.
- Vendors must provide an Accessibility Conformance Report (ACR) or Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT).

Before Adopting a Tool

- Always ask the vendor for a VPAT/ACR.

- Check whether the app works with Apple VoiceOver or Microsoft Narrator.
- Ensure videos and audio within the app are captioned, with audio description (if applicable).
- Avoid tools that rely on drag-and-drop without alternatives.
- Contact IT Services or Access and Accommodation Services if unsure.

Any tools/software that will be purchased with university funds for student, faculty, or staff use MUST be approved by A-State ITS first.

To request approval for purchase, staff or faculty must complete the [Software Purchase Request](#) form, then follow the appropriate procurement process.

Practical Accessibility Checklist

Here is an example of a simple accessibility checklist you can share in workshops:

Course Content

- All images have alt text
- All videos have captions and audio description (if applicable)
- All audio has transcripts
- Headings follow a logical structure
- Color contrast meets WCAG 2.1, level AA standards
- Links are descriptive
- Used the Accessibility Checker for Word documents, PowerPoints, Excel sheets, etc.
- No scanned image PDFs
- PDFs are tagged and readable

Apps & Tools

- VPAT/ACR reviewed
- Approved by ITS (if purchasing with university funds)
- Screen reader compatibility tested
- Keyboard navigation tested (if applicable)
- No tasks are “drag-and-drop” only
- All videos have captions and audio description (if applicable)
- All audio has transcripts

Canvas

- Ran UDOIT and fixed errors
- Accessibility Checker used on each page
- Modules organized clearly
- Third-party tools reviewed for accessibility
- All documents reviewed for accessibility before upload

Webpages

- All images have alt text
- All videos have captions and audio description (if applicable)
- Headings follow a logical structure
- Color contrast meets WCAG 2.1, level AA standards
- Links are descriptive
- Keyboard navigation tested
- Screen reader compatibility tested

Resources

Explore Access

Explore Access is a web resource of the University of Arkansas – Partners that focuses on increasing the capacity of Arkansas agencies to improve access for people with disabilities. Project staff are available to provide training and technical assistance on topics related to the ADA—physical access, programmatic access and digital access. Their Digital Access Resources page covers many topics such as:

- How to Make Your Presentations and Meetings Accessible to All
- Creating Accessible PowerPoint Presentations
- Creating Accessible Word Documents
- Creating Accessible PDF Documents
- Creating Audio Descriptions

[Digital Access Resources from U of A Partners](#)

How to Meet WCAG (Quick Reference)

This tool provides a customizable view of WCAG 2 resources:

- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines web standard – 2.0, 2.1, and 2.2
- Techniques for WCAG 2 implementation guidance
- Understanding WCAG 2 supporting information

[WCAG 2.1 AA Quick Reference](#)

Understanding WCAG 2.1

WCAG Understanding documents are guides to understanding and implementing WCAG. They provide detailed explanations and include background information and technical details. WCAG Understanding documents are not introductory resources. They are for people who want to understand WCAG more thoroughly.

[All WCAG 2.1 Understanding Docs](#)

Captioning in Kaltura

Kaltura is a cloud-based video management system that allows:

- Secure hosting of instructional videos
- Easy embedding in Canvas courses
- Auto-captioning and accessibility features
- Video quizzes with gradebook integration
- Analytics to track student engagement

It is integrated with Canvas and available to all A-State faculty, staff, and students.

[Instructions for Captioning in Kaltura](#)

Captioning and Transcription Guides

These are guides put together by A-State's Office of Access and Accommodation Services to help faculty navigate captioning and transcribing their content. Topics covered include:

- Definitions
- Best practices
- Instructions for captioning in Adobe Premiere Pro and YouTube
- Formatting guidelines

You can also find the full Captioning and Accessibility Operating Procedure [here](#).

[View the Captioning and Transcription Guides](#)

Access Guide for the A-State Community

Sample Access Statement

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities or other conditions requiring accommodations to ensure access in this course are encouraged to contact Access and Accommodation Services (AAS) as early as possible at 870-972-3964 or dservices@AState.edu. All information will be treated confidentially, and every reasonable effort will be made to provide appropriate accommodations. To receive accommodations, students must be registered with A-State's Office of Access and Accommodation Services.

Those requiring testing accommodations are responsible for scheduling their exams through AAS in advance on the same date and time that the exam is administered to the rest of the class.

In cases where a scheduling conflict (such as an overlapping class) prevents the use of an approved extended-time accommodation during the scheduled exam time, the student must obtain prior approval from the instructor to arrange an alternative exam date and/or time.

Classroom Considerations

- Many accessibility suggestions for campus events (tips found below) also hold true for the classroom and are required to be written into syllabi. This includes things such as a clear communication policy and captioning on all videos. For the full A-State captioning procedure, please visit AAS on the A-State Knowledge Base.
- Thoroughly review all emails from AAS regarding student accommodations. While questions and discussions are always welcome, accommodations are not subject to negotiation with the student, and faculty should not attempt to modify, reduce or deny approved accommodations without speaking to the AAS office and participating in a collaborative, interactive process. This protects both the instructor and the university from potential violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). AAS is available to address questions, concerns, or to engage in collaborative discussions and information sessions to support the implementation of accommodations. Our shared goal is to ensure that accommodations are facilitated appropriately and equitably, without creating the impression that they are discouraged, burdensome, or likely to be denied.
- Implement a specific policy that permits students to leave and return to the classroom as needed. You may wish to outline reasonable limitations within this policy — for example, distinguishing between expectations during exams and regular class sessions. This is important in fostering a supportive classroom environment. It can be particularly beneficial for students with diabetes, who may need to have a snack or adjust medication;

students with anxiety or processing disorders, who may require short breaks to re-engage effectively; and students with gastrointestinal or other medical conditions, who may need to leave the classroom more frequently.

- Have a short form syllabus that is separate from your course calendar/schedule that succinctly documents your course policies. This helps students clearly see the path for the class and increases the inclusivity of your class. Simple syllabus helps with this!
- Have your syllabus available in multiple modes to increase access. For example, a simple text-based syllabus with no charts, tables, or graphics is best for screen readers, whereas an infographic syllabus or a syllabus that has media can be both more engaging and more accessible to students with processing disabilities. A large-print syllabus can also enhance access. This may sound like a lot more labor, but once you've done one of each style, you can easily tailor your syllabi so that they are accessible for all students.
- Having paper copies of slides enhances access for some populations of students. Many professors do not like to share their slides for a variety of valid reasons. You can decide based on the needs of your students and their accommodations each semester. You can also contact AAS about registered note takers or other similar options that could increase access.
 - Please note that the AAS note-taking program is solely volunteer based, so there is no guarantee that note-takers will be found for every class that a student may need access for. Therefore, this resource may not be equitable to other options like slides or recording class lectures.
- Don't assume everyone can hear you, especially if you are in a larger lecture hall or auditorium. If needed, using a microphone is a great way to make your lecture more accessible. It may feel uncomfortable initially, but you will soon adjust.
- Make sure your course files are screen-reader friendly. This can be complicated in classes that require graphs and charts. Alt text that describes images may already be included in your course materials if you are using materials from a publishing house. If they do not provide image or video descriptions, ask them to implement these access tools.
- Use at least 14-point font for all communication with students.

Cultural Considerations

- Discuss accommodations as important aspects of higher ed early in the semester. Ideally, you will have a syllabus statement about AAS prominently displayed in your course policies. Students take their cues from you – if you let them know access and inclusion are important to you, they will value them too.
- Never discuss a student's disability or accommodations in front of the class.
- Never ask a student in public or in private if their disability will cause disruption or be a problem for class.
- Include disabled authors/scientists/activists in your course materials and make sure your students know that these individuals you are including have disabilities. This representation helps improve inclusion.
- Minimize or eliminate the use of language that dismisses or belittles the experiences of people with disabilities. Words and phrases such as "retarded," "blind as a bat," and "dumb" have no place in our classrooms. The R word should not be used, nor any

derivative. We can find alternatives that fit our colloquial habits such as “willfully ignorant,” “if it were a snake, it would have bit me,” and “silly” instead of the historically ableist phrases. Even phrases like “handicapped” can be seen as outdated or offensive. So, try to be culturally sensitive as much as possible.

- Generally, it is best to use person-first language. An example would be saying, “a person who is hard of hearing” or “an individual with a mental health condition.” There are suggestions that disability-first language is acceptable (which is why you see some examples of that in this guide), but generally, you want to use person-first language.

Tips from the Harvard Accessibility Guide for Faculty

Meet privately with your student to discuss their accommodations in the context of your course. During your conversation, ask how you can support your student’s learning and accommodation needs. Be mindful that students may not feel comfortable sharing health information and/or a diagnosis with you and they are not required to do so. Examples of ways you can rephrase questions without asking for health information are included below.

Possible Questions with Alternative Phrasing

Instead of saying...	Try the phrase...
How severe is your hearing loss?	What types of environments or class discussions may be inaccessible for you?
Do you have class participation accommodations because you are autistic?	How is class participation most accessible for you?
Why can’t you hand-write notes?	Let’s discuss how you will use technology in class for your note-taking accommodations.
You can tell me more about your disability after class.	Let’s discuss how we will implement your accommodations during office hours.

What Disability/Neurodivergence Might Look Like in Your Classroom

- Students may appear inattentive or bored
- Repetitive behaviors
- Intense focus on topics of interest
- Unexpected emotion when stressed
- Difficulty with organization
- Difficulty with group work
- Poor awareness of body space
- May misread social cues or facial expressions
- Social interactions/group work may be stressful
- Stress-relieving activities may make others uncomfortable

- Sensory perceptions can interfere with learning
- Nebulous sense of time (can impact multi-tasking)
- Have difficulty with changes and transitions

Accessible Classroom Strategies

- Clear Communication: Try not to use sarcasm, euphemisms or implied messages.
- Clear expectations around classroom behavior and what “good work” looks like. Give examples, if possible.
- Make materials available in advance.
- Deliver content through multiple/hybrid methods.
- Allow or facilitate the recording of teaching or meetings.
- Scaffold Assignments: Break down large papers into smaller tasks throughout the semester until it adds up to the final paper.
- Scaffold Reading: Providing a list of key ideas that you want students to take away from a reading assignment.
- Rethink your idea of “paying attention.”
- Supplement Your Syllabus with a one-page “syllabus breakdown” that includes crucial due dates, policies, and requirements, as well as perhaps some assessment details.
- Posting A Schedule creates predictability that will ease anxiety and help avoid distraction.
- Post Learning Objective(s). This will help students determine if they’ve comprehended the content knowledge for the week/lesson/unit.
- A Daily Reflection/Exit Ticket: At the end of each class, a quick reflection can clarify if the variety of different learners in the class understood the subject matter taught. The question should measure the student’s understanding of the posted explicit learning objective of the day.
- Use Varied Assessments: Variation in assessments increases success and accessibility for all learners while maintaining high standards.

Accessibility Tips When Hosting Meetings

- Choose an accessible location. Think about: distance if a person must walk but has mobility or health issues, if it requires driving because some people don’t drive or have transportation, if there is a ramp and elevator, etc.
- Hybrid meetings are most accessible, but make sure the people online can equally participate and engage.
- When sharing meeting information, don’t just share the meeting link. Share dial-in information too.
- Keep cameras optional.
- Mute all participants upon entry.
- Make use of the chat or questions features online. Not everyone processes information or communicates most effectively verbally.
- Ask meeting invitees what they need to fully participate in the meeting.
- When presenting materials with images and graphs, explain and describe all that is shown on the screen, even if they are decorative. Images should also include captions/alt text.

- During meetings, announce your name before speaking, even if a virtual meeting displays your name.
- Use an accessible virtual background.
- Share the meeting agenda in advance.
- Use a microphone when talking to a large crowd. Consider those who may be hard of hearing.
- If you are the speaker, always face the crowd when speaking. Some people may rely heavily on lip reading.
- If meeting in person, think about space. Can someone with a mobility device or mobility challenges easily move around?
- If you are using PowerPoint or presenting any kind of documents, provide hard copies.
- If providing food at meetings, have some gluten-free, dairy-free, and peanut-free options. Also, think about cross-contamination.
- Use 14-point font minimum. While 12-point font is "standard", it is often still too small for people with visual impairments.
- Don't rely on color to emphasize information. Think about those who may be color blind.
- Try to avoid places that have strong smells, loud noises, bright lights, etc. Also, try to avoid wearing strong perfumes, jewelry that makes a lot of noise, etc.
- Record meetings if they are virtual.
- Provide a summary of the meeting or meeting notes after.

Accessibility Actions to Consider for Events

- Provide an obvious point of contact for feedback regarding accessibility before, during and after the event.
- Leave spaces open in community rooms for people with mobility issues to access materials. Wheelchair users need more space to maneuver. This is also a good tip to ensure that in case of an emergency, everyone can get out safely.
- Consider food allergies and dietary restrictions by providing clear food labels. Ensure that a knowledgeable person is available to answer questions or address any concerns about ingredients and food preparation.
- Avoid flashing lights. Quick flashing lights are known to cause seizures and can also bring on headaches/migraines.
- Avoid loud noises when possible. In large groups of people, it is hard to avoid a noisy environment, but many people with disabilities are sensitive to loud noises.
- Have easy-to-access seating around the event space.
- Provide seated queuing options for people who struggle to stand in a queue for the required durations.
- Limit fragrances. Fragrances can make spaces inaccessible for those who are fragrant sensitive. Certain smells can trigger headaches, allergic reactions, or even asthma attacks.
- Provide location maps that make accessible routes clear, including elevators and spaces that would be clear of foot traffic and obstacles.
- Incorporate inclusive and safety initiatives into events. Don't make inclusive spaces too separate or distant from the main attraction.

- Ensure that any materials featuring a color-coded key (such as maps or programs) are accessible to people with color blindness. In addition to using color, include labels or other visual indicators to convey the information clearly.
- Provide roaming microphones rather than relying on standing microphones so that people with mobility issues can still engage with talks.
- Have sign language interpreters and live captioning for talks, and roaming interpreters so people can interact with people on booths or stalls, at networking gatherings, etc.
- Ensure there are spaces for service animals to eat, drink and relieve themselves.
- Invite a variety of people from different backgrounds to join committees so that your inclusive, belonging, and accessibility initiatives are meaningful.
- Let people know about the initiatives that have been implemented so that people can reassess whether they are now able to attend your event and can plan accordingly.
- Have policies around touching (hugs, handshakes, etc.), social interactions, and the taking and sharing of photos. Make these transparent.
- Make explicit, inclusive rules visible in spaces like tabletop game areas at gaming events, so everyone feels welcome at the table.
- Provide clear standards for visual aids and slides during panels and talks to ensure they are accessible to the audience, including color contrast and font size.
- Make accessibility and inclusivity information clear, transparent, and obvious on event material (websites, brochures, flyers, programs, emails, etc.).
- Use the Web Accessibility Guidelines and the A11y Project to assist with making your website more accessible.
- Ensure content and trigger warnings are included on talks that cover sensitive topics so audience members can make decisions about whether to view content. Provide these ahead of time so individuals can choose not to attend, rather than needing to leave part-way through (often in front of an audience).

Accessibility Considerations When Serving Food at Meetings/Programs/Events

- Label all food items clearly by including ingredients and noting if an item contains gluten, contains dairy, or was prepared in a shared kitchen. This takes out a lot of guesswork and reduces anxiety for many people.
- Offer at least one gluten-free and dairy-free entrée if an entrée is offered at the event. This shouldn't just be sides. This ensures staff with allergies or health-related concerns can enjoy the full experience like everyone else present.
- Prevent cross-contamination at serving stations by using separate utensils, separate serving lines when possible, and avoid placing allergen-free items next to foods containing gluten or dairy. This may mean you always have a monitor at the table and that you brief them to ensure nothing is getting mixed up or placed in the wrong area.
- Create a designated "allergen-safe zone." This could be a table where only gluten-free and dairy-free items are placed, with monitored utensils.
- Choose pre-packaged or sealed allergen-safe items when possible. This is the safest option when we cannot guarantee kitchen controls.
- Brief volunteers on safe serving practices. A quick reminder about glove changes, utensil separation, and avoiding shared surfaces can go a long way.

- Ask caterers direct questions to confirm whether they can provide gluten-free/dairy-free options and what steps they take to prevent cross-contact.
- Communicate options in advance: People often decide whether to go to certain places or attend certain events/programs based on whether they can safely.

Foods That Often Contain Gluten:

Fried chicken: breaded flour coating

Alternative: grilled chicken, smoked chicken, rotisserie chicken

Baked beans: some brands use sauces with wheat

Alternative: labeled gluten-free baked beans or simple seasoned beans

Pasta salads: wheat-based pasta

Alternative: gluten-free pasta salad or quinoa salad

Sauces, marinades, and dressings: some contain wheat, barley, or rye

Alternative: simple dry rubs or labeled allergen-free sauces

Rolls, buns, cornbread mixes: many cornbread mixes contain wheat

Alternative: certified gluten-free buns, plain corn tortillas, lettuce wraps, or meat with no buns that's in a separate area from the bread.

Cookies, brownies, cakes: wheat flour

Alternative: gluten-free cookies or fruit-based desserts

Foods That Often Contain Dairy:

Mac & cheese: cheese, milk, butter

Alternative: dairy-free mac made with plant-based cheese

Mashed potatoes: butter and milk

Alternative: mashed potatoes made with olive oil or broth

Cream-based salads: coleslaw, potato salad, ranch dips

Alternative: vinegar-based slaws or dairy-free dressings

Sauces, marinades, and dressings: some contain dairy

Alternative: simple dry rubs or labeled allergen-free sauces

Desserts like banana pudding or cobblers: milk, butter, cream

Alternative: dairy-free puddings or fruit crisps made with plant-based butter

Foods With High Cross-Contamination Risk:

Buffet-style fried foods: shared fryers with breaded items

Alternative: baked or grilled versions

Shared utensil dishes: pasta, casseroles, desserts

Alternative: individually packaged servings

[Download a PDF of the Access Guide](#)

FAQs

Understanding Accommodations

What is the purpose of academic accommodations, and how do they support student access at A-State?

Accommodations level the playing field for students with disabilities. They remove barriers that students without disabilities don't have to navigate so disabled students can adequately show what they are capable of. Accommodations don't guarantee success, but they improve access.

How do I know if a student is approved for accommodations?

You will receive an accommodations notification email from The Office of Access and Accommodation Services.

What information is included in an accommodation letter, and what information is intentionally not included?

The student's name, class, and a list of their accommodations are included. Information regarding their diagnosis is not included to help protect their privacy and confidentiality. Faculty should not request disability documentation from students.

Why don't accommodation letters list a student's diagnosis?

This is to be consistent with HIPAA and protect a student's privacy and confidentiality.

What should I do if a student requests accommodations but has no letter from Access & Accommodation Services?

Ask them if they are registered with our office and if they have requested their accommodations for this semester (they must request accommodations every semester through their online AIM account). If they are not affiliated with AAS, encourage them to get registered.

Implementing Accommodations

When should I expect to receive accommodation letters, and what is my responsibility once I receive them?

Generally, accommodation letters are sent by the first day of classes each semester. However, there is no deadline to register with AAS because disability or a temporary impairment can happen unexpectedly, it may take a while to get a diagnosis, etc.

Once a letter is received, follow the outlined accommodations plan. If there are questions or concerns about facilitating accommodations due to essential requirements of a course or program,

contact AAS immediately for further discussion.

How do I implement accommodations that require advance planning, such as extended time or reduced distraction testing?

Generally, if a student has testing accommodations, they test in the AAS office, and it is their responsibility to schedule their exams with AAS at least 3 business days in advance. When they schedule their exams, faculty are notified and can plan accordingly. Please note: If testing accommodations can be facilitated in the classroom environment and the student is comfortable in that setting, that is acceptable.

What if a student gives me their accommodation letter late in the semester; do I still have to implement accommodations?

Accommodations are not generally retroactive, so you typically do not have to accommodate anything done before you received notice of accommodations. But accommodations should be implemented from the time notification was received and moving forward.

What should I do if I believe an accommodation fundamentally alters an essential course requirement?

Contact AAS immediately for further discussion to see if any alternative accommodations are possible.

How do I handle accommodations in courses with labs, clinicals, practicums, or field placements?

Generally, testing accommodations for labs are handled in the lab setting. Other accommodations for labs, clinicals, practicums, and field placements are handled on a case-by-case basis, involving collaboration between AAS, faculty, students, and other parties because the structure and requirements for these experiences are unique to each program.

Attendance, Deadlines, and Flexibility

How do I determine whether attendance flexibility is reasonable for my course?

If it is a performance-based course or a practical, internship setting, flexible attendance may be difficult to facilitate. Please contact AAS to collaborate in these cases.

What is the difference between short-term illness (handled by the student and instructor) and disability related attendance considerations (handled through Access & Accommodation Services)?

A short-term illness is something like the flu, cold, COVID, stomach bug, etc. Students would not register with AAS in these cases. A disability-related issue is regarding a symptom or issue related to a long-term disability for which AAS would have a record. A temporary impairment is something that substantially limits one or more major life activities for 6 months or less.

What should I do if a student misses class due to a disability related reason?

If they have a flexible attendance accommodation, honor that accommodation. If they do not, follow your general policy and encourage them to register with our office if they aren't already or to update their accommodations plan, if needed.

How do I document and communicate expectations when a student has attendance-related accommodations?

Our general rule of thumb is that flexible attendance allows a disabled student with a flexible attendance accommodation twice as many absences as the university policy would allow (about 40% of the course). Once absences exceed that limit, follow your general policy. Students should be emailing faculty when they are missing due to disability reasons as a way to track those occurrences.

Why are students given attendance consideration and deadline extensions?

Students can be given these accommodations for several reasons, including but not limited to chronic health conditions, seizure disorder, severe migraines, etc. Often, many students have concurrent diagnoses, so they are juggling more than one diagnosis, various medications to manage symptoms, symptoms that exacerbate other conditions, etc., and we consider all those variables.

How do I handle accommodations that say "extended time, as needed"?

Generally, we try to put a time limit on extended time for assignments (up to 1 day, up to 2 days, up to 3 days). In rare cases, you might see "as needed". The faculty would work directly with the student to determine what a reasonable extension looks like for a particular assignment or course.

How do I handle a student who asks for extensions beyond what their accommodations allow?

This would be done at the professors' discretion.

Testing and Exams

How do I arrange extended time or reduced distraction testing for students?

If the test is online, extended time can be done in Canvas or whichever online platform(s); the student is responsible for their own low-distraction environment. For assistance with applying extended time for online exams, faculty should contact CETL.

If the test is on paper, students can choose to take it in the classroom with or without accommodations (faculty members will work with the student to determine if accommodations can be facilitated in the classroom), or schedule to take the exam with AAS. All students wishing to take their exam in the AAS office must follow our scheduling procedures.

What is my responsibility if a student prefers to test with me instead of AAS?

If accommodations can be facilitated in the classroom, this is acceptable.

What should I do if a student's accommodation requires assistive technology during exams?

In these cases, the student would most likely test with AAS, and we will work with the student to provide any assistive technology required and/or monitor the use of said assistive technology.

How do I handle pop quizzes or in-class timed activities for students with testing accommodations?

Discuss this with AAS if needed. However, the most common suggestion is to notify the student the morning of the "pop" quiz and allow them to come in earlier or test after class. Alternative assignments that measure the same content might be necessary, as pop quizzes or timed assignments in the classroom setting are inherently inaccessible.

What if students have accommodations for testing that won't be allowed on board exams?

For any national or state test, legally, there must be an accommodations process. Even if accommodations are rarely granted, that does not mean it is impossible. **That being said, accommodations determined by the AAS office for the educational setting should be implemented as required.** Conversations should be had with students explaining that while accommodations on these exams are possible, the board's accommodations process is different, may require different levels of documentation, and all accommodations granted in school may not be granted in these cases.

Communication and Boundaries

How do I talk with a student about their accommodations without asking for medical details?

We encourage you to ask them what would make your class and material most accessible to them or something similar.

What should I do if a student discloses personal or medical information I don't need to know?

This may mean they are comfortable with you, which is a good thing! Thank them for sharing and ask them if they are registered with AAS or have talked to their access counselor about these concerns to ensure they have the support they need.

How do I encourage students to use their accommodations appropriately and proactively?

Talk to the student directly about the importance of using their resources. Also, think about how you talk about disability and accommodations in your classrooms. How we talk about disability,

accessibility, and accommodations influences how students and others think about it and whether or not they use the resources available to them.

What is the best way to communicate concerns about a student's academic performance when they have accommodations?

Talk to the student directly. If additional guidance is needed, contact AAS via email, phone, or set up a meeting for further discussion.

Accessible Course Materials

What do I need to know about captioning requirements for videos used in class?

All videos must include captions that are accurate, easy to read, and positioned so they do not obscure important on-screen content. Captions must provide an equitable viewing experience for individuals who cannot hear the audio. This requirement applies to all videos, whether they are shown during class, assigned as homework, or made available in any other setting. Captions must remain enabled whenever videos are shown during an in-person setting.

If you own or create the video content, you are responsible for ensuring it is properly captioned. The Assistive Technology and Access Coordinator, CETL, and AOS Faculty Support are available to provide guidance and training.

If you do not own the video content, you are responsible for verifying that its captions meet A-State accessibility standards. Videos with captions that do not meet these standards are considered inaccessible and may not be used. If you believe a video is essential and cannot be replaced with an accessible alternative, please contact AAS to discuss available options and determine the appropriate next steps.

Faculty Rights and Responsibilities

What are my legal responsibilities under the ADA and Section 504 as an instructor at A State?

Follow a student's accommodations plan when it is sent to you. If there are any questions or concerns about accommodations or how to facilitate them, contact AAS immediately to collaborate to meet the needs of students.

What rights do faculty have when implementing accommodations?

Instructors have the right to require official verification from AAS before providing accommodations, consult on implementation methods, and challenge accommodations that fundamentally alter their course and work with the AAS office to assess what alternatives might be possible.

What should I do if I'm unsure how to implement an accommodation correctly?

Contact AAS as soon as possible to collaborate.

How do I document my efforts to provide accommodations?

Document them in whatever way feels most appropriate to you. Email is always a safe bet when communicating with AAS or the student. Even if you have phone conversations or meetings regarding facilitating accommodations, try to follow those up with an email.

Student Support and Referrals

When should I refer a student to Access & Accommodation Services?

If they disclose a disability condition to you or if you feel they may be able to use support from AAS. They can meet with an access counselor, and we will determine if they qualify as a person with a disability.

How do I support a student who is struggling academically but does not have accommodations?

Make a referral to our office if you feel that would benefit them. Also, make referrals to other support services on campus (counseling, tutoring, academic coaching, etc.). Faculty may also submit a Pack Support, and the appropriate individuals will do an outreach to the student.

What campus resources pair well with accommodations?

Tutoring, counseling, and academic coaching all benefit students with disabilities.

Other

Why are students given permission to record, and what if I don't allow recording in my classes?

Permission to record can address various disability conditions, including but not limited to diagnoses such as ADHD, chronic pain, migraines, learning disabilities, anxiety, depression, etc. Having a blanket policy where something is not allowed under any circumstances is inherently inaccessible. Please discuss your concerns with AAS staff to determine how recording can be made feasible for all involved or other alternative accommodations that would meet the student's need in the same way that recording class lectures would meet that need.

What if I'm concerned about accommodations being abused/misused?

Contact AAS immediately to discuss your concerns and AAS staff will reach out to the student for further discussion.

Some things students are given as accommodations won't be allowed at work. How are students being prepared for the "real world" or workforce?

Legally, workplace accommodations must be granted if requested by a disabled person. While similar, the accommodations process may look different in work settings, but accommodations are granted in these cases. Conversations about navigating workplace accommodations are often a topic of discussion between students and AAS. We note that workplace accommodations are a legal

requirement. The workplace accommodations process may look different, may require different levels of documentation, and all accommodations granted in the educational environment may not be granted in the workplace setting, but accommodations are possible. Additionally, while students may need accommodations in the educational setting because different things are being measured and required of them, accommodations may not be necessary in the workplace.