



PRAIRIE COLLEGE

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

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Approval Date:	Administrator: Academic Dean
Last Revision Date:	
Effective Date:	Related Procedures:

Purpose:

- 1.1 Prairie College is dedicated to providing an accessible learning environment for students with disabilities by providing appropriate academic accommodations in accordance with human rights and privacy laws in order to foster academic growth, independence, self-awareness and self-advocacy for all students.
- 1.2 This policy outlines the roles and responsibilities of the students, faculty and staff of Prairie College with regards to the implementation of academic accommodations for students with identified disabilities while maintaining the integrity of the institution's high academic standards, ensuring fairness for all students.

Scope:

- 2.1 This policy applies to situations where students are seeking academic accommodations at Prairie College.
- 2.2 This policy encompasses the responsibility of the institution, including faculty and staff, to provide an inclusive learning environment based on declaration and verification of a disability by the student. It also encompasses the responsibilities of the student both to the process and to the implementation of academic accommodations.

Policy:

3.1 Prairie College is committed to the principles of equity and inclusion. Members of the Prairie community are required to comply with federal and provincial legislation regarding the accommodation of persons with disabilities outlined in this policy.

3.2 Students with disabilities are responsible for identifying all needs for academic accommodation to the Director of the Student Success Office. This begins at the admissions stage and continues throughout their enrollment at Prairie College.

3.3 Responsibilities of the Student Success Office:

3.3.1 Respond to student requests for accommodations by reviewing supporting disability documentation provided by the student.

3.3.2 Develop, implement and review reasonable academic accommodations based on supplied supporting documentation.

3.3.3 Maintain student confidentiality and support their right to privacy in a discrimination-free environment.

3.3.4 Collaborate with instructors and other stakeholders to implement academic accommodations. This includes, but is not limited to, providing a testing environment that adheres to official accommodation requirements.

3.3.5 Assist, upon request, registered students in applying for scholarships and disability grants.

3.3.6 Partner with instructors on implementing practices to reduce barriers in the learning environment.

3.3.7 Publish procedures for specific accommodations in accordance with this policy.

3.4 Responsibilities of Faculty

3.4.1 Refer to the Letter of Accommodation in order to assist with the implementation of accommodations as requested by the student.

3.4.2 Follow procedures for implementation of academic accommodations as required.

3.4.3 Work with the Student Success Office to develop solutions in cases where the recommended academic accommodation could compromise the capacity of the student to acquire the essential competencies required for successful completion of a course or program.

3.4.4 Ensure student confidentiality and support their right to privacy and dignity.

3.5 Responsibilities of Students

3.5.1 Submit all required documentation in support of the request for accommodation.

3.5.2 Meet with the Director of Student Success to design accommodations. Provide adequate time for supports and services to be coordinated. Failure to make a request and supply required documentation in a timely manner will delay the approval and/or implementation of the requested accommodation.

3.5.3 Abide by procedures for accommodations and meet essential requirements of their course/program.

3.5.4 Understand that requests are subject to the limits of undue hardship and that accommodations do not need to be perfect or instant.

3.5.5 In the case of the student having received a loan, bursary or grant where the Student Success Office is responsible for coordinating and managing specific services on behalf of the student, the student is responsible for providing specified disability funds to Prairie College. Failure to provide specified disability funds may result in the student being invoiced for applicable charges.

3.6 Appeals and Exceptions to this policy

3.6.1 Exceptions to the guiding principles in this policy must be documented and formally approved by the Academic Dean.

3.6.2 Students who wish to appeal matters related to this policy must follow the regulations set out in the *Academic Guide*.

Definitions:

4.1 “Academic Accommodation” is the process of modifying the delivery of services, up to the point of undue hardship, so that those services are accessible to students with an identified disability. Accommodation does not require Prairie College to lower its academic standards or rigor. The student with a disability, petitioning for accommodation, is required to develop and acquire the same skills and competencies expected of all students.

4.2 “Disability” refers to a physical or mental condition, as delineated in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* (the *Act*). According to the Act, physical disability means “any degree

of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness.” This includes but is not limited to hearing loss, vision loss, mobility restrictions, seizures, muscular dystrophy and cerebral palsy. A mental disability as defined by the *Act* is “any mental, developmental and/or learning disorder” which includes but is not limited to psychological/psychiatric disabilities, acute mental distress and neurological disorders. Disabilities may be temporary or permanent, as per the *Duty to Accommodate Students with Disabilities in Post-Secondary Educational Institutions (2021)*.

4.3 “Documentation” refers to a report signed and dated by a qualified medical professional or registered psychologist. It must be current (within the last five years) and include a disclosure of ongoing treatment and how the disability and/or treatment impacts the student’s functioning in a post-secondary academic setting. A diagnosis is not required in order to receive accommodations if sufficient information is provided along with confirmation of ongoing treatment. However, students wishing to access provincial grant funding will be required to submit documentation with a diagnosis as per Student Aid guidelines.

4.4 “Essential Requirements” are reasonable and justifiable elements and/or skills of a program that may limit entry to or completion of a program or course. These components are essential to maintaining the academic integrity of a program.

4.5 “Letter of Accommodation” is the official response by the Student Success Office to indicate approved academic accommodations based on the documentation provided. This is made available to students, instructors and staff at the onset of implementation. It may be modified or updated by the Student Success Director. The student is responsible for requesting the implementation of any approved academic accommodation.

4.6 “Reasonable Accommodation” describes the nature of an accommodation to a standard that overcomes a discriminatory effect to the point of undue hardship. Prairie College is not required to choose the most expensive or comprehensive accommodation, only that which is reasonable within its context.

4.7 “Undue Hardship” under both provincial and federal legislation is defined as a situation where students are unable to meet the requirements for entering or completing a program; where the financial costs would undermine the viability of the institution; significant interference with the rights of other students; health and safety concerns for students being accommodated, other students or service providers.

Procedures related to acquiring and implementing of academic accommodations.

5.1 Student completes a Google Form located on the Student Development page in their Learning Management System or on the Prairie College website requesting accommodations.

5.2 Meet with the Director of Student Success, providing documentation of a learning or physical disability from a medical professional dated within the last five years. Together with the Director, they will design reasonable accommodations tailored to the request.

5.3 Accommodations and documentation will be recorded in the individual's student records. Faculty will have access to the Letter of Accommodation allowing them to facilitate accommodations in the classroom.

5.4 Students advocate for themselves by speaking with each faculty member regarding implementation of accommodations for each course.

5.5 Student Success Office holds documentation in confidentiality. Only the student may divulge diagnosis. The Office will continue to support the implementation of the accommodations through testing arrangements and collaborating with faculty.

5.6 Accommodations will be reviewed and adjusted upon student request to the point of undue hardship.

Policy Appendices or Procedures

[Accommodations Request Form](#)

Related Policies and Procedures:

Related Legislation:

[Alberta Human Rights Act](#)

[Duty to Accommodate Students with Disabilities in Post-Secondary Educational Institutions](#)

References: