



Policy and Procedures Regarding Students with Disabilities

Coyne Commitment

Coyne College is committed to providing equal opportunities in higher education to academically qualified students and prospective students with disabilities. If you have a recognized physical, learning, sensory or psychological disability or medical impairment, you can access tools and resources to help you master course content. We work towards an appreciation of students' abilities through partnerships with students, faculty and staff to create a community that values the unique talents each person brings.

Policy Objectives

1. Assist students with documentation protocol.
2. Establish appropriate accommodations with students and disseminate this information to appropriate college personnel.
3. Serve as a support source for students with disabilities regarding topics such as academic strategies and successful communication.
4. Provide assistance to college personnel as they accommodate otherwise qualified students with disabilities in the College's courses, programs and activities.
5. Maintain records on disabled students' disabilities and accommodations in a confidential manner.

Policies and Procedures

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"), individuals with disabilities are protected from discrimination and assured services and accommodations that provide equal access to the activities and programs of the College. Implementing reasonable and effective accommodations is a shared institutional and student responsibility. Students seeking reasonable and effective accommodation based on disability are required to submit an ADA Accommodation Request Form to the College Director. As corroborating documentation of disability must be obtained, students claiming a disability under ADA or Section 504 should request accommodations as soon as possible, preferably at least three (3) weeks prior to the start of classes, if a disability is known. Students who incur a disability for which an accommodation is needed during the semester should notify the institution immediately. For instructional or academic accommodations, students are encouraged to notify the faculty member directly. ADA Accommodation Request Forms are available from the College Director or online.

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Phone: (773) 577-8070
E-mail: lmuller@coynecollege.edu
Online: www.coynecollege.edu

Students can confidentially email, phone or fax the College Director or schedule an individual appointment.

Faculty are expected to work with students to identify and to provide reasonable instructional or academic accommodations, although the student is responsible for self-advocacy. In addition, the College Director is available as a resource and can assist students and faculty with accommodation issues, can recommend appropriate instructional or academic accommodations to faculty and can recommend or provide other needed reasonable accommodations.

Documentation

To establish that an individual is covered under the ADA and/or Section 504, documentation must indicate that the disability substantially limits a major life activity. In general, the less obvious the disability, the more information is required to assess a student's needs and make accommodation recommendations.

In order to be eligible for reasonable accommodations from the College, the student must provide current (within the past three years), relevant and comprehensive documentation of the disability and the disability's impact on the student's participation in a course, program or activity. Additionally, the student must complete the ADA Accommodation Request Form. The provided documentation will be reviewed by the College Director and must meet the following criteria listed below:

1. Be recent, relevant and comprehensive, and, where appropriate, contain test scores and interpretation (e.g., learning disability reports, audiograms, etc.).
2. Demonstrate a substantial impact on one or more major life activities.
3. Indicate whether the impact is current and stable or fluctuating (conditions that fluctuate over time may require more recent documentation).
4. Adequately verify the nature and extent of the disability in accordance with current professional standards and techniques.
5. Clearly substantiate the need for all of the student's requests for accommodations.
6. Be provided by a licensed clinical professional familiar with the history and functional implications of the impairments. This person should be someone other than a member of the student's family.
7. Be submitted on the official letterhead of the professional describing the disability (unless using the College's disability assessment forms).
8. Be dated and signed and include the name, title and professional credentials of the evaluator, including information about license or certification.
9. Identify treatments, medications, assistive devices/services currently prescribed or in use.

Should documentation from the student be inadequate or incomplete, the College reserves the right to require additional documentation. For instance, a previous 504 plan or Individualized Education Program (IEP) from a different institution may not meet the standards listed above, but could be used as part of a comprehensive set of documentation. The cost of providing additional documentation will be borne by the student. If it is necessary for the College to request a second professional opinion, the College Director will assist with the referral process. The College reserves the right to deny an accommodation until it receives all of the necessary documentation.

Final determination of all appropriate accommodations will be made in accordance with the mandates of Section 504 and the ADA, as well as court and Department of Education/ Office of

Civil Rights rulings related to these two laws as they apply to the College. Documentation of a disability does not guarantee accommodations and services.

Establishing Accommodations

Once the College receives all necessary documentation, the College Director will review the materials. The review of all student accommodation requests will include consideration of the following:

- Is the student who seeks accommodation otherwise qualified to participate in the course, program or activity?
- Did the student request accommodation from the College and provide documentation as outlined above?
- Is the requested accommodation relevant and reasonable to the documented disability?
- Will the requested accommodation fundamentally alter the affected course, program or activity?

Next, the College Director's office will identify the reasonable accommodations available in a conference with the student and, when appropriate, in collaboration with faculty members. During that meeting, the student and the College Director's office will establish the student's Accommodation Plan and complete the Accommodation Plan form. The Accommodation Plan may, however, be revised at any point during the student's course of study at the College. Necessary changes might be related to the nature of the student's disability and/or as a result of additional professional documentation that may be provided. It is the student's responsibility to keep the College Director informed of any additional information and/or changes relating to his/her disability that will impact the current Accommodation Plan.

Communicating about Accommodations

Once the Accommodation Plan has been established, the student is responsible for delivering the Accommodation Plan and the Accommodation Plan form to the College personnel. All students are encouraged to maintain open communication with course instructors, advisors and administrators facilitating programs regarding accommodations in conjunction with the accommodations letter and the Accommodation Plan form. Such dialogue might include exchanging contact information in the case of a necessary absence, details about how technology might enhance the learning experience, which side of the room it is best for the student to sit in, etc. This dialogue should always be within the student's comfort range. Students with disabilities are also encouraged to review the rights and responsibilities section of this document.

Students experiencing difficulty in establishing accommodations and/or receiving them once the Accommodation Plan has been established and letters distributed should contact the College Director. The College Director will work with the student and any appropriate party to seek resolution to such a situation. Students may utilize the Appeal Procedure outlined in this document.

Appealing an Accommodation Request

Otherwise qualified students who request accommodation, according to the College's published procedures for a documented disability, and who believe that reasonable accommodation(s) has

been denied, may submit a written appeal of the denial to the President. The written appeal must be submitted within ten (10) school days of the alleged denial and include the following:

- the date the accommodation(s) request in question was made
- identification of the student's disability
- the accommodation(s) sought
- copies of the Accommodation Request and Accommodation Plan forms verifying the current accommodation plan.

The student also must attach any additional documentation regarding the disability that the President should review. Within ten (10) school days of his/her review, the College Director will inform the student as to whether the proper accommodation procedures have been followed. During the course of the appeal process, and if all preliminary procedures to request accommodations have been followed by the student, the College will continue to provide the reasonable accommodation(s) offered at the accommodation conference with the student and outlined in the Accommodation Plan form. The decision of the President will be considered final. The student's filing of an appeal according to this procedure does not mean that the student gives up his/her right to pursue other appeal processes through outside regulatory agencies.

Health and Safety Concerns

In certain cases, the College may review whether a student's disability, behavior and/or conduct poses a direct threat to the student or others limiting or prohibiting their ability to participate in a class, a course of study, or attendance at the College. A "direct threat" means a significant risk to the health or safety to self or others that cannot be eliminated by a modification of policies, practices or procedures, or by the provision of auxiliary aids or services. Direct threat determinations are based on an individualized assessment relying on objective evidence and/or current reasonable medical judgment(s), taking into account the nature, duration and severity of the risk and the likelihood, imminence, and nature of potential harm and whether reasonable modification of any relevant College policies, practices, or procedures will sufficiently mitigate the risk posed by the student without fundamentally altering the nature of the service, program, or activity. Non-emergency direct threat determinations will be made using an interdisciplinary team comprised of multiple professionals, which might include some combination of mental health service providers, police or other professionals, as appropriate, in addition to College personnel.

If the College determines that a student poses a direct threat to himself or others, that determination will be communicated to the student in writing identifying the basis for the decision and the effect of that decision on the student's ability to participate in a class, a course of study, or attendance at the College. The student shall be entitled to appeal the College's determination to the President of the College. The written appeal must be submitted within ten (10) school days of the College's written determination. The appeal must include:

- identification of the student's disability
- the reasons for objecting to the College's determination
- any supplemental information for consideration regarding the College's determination
- copies of any Accommodation Request and Accommodation Plan forms verifying the current accommodation plan.

The student also must attach any additional documentation regarding the disability that the President should review or requested by the President. The student's filing of an appeal according to this procedure does not mean that the student gives up his/her right to pursue other appeal processes through outside regulatory agencies.

Within fifteen (15) school days of his/her review, the College President will inform the student as to his/her decision regarding the College's determination. During the course of the appeal process, the College's initial determination shall continue in effect. Final determination of all direct threat assessments will be made in accordance with the mandates of Section 504 and the ADA, as well as court and Department of Education/ Office of Civil Rights rulings related to these two laws as they may apply to the College.

Nothing herein shall be construed to preclude the College from taking interim steps to address an immediate safety concern, or from protecting and enforcing its rights.

Reinstatement

A student's withdrawal from the College will remain in effect until the student adequately demonstrates that his or her behavior no longer constitutes a direct threat of harm to self or others. To apply for reinstatement to the College, the student must submit a request to the College Director, and arrange for the submission of documentation from his or her licensed mental health provider confirming that the student no longer presents a direct threat of harm to self or others, as defined in this policy. The student must authorize verbal and written communication about his or her condition between all licensed mental health providers involved in this process and the appropriate College staff. The College Director or the College Director's designee will review this information and provide a recommendation to the President regarding the student's eligibility for reinstatement. The College Director may require the student to undergo, at the College's expense, additional psychological evaluation by a licensed mental health provider designated by the College. The results of such an evaluation shall be conveyed to the College Director for consideration. The student's eligibility for reinstatement will be determined in accordance with the College's policies and practices. The College normally will notify the student of the decision to grant or deny reinstatement within fifteen (15) days of the President's review.

If the student is approved for reinstatement to the College, any violations by the student of the College's policies and procedures must be reviewed and resolved, and all applicable academic requirements met, before the student will be permitted to re-enroll in the College.

Appealing an Application for Reinstatement

A student may appeal the denial of an application for reinstatement by submitting a written appeal to the President. The written appeal must be submitted within ten (10) school days of the denial and include the following:

- The dates of the application and denial of the request for reinstatement;
- Any support for the student's position that the student is eligible for reinstatement and should have been granted reinstatement, including submission of supporting documentation from his or her licensed mental health provider confirming that the student no longer presents a direct threat of harm to self or others, as defined in this policy.

As with the process for applying for reinstatement, the student must authorize verbal and written communication about his or her condition between all licensed mental health providers involved in this process and the appropriate College staff. In addition, the College may require the student to undergo, at the College's expense, additional psychological evaluation by a licensed mental health provider designated by the College. The results of such an evaluation shall be conveyed to the College for consideration. The College normally will notify the student of the decision to grant or deny the appeal of the denial of the application for reinstatement within fifteen (15) days of the President's review.

The student's filing of an appeal according to this procedure does not mean that the student gives up his/her right to pursue other appeal processes through outside regulatory agencies.

Rights and Responsibilities Relating to Students with Disabilities

College personnel maintain the following rights and responsibilities:

- Establish and maintain the academic and technical standards for the courses, programs and activities offered and evaluate students using those standards.
- Evaluate students on the basis of their abilities, not disabilities.
- Provide reasonable accommodations for otherwise qualified students with disabilities in courses, programs or activities offered by the College.
- Maintain the confidentiality of student records, except where permitted or required by law.
- Request students to identify a disability and request accommodation in a timely manner.
- Confirm a student's disability status by requesting and receiving current, relevant documentation to support a request for accommodation.
- Deny a request for accommodation if the student fails to provide the requested documentation or if the documentation establishes that the accommodation is not warranted.
- Determine the appropriate standards for the construction and maintenance of its facilities.
- Select the reasonable accommodations to be provided from among equally effective accommodations.
- Refuse unreasonable accommodations, service requests, and/or facility-related barrier removal requests that pose a threat to health and safety and/or fundamentally alter a course, program or activity of the College.

Otherwise qualified students with disabilities have the following rights and responsibilities:

- Meet the academic and technical standards for the courses, programs and activities in which they wish to participate.
- Provide timely notice to the College Director when an accommodation is needed.
- Provide documentation of one's disability and the impact of the disability on the student's participation in a course, program or activity.
- Follow all required College procedures to obtain reasonable accommodations from the College.
- Participate fully or equally in the College's courses, programs or activities with reasonable accommodations.
- Expect confidentiality with regard to records, including those related to disability.

Upon enrollment, Coyne College expects that each student will continue to demonstrate that they are otherwise qualified by meeting or exceeding the academic standards set by the College whether or not accommodations have been requested and/or utilized.

Accommodations and Services Provided by Coyne College:

Depending on the nature of the disability, students at Coyne College have access to tools and resources designed to be supportive and promote the development of self-advocacy skills while maintaining fundamental academic integrity and standards. These services include:

Academic Accommodations, such as preferential seating in class, taped lectures, volunteer note-takers, textbooks in alternative formats, enlargements of syllabus and class handouts.

Test/Quiz Accommodations, such as readers, scribes, extended time.

Adaptive Technology, Dragon Naturally Speaking is typical of the kind of technology that Coyne may elect to make available.

Confidentiality and Disclosure of Disability Information

Disability-related information provided to the College Director is considered an **educational record**; therefore it falls under the protection of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA permits the College to share information about the impact of a disability and accommodation eligibility with other College officials who have a legitimate educational interest. A College official includes, but is not limited to, faculty and instructional staff, academic deans and advisors, police and security, and counseling staff. Legitimate educational interest means the College official needs to review an educational record or receive educational record information in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities. Sharing this information does not require student consent under FERPA.

Disclosure of educational record information to a College official having a legitimate educational interest does not, however, constitute authorization for that person to transmit, share, or disclose any or all of that information to a third party who does not have a legitimate educational interest.

Disability information is generally housed in the office of the College Director or his/her designee, unless the student also provides it to another campus department.



ADA Accommodation Request Form

Coyne College is committed to fully complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and to providing reasonable accommodations to assist students to be in a position to achieve their academic and career goals. Students seeking reasonable accommodation based on disability are required to submit an ADA Accommodation Request Form to the Director of the College. As corroborating documentation of disability must be obtained, students claiming a disability under the ADA or Section 504 should request accommodations as soon as possible, preferably at least three (3) weeks prior to the start of classes, if a disability is known.

Student Name: _____ **Student ID#** _____

Phone # _____

I am requesting accommodation for the following limitation(s):

I am requesting the following types of accommodation:

I am requesting accommodation for the following time period:

From: _____ **To:** _____

Important: Submit with this Request documentation, which is original, signed, and on official letterhead from a certifying professional in the area of the student's disability. Documentation must address: a) identification of the specific disability and functional limitation(s); b) prognosis (permanent or temporary and, if temporary, the anticipated duration); and c) recommendations for specific accommodations.

Requests will not be considered without proper corroborating documentation.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____