



# **Counseling** **Services**

**Policies & Procedures Manual**

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**Lawson State Community College**

**2025**





# **Counseling and Assessment Services Policies and Procedures Manual**

**2023 - 2025**

**“Devoted to Academic, Personal, and Career Success”**



## **Preface**

Counseling and assessment are an integral part of the college's total educational program, and it is imperative that students, faculty, staff, and others in the college community are aware of and understand the counseling unit policies and procedures. The purpose of this manual is to provide relevant information about Lawson State Community College's Counseling and Assessment unit. The Counseling and Assessment unit, under the umbrella of the Student Services Division, provides services that are central to the overall mission of the college. These services help students to achieve their educational goals, acquire problem-solving skills, increase and enhance their capacity for satisfying interpersonal relationships, define their career goals, and make full use of their potential for continued growth beyond their educational experience. These services are directed towards enhancing the skills which students bring with them to the college and encouraging the development of skills which will make students more successful both at Lawson State Community College and beyond.

This manual is designed to specifically assist students, faculty, and staff with obtaining services. These services are imperative to the success of students, such as crisis intervention, new student orientation, and testing. In addition, counselors facilitate a variety of educational and support-based experiences, including workshops, seminars, classes, and groups designed to address issues relevant to students and the broader community.

It is the policy of the Alabama Community College System, its Board of Trustees, and Lawson State Community College (the College), a postsecondary institution under its control, that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, creed, national origin or age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program, activity or employment. The College does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX and its regulations, including admission and employment.



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## MISSION STATEMENT

*Approved on March 2025 by the Alabama Community College System Board of Trustees*

With a focus on student success, Lawson State Community College provides affordable and quality educational opportunities, promotes economic growth, and enhances the quality of life in the communities it serves. Through innovative instruction and lifelong learning opportunities, the College prepares students for college transfer, employment, and career advancement.

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## Core Values:

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*Approved in 2022 by the Expanded Cabinet, Faculty, and Staff*

### **CV#1: Student Success**

Recruitment, Persistence, Graduation, Career Development

### **CV#2: Excellence**

Leadership, Instruction, Processes, Customer Service

### **CV#3: Innovation**

Technologies, Creativity, Curriculum, Community Development, Partnerships

### **CV#4: Integrity**

Stewardship, Accountability, Ethical Practices

### **CV#5: Engagement**

Caring Campus, Student Support, Student Focused





## INSTITUTIONAL GOALS 2023 - 2025

### **Institutional Goals**

*Approved in 2022 by the Expanded Cabinet, Faculty, and Staff*

#### **Goal 1.0:**

Develop a student-centered instructional program that is focused on heightened engagement and innovative technologies, using varied modes of delivery.

#### **Goal 2.0:**

Develop and implement a student-centered, comprehensive and strategic approach to student success, enrollment, engagement, persistence, and completion.

#### **Goal 3.0:**

Optimize the use of innovative technologies to enhance processes, implement training, and refine services collegewide.

#### **Goal 4.0:**

Ensure that the institution has a sound financial base and demonstrates financial stability.

#### **Goal 5.0:**

Provide optimal facilities that are safe and support educational programs and administrative services.

#### **Goal 6.0:**

Align, create and provide economic and workforce development opportunities based on business and industry needs and emerging trends.

#### **Goal 7.0:**

Engage and build community partnerships while promoting college initiatives, programs and services.



### **Counseling and Assessment Services Staff**

Lesley D. Harper – Student Services Specialist: Counseling/Advising Testing & Disabilities Services:  
B.S., Stillman College, M.S., Alabama State University, Ed.D., Tennessee State University

[Lharper@lawsonstate.edu](mailto:Lharper@lawsonstate.edu)

Student Services- Building A, Room 184 (Bessemer Campus)  
205-929-6383

Janine McCoy Jones– Student Success Coordinator: Counseling/Advising, Testing, & Disabilities Services:  
B.A., University of Alabama; M.P.A., University of Alabama – Birmingham

[jjones@lawsonstate.edu](mailto:jjones@lawsonstate.edu)

Academic Success Center, Room 220 (Birmingham Campus)  
205-929-6396

Leda Porter-Student Services Specialist: Counseling/Advising, Testing & Disabilities Services: B.A., Mississippi Valley  
State University; M.S.C.E., University of West Alabama

[lporter@lawsonstate.edu](mailto:lporter@lawsonstate.edu)

Student Services Building A, Room 183 (Bessemer Campus)  
205-929-3419

### **Additional Personnel Providing Counseling and Advising Services**

The following individuals also provide counseling and advising to students affiliated with other student support  
areas:

Iris Adams- Student Persistence Counselor: B.S., Mississippi University for Women, M.S., University of West  
Alabama

LaSharron Harris – Director of Student Support Services (Bessemer Campus) B.S., University of Montevallo; M.A.,  
University of Alabama – Birmingham

Nkenge Hudson – Support Counselor (Birmingham Campus) B.S., Alabama State University, M.ED., Alabama  
State University.

**Staff Responsibilities:** Counseling services professionals are responsible for providing educational, personal, and  
some academic counseling services to students. Direct services include, but are not limited to, case management  
activities, crisis intervention, and assessment. In addition, other responsibilities include facilitating new student  
orientation courses, preparing and presenting informational seminars, giving lectures and workshops to groups on  
and off campus, serving on committees, and participating in professional development activities.



## ***Counseling and Assessment Services*** **Policies and Procedures**

### **I. Mission, Services, and Student Eligibility**

#### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Counseling and Assessment department is to advance the educational mission of the college by fostering the personal, career, and educational development of students to promote their success and persistence in the college community

#### **Overview and Nature of Services Provided**

1. Crisis intervention
2. Career exploration and decision making
3. Student persistence
4. New Student Orientation, teaching, and training
5. Assessment and testing
6. Community outreach
7. Professional and community service
8. Disability Services
9. Consultation with faculty, staff, administrators, students, and others

#### Crisis Intervention

Assistance and consultation is available through the Counseling and Assessment department in the event of a crisis situation during regular college hours.

#### Counseling

Student Services Specialists are available for and provide counseling and assessment sessions for students who wish to discuss personal concerns that may interfere with their emotional well-being and their ability to achieve their educational and personal goals. Some of the concerns which might lead a student to seek counseling are decisions about choosing a major and a career, anxiety, stress, depression, personal relationship problems or general difficulties adjusting to college life.

#### Career Exploration and Decision-Making

Students who wish to explore career and educational choices and goals can benefit from career counseling and assessment. The counseling process assists them in developing self-evaluation techniques that can be used to select majors or careers and to explore and fine tune their goals. Interest inventories and other assessment measures are often used to increase self-awareness and assist the student in making informed decisions. A fee may be charged for certain assessment materials and testing. In addition to individual career counseling, counselors, in collaboration with the Career and College Transfer Services Coordinator, may offer job readiness training, workshops, and seminars on career decision-making and job search skills. The Career and College Transfer Services Coordinator may also be utilized to provide in-depth career-related services.

#### Student Persistence

In addition to assisting with recruitment by making specific services available to targeted groups of prospective students, Student Services Specialists specifically work to enhance retention and persistence efforts for the college



by identifying the needs of students and working with other faculty, staff, and external entities to meet those needs so that success in college can become a reality. A variety of services are provided to the entire student population for retention purposes. Specific persistence and retention efforts are conducted through the SPACE (Student Persistence through Advising, Collaboration and Student Engagement) Center through the Student Persistence Counselor. The SPACE Center works in collaboration with the Freshman Academy and the Center for Teaching Excellence and Learning (CTEL) in providing support for Freshman Academy (ORI 101) and strives to engage students in the learning process and equip students with the knowledge, skills, and resources needed for success. The purpose of the SPACE Center is to combine academic and nonacademic support services and to proactively assist students in utilizing these services.

#### Freshman Academy (ORI 101)

Student Services Specialists are involved in teaching Freshman Academy Courses (ORI 101) each term. The Freshman Academy is designed to equip students during their first year of college experience with critical thinking, communication, technology, social skills, time management, study skills, and leadership skills. Student Services Specialists assist new students in their transition to the institution, expose them to the broad educational opportunities of the institution, and equip them with skills and resources to be successful in and out of the classroom.

#### Assessment/Testing

Students seeking admission to Lawson State Community College typically take the ACCUPLACER Placement Test. Specific guidelines regarding testing requirements are published and available through various offices in the Student Services Division. Students must meet defined criteria in order to be placed in regular college courses. Consequently, prospective students are encouraged to study and prepare for the exam before actually attempting to take it.

Who May Take the Test: All new students who have not taken the ACT / SAT, students who do not have the recommended High School G.P.A. or minimum "C" High school grade in the subjects of English and Math, or transfer students who do not transfer in credits for English Composition or Math 100 or higher with a "C" or better are required to take the placement exam before registering for classes.

Questions about transfer evaluations should be directed to the Admissions Office. Prospective students who have an associate degree or higher are not required to take the placement exam.

POLICY NAME:	<b>800.00: Nondiscrimination</b>
EFFECTIVE:	August 1, 2024
SUPERSEDES:	May 10, 2017
SOURCE:	<i>Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1972 and 1991; Title VI; Title VII; Equal Opportunity Act of 1972; Title VII Education Amendments of 1972; Title IX (P. L., 92-318) 45 CFR, Parts 81, 86 (Federal Register, June 4, 1975, August 1 1, 1975); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Federal Register, May 4, 1997); Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978; Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (GAAA); ACT #2015-125</i>
CROSS REFERENCE:	

No student shall be discriminated against on the basis of any impermissible criterion or characteristic, including, but not limited to, race, color, national origin, religion, marital status, disability, gender, age or any other protected class as defined by federal and state law. Institutions must publish their policies regarding nondiscrimination. Each



College shall adopt a policy stating that the College does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX, including in admission and employment.

Special Accommodations: Students who have a documented disability and need special accommodations should contact Lesley D. Harper or Leda Porter, (Disabilities) Student Services Specialists (Bessemer Campus), at (205) 929-3419 or Janine McCoy Jones, (Disabilities Services) Student Success Coordinator (Birmingham Campus), at (205) 929-6396.

Where to Test: Birmingham Campus, Academic Success Center, Room 220: Bessemer Campus Student Services, Building A, Room 182

What to Bring: You must bring a photo I.D.

Re-Testing: Students may retest once for a fee of \$11.00. Students who place in the College's Support courses are advised to register for those courses and consult with the College Support education faculty for retest recommendations.

Test Format: The placement test, ACCUPLACER, is administered on a computer at the testing site. The test items themselves were developed by COLLEGE BOARD with the help of college professors and are designed to help determine the initial English, reading, and mathematics courses most appropriate for students. The ACCUPLACER placement exam is not timed and consists of three areas: writing, reading, and math. Student Services Specialists provide immediate interpretation of test scores for academic course placement.

#### Professional and Community Outreach

Student Services Specialists are available to provide consultation services and educational programs to faculty, staff, and community individuals on a variety of topics such as career decision-making, stress management, anxiety, depression, eating disorders, parenting skills, assertive communication, and self-esteem. Individuals from the community who need services must contact the One-Stop Center to arrange an appointment and request services. In accordance with the mission of the college, Student Services Specialists provide professional and personal enrichment activities and referrals to the community. Student Services Specialists serve on boards/committees, conduct/facilitate seminars and workshops, and host a number of events for the community.

#### Disability Services

Lawson State Community College is committed to making its programs and services accessible to qualified students with disabilities. Student Success Coordinator /Student Specialist screens disability documentation, determines needed accommodations, communicates with faculty and/or staff regarding students' needs, refers students to other available campus and/or community resources, and disseminates information regarding federal requirements and college policies regarding ADA issues.

#### Consultation with faculty, staff, administrators, students, and others

The Student Success Coordinator will consult with faculty, staff, and administrators on an as-needed basis.

### **Student Eligibility**

1. Eligibility for counseling services is based on a student's enrollment status, the needs of the student, and the



resources available. All currently enrolled students are eligible to receive services through the Counseling and Assessment department. Former students are eligible for some specific services. Former students needing additional career services and job placement must contact the Career and College Transfer Services Coordinator.

2. The Counseling and Assessment department emphasizes a brief therapy model utilizing focused interventions. In most cases involving currently enrolled students, a referral will come from a faculty or staff member. A Student Success Coordinator or Student Services Specialist will assess the student's needs and determine the best approach to fill that need. Possible options include individual counseling, group counseling, workshops, stress management, referral, or some combination of services.
3. Any individual who shows intent to attend Lawson State Community College by having applied and received tentative acceptance is eligible for pre-admission counseling. Student Services Specialists assist the Admissions Office personnel with pre-admission counseling related to career and major choice as well as initial educational advising.

**Services not provided by the Counseling and Assessment department include the following:**

1. As a general rule, counselors do not become involved in administrative proceedings by in-person testimony before committees or courts of law. Students needing such services should seek an appropriate professional.
2. Student Services Specialists or Student Success Coordinator are not available to treat serious or chronic psychiatric disorders. Individuals requiring or requesting such treatment will be referred to the appropriate professionals for such services. The cost of these services will be the responsibility of the student.
3. If a student has a pattern of failing to attend scheduled appointments, the counselor may choose to discontinue providing services to that student. However, the student may be reassigned to another counselor who will attempt to serve that student.
4. The role of the counselor is one of advocacy by preparation rather than by representation. Students are empowered through counseling and assessment services to represent themselves or select the appropriate professional for the situation.
5. If there is a dispute or question regarding the counseling or treatment of a student receiving services, the case must be reported to the Dean of Students.

**Student Responsibilities**

It is the student's responsibility to act on all referrals, to advocate for him/herself, and to seek services when needed. The student is responsible for acting on all academic plans and completing requested assignments and tasks. It is the student's responsibility to report any illegal, immoral, or unethical behavior of counselors, staff, faculty, administrators, or other students. It is the student's responsibility to read and follow the college's policies and procedures as noted in the Student Catalog.

## **II. Confidentiality, Procedures, and Policies**

### **Confidentiality Statement**

Counselors adhere to the legal standards and ethical codes of the State of Alabama. This means that communications between counselors and students are confidential, with the following exceptions: (1) With the written consent of the student or, in the case of the student's death or mental incapacity, with the written consent of the student's personal representative or guardian; (2) That the counselor need not treat as confidential a communication, otherwise confidential, that reveals a threat or imminent harm to the client or another person. Student Services Specialists and



the Student Success Coordinator will adhere to all exceptions regarding confidentiality as approved by the State Counseling Association. Both the identity of students and information about them are confidential.

## **Overview of Procedures**

1. Procedures for Disability Services
2. Procedures for Pre-Admission Counseling
3. Procedures for Testing Services
4. Procedures for Advising
5. Procedures for New Student Registration
6. Procedures for New Student Orientation
7. Procedures for Student Referrals
8. Procedures for Scheduling Appointments with Counselors
9. Procedures for Consultation

### Procedures for Disability Services

Lawson State Community College is committed to providing a quality environment to support and assist its students during the educational process. Counseling and other special assistance is available to students with disabilities, with emphasis on the unique needs of the student and assurance of compliance with federal laws.

- Contact a Student Services Specialist or Student Success Coordinator and provide appropriate documentation of the disability
- Note that registration for classes is different from registration for disability services
- Submit documentation of the disability to a Student Services Specialist or Student Success Coordinator, not to the Admissions Office
- Request a Reasonable Accommodation Letter from a Student Services Specialist or Student Success Coordinator.

### Procedures for Pre-Admission Counseling

Eligibility for admission to Lawson State Community College, prospective students must meet certain criteria. Student Services Specialists or Student Success Coordinator are available to provide pre-admission counseling according to guidelines and policies established by the Admissions Office.

- Contact the Admissions Office by phone or in writing
- Request a conference with one of the counselors
- Student Services Specialists or Student Success Coordinator will provide advisement and counseling for educational, testing, career goals, and choice of major issues.

### Procedures for Testing Service

Each college in the Alabama College System requires a comprehensive assessment of students upon admission to the college and prior to enrollment in associate degree, diploma, or certificate programs.

- Contact the Counseling and Assessment department to schedule a test date
- Request information regarding what is needed to take the test
- Bring a photo ID to the testing site
- Complete examination process



- Request information regarding test results and additional steps

#### Procedures for Academic Advising for First-time Students and Undecided Majors

The primary purpose of academic advising is to support students in their pursuit of meaningful educational programs that will assist them in fulfilling career and personal goals. The Counseling and Assessment department provides counseling and advising services for prospective students, first-time students, and undecided students. Departmental advisors are available to provide advising to students once the student has selected a major program of study.

- New students must contact a counselor for initial educational or academic advising
- Returning students must contact a departmental advisor
- The Student Services Specialists or Student Success Coordinator /advisor will assist undecided students with identifying educational and career goals
- The Student Services Specialists or Student Success Coordinator /advisor will familiarize the student with certificate or degree requirements
- The Student Services Specialists or Student Success Coordinator /advisor will assist students with appropriate course selections
- The Student Services Specialists or Student Success Coordinator /advisor will review and evaluate students' current and previous academic records for required prerequisites
- The Student Services Specialists or Student Success Coordinator /advisor will inform students of registration procedures
- The Student Services Specialists or Student Success Coordinator /advisor will monitor students' academic progression

#### Procedures for New Student Registration

Registration is held each semester according to scheduled dates and procedures published in the semester class schedule. It is the responsibility of the student to register for classes each semester. Counselors are available to assist new and undecided students with the registration process. New students should follow the following procedures:

- Contact a Student Services Specialist or Student Success Coordinator for advisement regarding the testing process
- Contact a Student Services Specialist or Student Success Coordinator for ACCUPLACER placement scores, if applicable
- Select appropriate courses and submit to a Student Services Specialist or Student Success Coordinator for review (If approved, they will enter the schedule into the computer system.)
- Continue to the Office of Student Financial Services for financial aid information and go to the College Cashier to pay tuition and fees. Students who are not receiving financial aid may proceed directly to the Cashier's office.
- Complete registration by getting a student ID and parking decal (Students must have a copy of his / her receipt before obtaining an ID and decal.)

#### Procedures for New Student Orientation

The New Student Orientation program is designed to provide new students with information regarding the services available at the college as well as the physical environment of the campus and the college community.

- Contact the Admissions office for information regarding those who might be exempt from New Student Orientation



- Enroll in the ORI 101 course (Freshman Academy) during the registration process
- Attend all class sessions

#### Procedures for Student Referrals

Referral forms are available to assist faculty and staff with referring a student to Counseling and Assessment for assistance or support. The referral form should give the student information needed to locate the counselor and access services. The referral form should also serve as documentation that the referral was made.

- Complete the student referral form located on the shared directory in the “Forms” folder or secure a hard copy from the Counseling and Assessment department.
- Give the student a copy and forward a copy via e-mail or campus mail to a counselor.
- Contact Counseling and Assessment for follow-up information regarding the student.

#### Procedures for Scheduling Appointments with Counselors

Student Services Specialists or Student Success Coordinator are available to counsel, assess, and advise students during regular college hours. Counselors are also available on certain evenings to assist night students.

- Contact a Student Services Specialist or Student Success Coordinator
- Request a conference or advising session (The counselor will provide available dates and times.)
- Select a date and time that is convenient for a meeting and confirm the appointment.

#### Procedures for Consultation

Counselors are committed to providing resources to the entire college and the community it serves. Consultation regarding counseling issues, situations, and services are just some of the ways that counselors foster relationships with others both internally and externally. To request the services of a counselor, an individual should follow the procedures below:

- Contact a Student Services Specialist or Student Success Coordinator via phone or email or contact the One-Stop Center to request services
- Complete a written request for services or college referral form
- Submit the form to the Counseling and Assessment department

### **III. Record Keeping**

POLICY NAME:	<b>808.01: Student Records</b>
EFFECTIVE:	May 10, 2017
SUPERSEDES:	
SOURCE:	<i>20 U.S.C. 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99; ACT #2015-125</i>
CROSS REFERENCE:	

Each college must protect the security, confidentiality, and integrity of its student records and comply with the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA), known as the Buckley Amendment.

#### **General Guidelines**

A file is maintained in the Counseling and Assessment department for each student receiving Disability Services or



in-depth counseling services. Files are accessible only to counseling staff and the Dean of Students unless the student makes a request in writing for a release of information. Files are retained for at least years (5) years, after which they are destroyed.

## **Overview of Record-Keeping and Procedures**

1. Content of Files
2. Records Maintenance and Retention
3. Procedure for Responding to Request for Student Records
4. Procedure for Disability Services Records

### Content of Files

Student files contain records documenting guidance provided to students by the Counseling and Assessment staff. These records may include information that would help assess the student's needs or may include other documentation such as assessment results, guidance notes, referral forms, and/or directives given to the student.

- Each file contains a copy of the student's referral form, test scores if available, a copy of the student's transcript and a contact log with case notes. Applicable consent and information release forms are also in the student's files.
- Files are identified and developed with a label with the student's name and student number on it.
- Each record has a referral form completed with updated demographic information and identifies the counselor assigned to the student
- Each referral form is signed by the student, indicating the student's consent and acknowledgement that he/she understand the limits of confidentiality
- Case notes and other information regarding referrals and services rendered are in the files

### Records Maintenance and Retention

Counseling and Assessment records are temporary records according to the Alabama College System. Institutional practice records are retained for 5 years after the student's last date of attendance.

- Each student's file will remain with the counselor who is working with the student in secure storage within the counselor's office throughout the fiscal year. If the student is referred to another counselor within the Counseling and Assessment department, the file will go to the new counselor and the new counselor's name will be added to the file.
- A file will be kept on every individual and group receiving disability or in-depth counseling services. Notes kept on each student or on a group's progress will be included in the file.
- At the end of each fiscal year, files will be reviewed and stored until the student returns or time for permanent storing/destruction of the files.
- Student files are destroyed after being held in inactive storage for a period of five (5) years.

### Procedure for Responding to Request for Student Records

Student Services Specialists or Student Success Coordinator will follow the procedures implemented by the Records Office for handling a student's request to review his/her records. Please see the Student Records Policies and Procedures Manual for more information.

### Procedure for Disability Services Records

Records regarding Disabilities will be maintained in accordance with the policies of the Alabama Community College System.



Disabled Students Files (Americans with Disabilities Act Files). Records documenting a student's request for Accommodation as well as the college's response to their requests, are temporary records. They are retained for five (5) years after the student's last day of attendance. Please review the ***Guide to Disability Services***.

## **IV. Assessment Services**

### **ACCUPLACER Placement Testing**

Lawson State Community College requires all new students to undergo a comprehensive assessment in Math, and English prior to enrollment in classes unless appropriate exemptions are on file in the student's admission file (as defined by college policy). Failure to have appropriate exemptions on file will result in required testing for appropriate placement into English and/or Math courses with a support Lab. Placement test exemptions are authorized after the following conditions are met:

- Students who have taken the ACT or SAT will be placed in English and Math courses based on their scores in each area.
- Transfer students or returning students who have already completed English Composition I and Intermediate Algebra or higher are not required to undergo placement assessment in these areas; however, placement testing for reading may be required.
- Senior citizens and other non-award seeking majors who are taking classes for vocational or personal reasons only, so long as they are enrolled in no more than four (4) semester hours per semester and their total hours completed do not exceed twelve (12) semester hours.
- Students who have already been awarded an associate degree or higher.
- Students taking courses for audit only.
- Transient students.
- Applicable High School G.P.A. (Grade Point Average) and minimum grade of "C" in English and Math

All returning students whose placement scores are older than five years must retest unless they have already completed English Composition I and Intermediate Algebra.

There is no fee for initial placement testing. However, students must have submitted an application for enrollment to the Admissions Office and must present photo identification at the time of testing. Students needing special accommodations for testing should contact the Counseling and Assessment department at the campus on which the testing is taking place.

Test dates are scheduled on a regular basis through the Testing Center at each campus.

Birmingham Campus  
(205) 929-2113  
Academic Success Center  
Room 220

Bessemer Campus  
(205) 929-3419  
Student Services Center  
Room A-182

VISIT <https://accuplacer.collegeboard.org/students> for sample ACCUPLACER placement test questions and online resources to aid in test preparation.



**ACCUPLACER Retest Policy**

It is the practice of the college to allow students one opportunity to retest. There is a charge of \$11.00 to retake the ACCUPLACER test.

**General Equivalency Diploma (G.E.D.)**

Information regarding taking the G.E.D. examination can be obtained by contacting the college's official testing center at (205) 929-6448.

**American College Test (ACT)**

The Birmingham campus of Lawson State Community College is an official center for administering the ACT. Students interested in taking the test may secure an application packet from an area high school counselor or register on-line at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org). Please contact the National ACT testing center for costs associated with taking the examination.



## FORMS



### Student Services

#### General Consent (Confidentiality)

I, \_\_\_\_\_, give my permission for the counselor to share information with appropriate and authorized personnel at Lawson State Community College. I understand this information is confidential and will only be shared for academic and support services purposes on a need-to-know basis.

---

Student Signature

Date

---

Counselor Signature/Student Services Specialist

Date





## STUDENT REFERRAL FORM

**Please complete and forward to the appropriate office.**

This form should be utilized by the LSCC staff to refer the student named below for services in the Office of Student Development, Student Support Services, Student Life/ Retention, and or Special Needs/Disability Services. Give a copy to the student to make an appointment with their counselor.

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

COURSE: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

MAJOR: \_\_\_\_\_

ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NO.: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Career Services

☐ Counselors

☐ Special Needs/Disability Services

☐ Student Development Services/Dean

☐ Student Financial Services

☐ Student Success Center/Dean

☐ Student Support Services

Reason(s) for Contact:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Attendance	<input type="checkbox"/> Note Taking Tips
<input type="checkbox"/> Basic Skills Review	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal Counseling
<input type="checkbox"/> Career Counseling	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor Academic Progress
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Assistance	<input type="checkbox"/> Disability Svcs./Spec. Needs
<input type="checkbox"/> Intervention Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Study Skills/Student Success
<input type="checkbox"/> Job Placement Assistance	<input type="checkbox"/> Tutoring

Has student been officially dropped from class? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Re-entry recommended? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Student's present grade average: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list other assistance needed and/or comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**For Office Use Only (Please check all that Apply)**

\_\_\_ Federal Assistance

\_\_\_ Veteran

\_\_\_ Rehab Services

\_\_\_ WIA

\_\_\_ SSS

\_\_\_ Other

Please describe action taken: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Initials





## STUDENT REFERRAL FORM

**Please complete and forward to the appropriate office.**

This form should be utilized by the LSCC staff to refer the student named below for services in the Office of Student Development, Student Support Services, Student Life/ Retention, and or Special Needs/Disability Services. Give a copy to the student to make an appointment with their counselor.

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

COURSE: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

MAJOR: \_\_\_\_\_

ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NO.: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Career Services

☐ Counselors

☐ Special Needs/Disability Services

☐ Student Development Services/Dean

☐ Student Financial Services

☐ Student Success Center/Dean

☐ Student Support Services

Reason(s) for Contact:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Attendance	<input type="checkbox"/> Note Taking Tips
<input type="checkbox"/> Basic Skills Review	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal Counseling
<input type="checkbox"/> Career Counseling	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor Academic Progress
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Assistance	<input type="checkbox"/> Disability Svcs./Spec. Needs
<input type="checkbox"/> Intervention Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Study Skills/Student Success
<input type="checkbox"/> Job Placement Assistance	<input type="checkbox"/> Tutoring

Has student been officially dropped from class? Yes \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

Re-entry recommended? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Student's present grade average: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list other assistance needed and/or comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff's Signature

.....  
For Office Use Only (Please check all that Apply)

\_\_ Federal Assistance

\_\_ Veteran

\_\_ Rehab Services

\_\_ WIA

\_\_ SSS

\_\_ Other

Please describe action taken: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

Date

Student's Initials





# Disability Services Guide

**Lawson State Community College**    **2025**





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## **GUIDE TO DISABILITY SERVICES**

### **Student Services**

<b>Bessemer Campus</b>	<b>Birmingham Campus</b>
<b>1100 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue S.W.</b>	<b>3060 Wilson Road</b>
<b>Bessemer, AL 35022</b>	<b>Birmingham, AL 35221</b>

**(205) 925-2515**  
**[www.lawsonstate.edu](http://www.lawsonstate.edu)**



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## Preface

The purpose of this manual is to provide relevant information about disability services and support provided through Lawson State Community College. The Counseling and Assessment unit of the Student Services division acts as the service arm of the college, in facilitating accommodations and services for students with disabilities. Through the eligibility determination procedures described herein, the counseling services strive to develop and implement special accommodations tailored to the individual student's needs and learning characteristics. Furthermore, the role of self-advocacy is fostered and supported by the college; therefore, students are encouraged to actively participate in the process of securing services. Administrators, faculty, and staff are committed to the delivery of quality services and support for students with documented disabilities. A professional counseling staff is available to provide career, personal, and psychological counseling as well as academic advising to students with disabilities. In addition, the LSCC staff is committed to providing training and technical assistance for faculty, staff, students, and the community involved in the provision of services and/ or educational experiences to college students who have disabilities. The Student Services Specialists and Student Success Coordinator are committed to working collaboratively with the faculty and staff of the college to help students minimize the effects of their disabilities through the implementation of a wide range of accommodations in the learning environment.

The policies and procedures contained in this document represent the college's effort to adhere to the federal disability laws, which guarantee access and participation of all qualified students, regardless of their individual strengths and abilities. It is our intent to provide an environment in which all students learn and realize their potential. Copies of this manual can be accessed via the Lawson State website at [www.lawsonstate.edu](http://www.lawsonstate.edu) and will also be available in the Counseling Services department on the Birmingham and Bessemer campuses.

Recognition and respect are extended to the LSCC faculty and staff for their continued commitment to students of all abilities.

### Important Note

Any information described in the *Guide to Disability Services* is subject to change. The Counseling Services department will inform students of policy and procedure changes via U.S. Mail, college email, college website, posted notification, and seminars. Please keep your current address updated to avoid missing pertinent information from the college.



## Information for Prospective Students

The Student Services staff welcomes you to Lawson State Community College. Our Student Services Specialists or Student Success Coordinator are committed to facilitating reasonable and appropriate academic accommodations to college students with disabilities. The information in this booklet is designed to help you get accommodation and special services while you are a student at Lawson State Community College.

### Registration for Accommodations/Disability Services

Lawson State Community College is committed to providing a quality environment to support and assist students throughout the academic process. In compliance with *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended* and the *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990*, as amended, special services and accommodations are given on an individual basis once supporting documentation is provided. It is the responsibility of a student to notify the college of a disability that requires assistance. Accommodation requests should be made prior to enrollment. Students requesting accommodation such as interpreters or captioning services should do so in a timely manner to ensure services can be arranged. The steps are as follows:

- Contact Janine McCoy Jones (Birmingham Campus, Leon Kennedy Student Center, Room 220), Leda Porter (Bessemer Campus, Student Services Center, Room 183), or Lesley Harper (Bessemer Campus, Student Services, Room 184)
- Provide documentation that is appropriate and meets the guidelines according to Alabama State Board Policy
- Participate in interview with the counseling staff
- Assist with the selection of accommodations

Registration for disability services is a separate process from applying for admission to Lawson State Community College. Information on how to reach the Counseling Services department is as follows:

E-mail requests for information regarding Disability Services: [counseling@lawsonstate.edu](mailto:counseling@lawsonstate.edu)

For Web access, go to: [www.lawsonstate.edu](http://www.lawsonstate.edu)

### Admissions

The Admissions Office handles all applications for admission to Lawson State Community College. Admission standards are described in the College Catalog/Student Handbook and must be met by all students, regardless of disability. Applications for admission are available from the Admissions Office. Accommodation for placement testing will be provided for those students who contact Janine McCoy Jones at (205) 929-6396, Leda Porter at (205) 929-3419, or Lesley D. Harper at (205) 929-3420

Appropriate documentation is required to receive accommodation services.

### Financial Aid

Lawson State Community College's financial aid packages (federal Pell Grant, work study, supplemental grants, and scholarships) enable students from all economic backgrounds to attend Lawson State Community College. Financial aid is awarded based on need and merit, and students who wish to receive aid must reapply each year. If an individual with disabilities needs assistance in applying for financial aid, he/she should contact Janine McCoy Jones at (205) 929-6396, Leda Porter at (205) 929-3419, or Lesley D. Harper at (205) 929-3420



## **New Student Orientation**

The new Student Orientation is important to the success of all students; therefore, all new students are expected to attend the sessions conducted by Student Services. Students who anticipate a need for accommodation during the orientation process should contact Janine McCoy Jones, Birmingham Campus, at (205) 929-6396, Leda Porter, Bessemer Campus, at (205) 929-3419, or Lesley D. Harper, Bessemer Campus, at (205) 929-3420.

## **Americans with Disabilities Act**

### **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, states:**

No otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall solely by reason of his disability be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. Under the provisions of Section 504 as amended, Lawson State Community College may not;

- Limit the admission of otherwise qualified students with disabilities
- Make pre-admission inquiries as to whether an applicant is disabled;
- Exclude an otherwise qualified student with a disability from any course of study
- Provide less financial assistance to students with disabilities than is provided to non-disability students. Counsel students with disabilities into more restrictive career paths than are recommended to non-disability.
- Measure students' achievements using modes that adversely discriminate against a student with a disability; Establish rules and policies that have the effect of limiting the participation of students with disabilities in educational programs or activities.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, as amended:**

This is a national mandate to end discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, state and local government services, public accommodations and commercial facilities, and telecommunications.

- Title I: nondiscrimination in employment activities
- Title II: state and local government entities and programs must be made accessible, as well as public transportation systems
- Title III: programs, goods, and services provided to the public by private entities must be accessible by persons with disabilities
- Title IV: telecommunication services must be accessible to persons with hearing or speech impairments
- Title V: miscellaneous provisions



## **LSCC Services for Students with Disabilities**

Lawson State Community College is committed to providing a quality environment to support and assist its students throughout the academic process. In compliance with Section 504, as amended in 2008, of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, special services and accommodations are given on an individual basis once supporting documentation is provided. It is the responsibility of a student to notify the college of a disability that requires assistance. Requests for accommodations should be made prior to enrollment. The college relocates classes, programs and activities as necessary to accommodate students with mobility challenges.

### **Reminders**

- Students with disabilities should remember that registration for disability services is separate from gaining admission to Lawson State Community College.
- If you are applying to Lawson State Community College and you have a disability, it is recommended that you do not submit disability documentation to the admissions office.
- Admissions decisions are made without regard to disability status.

### **Guide Dogs/Service Animals**

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as amended, service animals are permitted on the college campus and in its facilities. Technically speaking, a service animal means any guide dog, signal dog or other animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including but not limited to guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing, providing minimal rescue or protection work, pulling a wheelchair or fetching dropped items. Therapy or companion animals are not service animals and are not covered under the ADA. To be permitted on campus, a guide dog must be specifically trained to perform a service function. Furthermore, the animal should wear a harness, cape, identification tag or other gear that readily identifies its working status. Guide dogs whose behavior poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others may be excluded regardless of training or certification.

### **Parking**

Accessible parking areas are available to students who are certified for disability parking by their home state.

### **Library Media Center (Access and Assistance)**

Library staff may be contacted during business hours to ensure access to library collections and services. Special services include research assistance, telephone, and reference, retrieval of materials, photocopying assistance, library orientation, special check-out arrangements, and extended loan periods for reserved materials.

- \*Up-to-date reference and resource materials

- \*Computers and Internet access

- \*Virtual library system

### **Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS)**

ADRS exists to enable individuals with disabilities to reach their potential. ADRS provides necessary diagnostic medical, educational, technology, Independent living, vocational counseling, and employment services to eligible individuals with disabilities to assist them in entering into employment. They do not provide comprehensive psychological services. For more information, contact ADRS at (205) 290-4400 or 1-800-441-7607.



## **Other Disability Related Services May Be Provided Upon Request After Submission Of Appropriate Documentation.**

### **Accommodations and Support Services**

#### **Priority Registration**

Priority registration is provided for students who have identified themselves as a person having a disability. The student is responsible for regular advisement through his/her academic advisor and/or the disability services counselor. After consultation with the academic advisor, the student must have the registration form approved by the disability services counselor.

#### **Disability Services**

- \*Screening of disability documentation
- \*Determination of appropriate accommodations
- \*Communication with faculty and/or staff regarding student needs
- \*Referral to other available campus and/or community resources
- \*Disseminate information regarding federal requirements and college policy regarding Section 504 as amended
- \*Works to resolve issues regarding accommodations for students \*Serves as a resource for students needing guidance in regards to receiving appropriate and reasonable academic modifications

#### **Counseling Services**

- \*Provides personal, career, and psychological counseling to students with disabilities
- \*Provide academic and career advisement to students with disabilities
- \*Conducts appropriate pre/post assessment counseling \*Encourages participation in campus and student activities

#### **Student Support Services**

Student Support Services is a federally funded program that provides academic assistance and cultural and educational enrichment to eligible students who qualify, including students with disabilities. Services provided include:

- Tutoring
- Peer and Faculty Mentors
- Study and Test Taking seminars and workshops
- Academic counseling and advisement

#### **SPACE Center**

The purpose of the SPACE Center is to combine academic and non-academic support services and to proactively assist students in utilizing these services. The following services are provided through the center:

- \*Counseling
- \*Tutoring
- \*Mentoring
- \*Referrals
- \*Technology-Based Services
- \*Academic Support Services
- \*Workshops



## **LSCC Eligibility Determination Guidelines**

**Legal Mandates:** The fundamental principles of nondiscrimination and accommodation in academic programs were set forth in the implementing regulations of Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and in 1992, as amended and more recently with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Regulations for Section 504 make it clear that:

- Persons with disabilities have opportunities to participate in or benefit from services equal to those provided to persons without disability; this includes extracurricular activities such as sports and clubs.
- Program, including educational programs, must be made accessible
- Auxiliary aids, services, and program modifications must be provided so that persons with a disability can participate in education (e.g., the provision of a reader or tape recorder for a student with a visual disability or an interpreter for a student with a hearing disability).

### **Qualified Recipients of Services**

In order to receive disability services, an individual must have a documented disability that meets the definition as stated in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended and the ADA (1990), as amended. An individual with a disability must have documentation that supports at least one of the following conditions:

- a physical or mental condition that limits one or more major life activities;
- a record of such a condition; or regarded as having such a condition

### **Identification of Student Recipients and Self-Advocacy**

- The student is responsible for self-identifying and disclosing a disability
- The student is responsible for supplying written documentation of the disabling condition to the disability counselor. The disability counselor will assist the student with obtaining information when needed.
- Documentation is required in order to activate a disability services file, develop an academic plan, and provide disability related services.

In addition to self-identifying and providing the necessary documentation, you will need to be able to answer these questions when arranging for your accommodations:

- What is your disability?
- How does your disability affect you in the classroom?
- What accommodations have been helpful in the past?
- What accommodations do you think you need?

Students who choose not to self-identify when they enter LSCC do not forfeit their right to identify themselves and to request accommodation later. However, the college is not obligated to provide accommodations and services for students with disabilities until they are registered with the disability counselor and make known their need for accommodations.

### **Appropriate Documentation**

A written report must be submitted by a qualified provider that clearly diagnoses a disability and/or records showing the history of a disability. Medical doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists, counselors and school psychologists are among the professionals who routinely evaluate, diagnose and treat disabilities. The report must include the following:

- Clearly stated diagnosis and name/title of evaluator



- Defined level of functioning and any limitations
- Supporting documentation (i.e., test data, history, observation, etc.)
- Current treatment, medication, letter/report (1-3 years), dated and signed

## **Accommodations**

### **Determining Reasonable Accommodations**

Providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities requires an individual assessment of need and is a problem-solving process. Specific accommodations depend upon the nature and requirements of a particular course or activity and the skills and functional abilities of a particular student. Modifications and adjustments to course content and evaluation criteria that do not alter the fundamental nature of the course can generally be arranged.

### **Academic Accommodations**

The counseling services department is responsible for disability services determines reasonable academic adjustments for students, taking into consideration recommendations from the physician, psychologist, or other clinician who diagnosed the student's disability. Consideration is also given to accommodations that have previously been used in educational settings with the student. In addition, the disability counselor consults with faculty to assist in tailoring reasonable accommodations to individual course requirements. Although some persons may have similar diagnoses, each person is treated as an individual since accommodations must be tailored to individual needs. If you are registered with disability services, please make an appointment with a counseling service staff member as soon as possible to discuss any course accommodations that may be necessary. Students who may need course adaptations because of a disability are encouraged to make an appointment to meet with a Counseling Services staff member during the pre-registration period.

### **Accommodation Letters**

It is the student's responsibility to deliver accommodation letters to each instructor in whose course the student is requesting accommodations, and to discuss with those instructors' methods for providing the requested academic adjustments. Letters are not to be placed in an instructor's mailbox, under a door, or given to someone else to deliver. Instructors are not obligated to provide accommodations until they have received accommodation letters. If an accommodation letter is not presented, faculty members are not expected to provide accommodations. If a student delivers an accommodation letter to his/her instructor only within a few days of an assignment or exam, the instructor may not be able to arrange an optimal adjustment. Instructors are required to contact the disability counselor if there are concerns regarding requested accommodations.

### **Providing Reasonable Accommodations**

An academic accommodation is essentially a problem-solving process. The task is to determine the necessary adjustments that will enable students with disabilities to have access to the same programs and services available to students without disabilities and to have their academic performance evaluated without the limiting effects of their disability. The objective of such adjustments is to accommodate the functional limitations of the student's disability while maintaining the integrity of college courses and programs. Providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a collaborative process between the student and his/her instructor. For example, extended time for exams should be arranged to match both the student's and the instructor's schedules. A student might start a test before the rest of the class, finish a test after the rest of the class, or take a test in two halves at two different times. The accommodation strategy should be appropriate and efficient for both the student and the instructor. Federal law requires that students with disabilities receive services in the most integrated setting possible, unless separated



services are the only method of providing appropriate accommodations. The Student Assessment Center is available by appointment, and the disability counselor will provide testing assistance under special circumstances.

Federal disability laws also call for the provision of reasonable accommodations or academic adjustments as necessary to ensure that academic requirements do not discriminate or have the effect of discriminating on the basis of disability against a qualified applicant or student. Accommodations are provided based on the specific request and disability documentation provided to disability services. Accommodations will not be provided retroactively. A request may be deemed “unreasonable” if it:

- Creates a direct threat to the health or safety of others
- Causes a substantial change in an essential element or a substantial alteration in the manner in which the university provides a program or service
- Causes undue financial or administrative burden

### **Confidentiality**

Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 states that any information regarding a disability gained through medical, psychological, educational, other professional reports, and student self-reports is considered confidential.

- Neither the disability nor the use of accommodations is noted on the transcript or diploma.
- Information can be released only with written authorization from the student (FERPA)
- Students requesting special services must sign a release form, which allows the disclosure of information
- Information can be shared without written permission in the event of a medical emergency, behavior that endangers the safety of the student or others, an official court order, or report of child abuse.
- Students have access to the contents of the file and will be allowed to view material with either the Dean of Students or Counselor present.
- Students are not allowed copies of file materials obtained from another source (psychological reports, medical records, etc.) without written permission from the other source.
- A Statement of Confidentiality is discussed with the student, signed, witnessed, and placed in the student’s file.

### **Institutional Obligations**

Lawson State Community College, as a public institution of higher education that receives federal financial assistance, is legally bound to prohibit discrimination in the recruitment process, the admissions process, and the education of students with disabilities. Students with documented disabilities are entitled to receive appropriate modifications, accommodations, or auxiliary aids that will enable them to participate in and have the opportunity to benefit from all educational programs and activities provided on the campus of LSCC.

### **Modifications to Policies and Practices**

Federal regulations now require prospective students to produce specific documents as proof of identity or age. If you need assistance with providing alternate proof of identity, you must provide documentation regarding your disability and request assistance with determining appropriate alternate identification. The college’s disabilities counselor will be available to assist you with this procedure during the admissions process.



The college's cafeteria will make dietary modifications only if appropriate documentation has been provided and a timely request has been made. Please contact the college's disabilities counselor regarding any special dietary requests.

ADA students needing between-campus transportation must contact the college's disabilities counselor for assistance. The student must provide appropriate documentation and make a timely request. The disabilities counselor will assist with contacting and arranging City ADA/Disability public transportation only. However, public transportation managers will ultimately make the decision regarding assistance and transportation commitment.

Lawson State Community College is proud of an outstanding record of providing students with a safe and secure learning environment. ADA students who have unique or different safety issues should provide appropriate documentation and make a timely request for assistance. Please contact the disabilities counselor for assistance with developing a plan of safety.

### **Student Grievance Process/Conflict Resolution**

When a qualified student with a disability requests accommodation, the college has a legal obligation to make an effort to provide effective and reasonable accommodations. However, the college is not required to make adjustments that impose an undue financial or administrative burden on the institution, or fundamentally alter the nature of the college program, service, or activity. The obligation to reasonably accommodate students with disabilities does not require reduction of academic standards or course requirements, nor does it require acceptance of behaviors that pose a direct threat or disrupt the learning or teaching environment. If a particular requested accommodation is judged to be inappropriate, the college is obligated to consider other reasonable accommodations. Questions and concerns regarding accommodations and services for students with disabilities should be directed initially to the Counseling Services department. If the necessary assistance cannot be provided, or information or suggestions that resolve issues involving accommodations, a meeting with the faculty member, the disability counselor, and the student will be scheduled. If an agreement is not reached at this meeting, the Dean of Students will schedule a meeting with all parties involved. If there remains no resolution, the final step in the grievance process involves the dissenting party filing a formal grievance. During the grievance process, the student is entitled to receive accommodations recommended by the disability services counselor. The process for filing an official grievance is outlined in the *Lawson State Community College Catalog/Student Handbook*.

### **Considerations and Responsibilities**

#### **Responsibilities of Students**

Students with disabilities are responsible for informing the college about their disability and the need for reasonable accommodation. This should be done prior to or upon enrollment at the college. Students must furnish adequate documentation of their disabilities from medical or other appropriate professionals in order to substantiate the need for services. The student will:

- Identify as a student with a disability in order to access accommodations and services available.
- Provide a schedule at the beginning of the semester to the Counseling Services department for the development of the faculty notification letter.
- Meet with the faculty to present letters and discuss arrangements for accommodations.
- Notify in a timely manner of the need for services or a change in service requirements.
  - Adhere to all academic requirements and policies



- Update file when appropriate (i.e., when enrollment is not continuous).

### **Responsibilities of Faculty**

Faculty plays a major role in the implementation of accommodations to students with disabilities. Faculty members should have input and should assist with determining reasonable accommodations. However, according to federal law, faculty may not refuse to provide required accommodations, question whether the disability exists when accommodations have been authorized by the counseling services department, or ask to examine documentation when it is not academically related. Faculty will:

- Work collaboratively with disability services counselor to provide authorized accommodations and support services.
- Provide accommodations in a fair and timely manner.
- Meet with the student as quickly as possible upon notification of special needs. Students should initiate this meeting, but faculty may take the initiative when students are reluctant to self-advocate.
- Contact the disability services counselor with questions or suggestions regarding the appropriateness of a required accommodation. (Faculty must continue to provide accommodation until it is set aside or modified).
- Refer students to the disability services counselor when an accommodation is requested. Provide temporary services until paperwork is complete, as recommended by the disability services counselor.

### **Responsibilities of the Counseling Services Department**

Registration for assistance with disability services is a separate process from applying for admission to Lawson State Community College. The Disability Services Counselor will:

- Screen and evaluate documentation
- Determine appropriate accommodations
- Communicate with faculty and/or staff regarding student needs
- Make referrals to other available campus and/or community resources

**The college has an obligation and a responsibility to maintain confidentiality of evaluation information and does not release disability documentation without the student's informed and written consent.**

### **General Guidelines for Instructors**

- Students should be viewed on the basis of ability, not disability
- Avoid fostering dependence in students with disabilities
- Interact with students with disabilities in the same manner as other students
- Respect the privacy of students with disabilities; avoid mentioning accommodations in front of others
- Do not view accommodations as “special treatment”, but as methods to limit the negative effects of disabilities on students
- When in doubt about if and how to assist students with disabilities, ask them! If your offer of assistance is declined, do not insist on “helping”

Students with disabilities need academic accommodations to meet the expectations of an academic environment.

Faculty may impose “standards of conduct” for classroom behavior that all students are expected to meet. Such standards of conduct should be designed to prevent significant disruption in the teaching/learning process and provide a more effective classroom learning environment for all students.



## **Activities, Clubs, and Organizations**

As an equal opportunity educational institution, Lawson State Community College is committed to making all programs, activities, clubs, organizations, and services accessible to students with disabilities. It is the responsibility of staff, faculty, and administrators to notify the disability counselor when reasonable adjustments need to be made to include students with disabilities. It is the responsibility of staff, faculty, and administrators to ensure that students with disabilities are included, encouraged, and supported regarding participation.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to become actively involved with campus organizations. One of the goals of the disability services is to assist students with developing self-advocacy skills and becoming active members of the college community.

## **Criteria for Disability Documentation**

Alabama Community College System institutions do not provide disability documentation for students. It is the student's responsibility to provide appropriate documentation to the college office responsible for handling the request and to request accommodations. Appropriate documentation is defined as that which meets the following criteria:

### **Health Condition, Mobility, Hearing, Speech, or Visual Impairment**

A letter or report from treating physician, orthopedic specialist, audiologist, speech pathologist, or ophthalmologist (as appropriate), including:

- Clearly stated diagnosis
- Defined levels of functioning and any limitations
- Current treatment and medication
- Current letter/report (within 1 year), dated and signed

### **Psychological Disorder**

A letter or report from a mental health professional (psychologist, neuropsychologist, licensed professional counselor), including:

- Clearly stated diagnosis (DSM-V criteria)
- Defined levels of functioning and any limitations
- Current treatment and medication
- Current letter/report (within 1 year), dated and signed

### **Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)**

A comprehensive evaluation report by a rehabilitation counselor, speech-language pathologist, orthopedic specialist, and/or neuropsychologist (or other specialist as appropriate), including:

- Assessment of cognitive abilities, including processing speed and memory
- Analysis of educational achievement skills and limitations (reading comprehension, written language, spelling, and mathematical abilities)
- Defined levels of functioning and limitations in all affected areas (communications, vision, hearing, mobility, psychological, seizures, etc.)
- Current treatment and medication
- Current letter/report (post-rehabilitation and within 1 year), dated and signed



Note: High School IEP, 504 Plan, and/or a letter from a physician or other professional will not be sufficient to document a learning disability.

### **Learning Disabilities (LD)**

A comprehensive evaluation report from a clinical psychologist, psychiatrist, neuropsychologist, school psychologist, learning disability specialist, or diagnostician, including:

- Clear statement of presenting problem; diagnostic interview
- Educational history documenting the impact of the learning disability
- Alternative explanations and diagnoses are ruled out
- Relevant test data with standard scores are provided to support conclusions, including a least: WSIA-R; Woodcock-Johnson Psycho educational Battery-Revised, including Written Language; Woodcock-Johnson Cognitive
- Processing Battery to substantiate any processing problems
- Clearly stated diagnosis of a learning disability based upon DSM-V criteria
- Defined levels of functioning and any limitations, supported by evaluation data
- Current report (within 3 years of enrollment date), dated and signed

### **Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)**

A comprehensive evaluation report from a physician, psychiatrist, clinical psychologist, neurologist, or neuropsychologist, including:

- Clear statement of presenting problem; diagnostic interview
- Evidence of early and current impairment in a least two different environments (comprehensive history)
- Alternative explanations and diagnoses are ruled out
- Relevant test data with standard scores are provided to support conclusions, including at least: WAIS-R, Woodcock-Johnson Psycho educational Battery-Revised, including Written Language; Behavioral Assessment Instruments for ADD/ADHD norm on adults
- Clearly stated diagnosis of ADD based upon DSM-V criteria
- Defined levels of functioning and any limitations, supported by evaluation data
- Current report (within 3 years of enrollment date), dated and signed

Note: High School IEP, 504 Plan, and/or a letter from a physician or other professional will not be sufficient to document ADD or ADHD. Medication cannot be used to imply a diagnosis.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

It is the policy of the Alabama Community College System, its Board of Trustees, and Lawson State Community College (the "College"), a postsecondary institution under its control, that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, disability, sex, religion, creed, national origin, or age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program, activity, or employment. The College does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX and its regulations, including in admission and employment.

Lawson State Community College also prohibits discrimination due to ethnic origin, marital status, parental status, economic status, genetic information, citizenship, veteran status, or disability, reasonable accommodations, or any other protected



class as defined by federal and state law. The college has zero tolerance for harassment, retaliation, violence, physical bullying, cyberbullying, and hazing.

In addition to admissions and employment, this nondiscrimination policy covers training, organizational affiliation, student housing, and advisory boards in all college programs and activities. This policy is enforced by Federal law under Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972, Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as amended in 2008.

Inquiries can be made to the Title IX and Section 504 Coordinator, to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both. The College's Title IX Coordinator/Section 504 Coordinator is the Dean of Students, 3060 Wilson Road SW, Birmingham, Alabama 35221, Academic Success Building, 2nd Floor, [cvance@lawsonstate.edu](mailto:cvance@lawsonstate.edu) and [205-929-6361](tel:205-929-6361). The Deputy Title IX Coordinator is the Director of Human Resources, 3060 Wilson Road SW, Birmingham, Alabama 35221, the Dr. Perry W. Ward Alabama Center for Advanced Technology & Training Building, on the 3rd floor, [ebell@lawsonstate.edu](mailto:ebell@lawsonstate.edu) and [205-929-6313](tel:205-929-6313)



## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Can I ask a student if he/she has a Disability?**

No. However, it is the college's responsibility to notify students of the services available for students with disabilities. You should inform all students of services and/or programs available at the college for students who need accommodations due to a disability, and how to access those services.

### **Do I have the right to know what type of disability a student has when they ask for an accommodation?**

No. A student does not have to inform the faculty or staff member about their disability, but only the needed accommodations. If you have a question regarding the need for the accommodation, then you may contact the Counseling Services department. The department will have documentation regarding the student's disability on file. They cannot give details about the disability, unless the student has signed a written consent form, but can inform you if the student has a documented disability and if the accommodation requested is appropriate. The student may disclose their disability to you. You are then obligated to maintain confidentiality regarding the student's disability. It is important to remember that the confidential nature of disability-related information has been an overarching principle of nondiscrimination since Section 504, as amended.

### **What can I do if I disagree with the academic accommodation requested?**

If you disagree with the academic accommodation requested, you should discuss your disagreement with the counseling services department, but you should continue to provide the accommodation. An instructor may not forbid a student's use of an aid if that prohibition limits the student's participation in the school program. Often, faculty members are concerned with the use of a tape recorder in their classroom because it may infringe on their freedom of speech or potentially copyrighted material. The instructor may ask the student to sign an agreement that states that they will only use the recordings for their personal use. It is important to remember that under the ADA, as amended, if appropriate accommodations are not provided to the student, YOU, as well as the institution, can be held liable for monetary damages.

### **Does the student receive "special privileges" under this legislation?**

Providing accommodations should not be regarded as giving students "special privileges," but rather as equalizing the impact of the student's disability to the greatest extent possible. Institutions are not mandated to make changes in requirements that would result in a major or substantial change in essential elements of the curriculum. The institution has the right to set academic standards, but the institution must prove that a requested accommodation would create a substantial change. The burden of proof lies with the institution.

### **Does the student with a disability need to ask for accommodations within a certain time frame before classes?**

Yes. Most institutions require that the student indicate the need for an accommodation within a reasonable advance time. This is not always possible, but it is important to provide the accommodation as soon as possible.



### **What can I do to make the classroom environment open to students with disabilities?**

It is important to remember that people with disabilities are just that-people first. Here are a few easy-to-remember tips:

- Make a general announcement regarding the availability of accommodations at the beginning of class. Most institutions require a statement on all syllabi regarding requests for accommodations.
- Inform students of the services provided at your college and how to contact the person responsible for assisting students with disabilities.
- Ask questions. The student is the best source of information.
- Not everyone who has a disability is the same. It is important to look at the person first and not lump everyone together in the same category. This is also important when addressing accommodations. For example, not all students with learning disabilities need extended time, not all people with visual impairments need Braille, etc. Everyone is an individual with individual needs.

### **How do I know what type of academic accommodation a student needs?**

It is up to the student and the disability counselor to determine what type of accommodation is needed based on appropriate documentation. If you question the accommodation, contact the counseling services department. There is no one type of accommodation for all students with disabilities. Each accommodation must be decided on a case-by-case basis. Some common accommodations are:

Taped textbooks/Lectures	Interpreters	Note takers
Readers	Cassette Recorders	Student Tutors
Alternate Testing Arrangements	Assessment & Referral to Outside Agencies	Extended Test Time
Accessible Facilities	Computer Adaptive Equipment	Large Print Materials
Parking Permits	Counseling	Career Planning



# **APPENDIX: Forms**





### Accommodations Letter

The student whose name appears below has identified him/herself as a person with a disability and has provided the appropriate documentation to support reasonable accommodations. The following is a request for accommodation, in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Please feel free to contact me if there are questions regarding the accommodation indicated below.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student I.D.: \_\_\_\_\_

Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Accommodations Requested:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extended time on exams (time and a half)                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Use of a computer to take notes in class                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extended time on class work (time and a half)                | <input type="checkbox"/> Excuse absences caused by disability                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extended time on special projects                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Exams at SS to use assistive technology                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reduced distraction testing situation                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Tape recording of lectures                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ergonomic chair exacerbation of symptoms                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Alternate test format, if needed                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Note taker (please see note taker announcement)              | <input type="checkbox"/> Permission to leave seat briefly if necessary                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Copies of handouts provided in large print (22 font)         | <input type="checkbox"/> Enlarged print exams (22 font)                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provision to stand and sit as needed                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Use of a calculator   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sign language interpreter (provided by SS)                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Permission to take breaks during exams                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use of in class assistant                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Provision to leave class briefly to use restroom                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eat and drink in class, if needed (even during exam time)    | <input type="checkbox"/> Seating middle front row  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative evaluation criterion for oral class presentation | <input type="checkbox"/> Provision to make up exams/assignments missed due to disability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extended time on exams if student experiences                |  |

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

I give permission for the Counseling Services department to discuss the requested accommodation(s) with my instructor and other appropriate College officials.

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Student Signature

Date

**\*\*\*Instructor: Please keep this page for your records\*\*\* Student Services**





General Consent

I, \_\_\_\_\_, give my permission for the Disability Services counselor to share my information concerning my disability with appropriate personnel at Lawson State Community College understand this information is confidential and will only be shared for academic and support services purposes on a need-to-know basis.

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Student Signature

Date

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Disability Services Counselor/Student Services Specialist

Date





### Authorization for Release of Information

I, \_\_\_\_\_, by signing this document, give my permission for the counselor at Lawson State Community College to release copies of my records to \_\_\_\_\_.

The following checked information may be released as indicated.

- ☐ Classroom accommodations that have been recommended or previously utilized
- ☐ Current accessibility requirements/needs
- ☐ Psychological and/or neuropsychological reports
- ☐ Medical documentation of disability, including official diagnosis

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Student Signature

Date





**Student Services**

**Authorization for Release of Information**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, by signing this document, give my permission for the Disability Services counselor at Lawson State Community College to release the items checked below to \_\_\_\_\_, my vocational rehabilitation counselor, or the Alabama Department of

Rehabilitation Services designee.

- ☐ College Transcripts
- ☐ Student Schedule for \_\_\_\_\_ Semester / Year
- ☐ Instructor reports on student progress
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

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Student Signature

Date

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Disability Services Counselor/Student Services Specialist

Date





**Student Services**

**Authorization for Release of Information**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, by signing this document, give my permission for the Disability Services counselor at Lawson State Community College to obtain copies of my records. Please provide the following checked information:

- ☐ Classroom accommodations that have been recommended or previously utilized
- ☐ Current accessibility requirements/needs
- ☐ Psychological and/or neuropsychological reports
- ☐ Medical documentation of disability, including official diagnosis

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_





**Student Services**

**Authorization for Release of Information**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, by signing this document, give my permission for the Disability Services counselor at Lawson State Community College, to release the items checked below to \_\_\_\_\_.

- ☐ College Transcripts
- ☐ Student Schedule for \_\_\_\_\_ Semester/ Year
- ☐ Instructor reports on student progress
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Disability Services Counselor \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_





**Student Services**

**Student Accommodation(s) Agreement**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security #: \_\_\_\_\_

Semester:      ☐ Fall    ☐ Spring      ☐ Summer

The student named above has identified him/herself as a student with a disability. He/she has provided documentation of a disability to the Disability Services counselor at Lawson State Community College. Based on a thorough review of the documentation and interview with the student, the following accommodation(s) for this student have been agreed upon:

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I agree with the accommodations listed above. I understand that I must follow through in the areas that are my responsibility.

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Student Signature

Date

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Disability Services Counselor

Date





### Disability Services

#### APPLICATION TO RECEIVE ACCOMMODATIONS

Please respond to all questions

#### Background Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B. \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Local address if different from above \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_ (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_ (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent/Guardian (If Appropriate) \_\_\_\_\_

Are you affiliated with a Sponsoring Agency? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes: ☐ Voc. Rehab. ☐ Easter Seals ☐ AIB ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Diagnostic Information

State Diagnosed Disability: \_\_\_\_\_

How does disability impact daily functioning? \_\_\_\_\_

Identify Functioning Limitation: Major \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Sitting

☐ Reading

☐ Talking

☐ Hearing

☐ Listening

☐ Breathing

☐ Calculating

☐ Seeing

☐ Concentrating

☐ Written Expression

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_



Please describe previous support services or accommodations that you received in the past.

A. Accommodations:

B. Adaptive Equipment:

#### Contact Information

Student #: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_