



ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES “CONSIDERATION OF” ACCOMMODATION

Description:

Many students who engage in the accommodations process live with medical or mental health conditions that, at times, can affect their ability to engage with their academics. These may not be complete barriers, but often they make participation in our academic programming more difficult. The “Consideration of...” accommodations are meant to highlight our responsibility to explore adjustments to classroom expectations for students; the outcomes of those conversations will be varied.

There are three distinct 'Consideration of' accommodations. Students may be approved for one or all of the following:

- *Consideration for Missed Classes*
- *Consideration for Flexible Deadlines*
- *Consideration for Alternative Participation*

When this accommodation is approved:

Before determining that a “consideration of” accommodation is appropriate, Accessibility Services reviews clinical documentation provided by the student, that has been completed by a licensed medical or mental health professional who has knowledge of how the student is affected by their disability. Accessibility Services then works with a student to determine whether or not an accommodation like this is necessary to increase access to our academic programs. Although it may be determined that additional missed classes, modified assignment deadlines, or modified participation are appropriate, there are limitations to those modifications beyond which a student cannot be reasonably accommodated.

Students should continue to be held responsible for meeting course objectives and showing proficiency in learning outcomes.

What it is not:

A “consideration of” accommodation is not a blanket allowance to miss unlimited classes, or to turn in homework whenever a student feels like it. Consideration of these modifications to course

policies is not intended to, nor should it, fundamentally alter the course learning objectives. This modification is not a guarantee that a student can be successful in a course.

What it is:

Expectations within participation, class attendance, and homework vary widely across academic programs. When a student presents you with a “consideration of” accommodation, the student and faculty member should engage in a dialogue about the course objectives to determine whether or not additional flexibility is possible without fundamentally altering the student’s experience of the course. Appropriate coordination of this accommodation includes new and concrete expectations that are clear to both student and course instructor.

Broadly, we expect that some amount of extra flexibility will be possible given the student’s needs, but to what degree that flexibility is reasonable is a conversation best-suited for the instructor.

Conversations about this modification should include:

- How much flexibility can be expected...
 - *...in the number of days that a student may miss class*
 - *Are follow up meetings with the instructor necessary to discuss material that was missed during absence?*
 - *...in how much longer a student may have to turn in an assignment*
 - *Or to what degree their participation may be different than their peers’*
- How a student will notify an instructor of the need to use this accommodation:
 - *Will a student be expected to email the instructor if they are going to miss extra class periods?*
- Limitations to the flexibility:
 - *What learning objectives are threatened by missing too much class?*
 - *Why are modified deadlines set the way they are?*
 - *What are the essential elements of classroom participation that cannot be modified?*

Examples of considerations:

1. **A lecture-focused class allows 4 absences a semester for all students. There is little peer interaction, and in-class participation is minimal.**

After discussion with this student, the instructor may determine that the student will not be unreasonably affected if they miss 2 additional classes beyond the published course policy. If they are able stay up-to-date with course readings and come to office hours after a missed class discuss the lecture material, this would seem to be acceptable.

2. **A writing intensive course expects students to submit weekly reflections at the beginning of class so that they can be discussed later that same period within a peer-review experience**

A student with “Consideration for Flexible Deadlines” may find that this is not a reasonable modification to this part of the course; delaying submission of the assignment would fundamentally alter the peer-review component of the learning experience.

The instructor of this course may want to consider whether they can provide topics ahead of time to this student so that they can begin this assignment earlier.

If there are other assignments that are not limited in the same way, flexible deadlines may be appropriate for some course assignments, but not all.

- 3. A laboratory-focused course does not allow any absences for that component. Lab materials take considerable care to set up, and specialized training is needed to handle setup and take-down.**

A student with “Consideration for Missed Classes” may still be expected to attend all of these lab components. Without an opportunity to visit the lab at another time, missing this experience would mean the student was never exposed to essential learning experiences.

- 4. A course with few writing assignments has an expectation that a 15 page paper will be due on a predetermined date.**

A student with “Consideration for Flexible Deadlines” has already met with the faculty member as early as possible during the semester for general discussion about this accommodation. The assignment deadline is approaching, and the student alerts the faculty member to a flare-up of their condition. The assignment was supposed to be due on a Friday at 7pm, but the instructor had no intention of beginning to grade them until the next week. An extension until Monday morning would likely be appropriate.

Frequently Asked Questions

If a student has a ‘Consideration of’ Accommodation, how can grading for participation or late assignments be affected?

Instructors can still hold students to the expectations of the course. A 'Consideration of' accommodation does not mean that students are exempt from completing assignments or participating in class as expected, and reductions in grades could be appropriate depending on the situation. Faculty and student should factor this into their discussion.

Whatever agreement the student and faculty come to should be the new metric for determining their grades. For example, if an instructor has an established course policy for all students that the score on a paper will be reduced by 5% every day that the paper is late, then students with a Consideration of Flexible Deadlines accommodation should not have their grade reduced for lateness if they turn it in by a new agreed upon date. However, if the student fails to meet that new deadline, then the instructor could chose to begin to reduce the grade for every day thereafter.

What if a student delivers an Accommodation letter with a ‘Consideration of Accommodation AFTER they have already missed an assignment deadline or the established maximum number of classes?’

All accommodations established through the Office of Accessibility Services are not retroactive. This means that if a student has missed the maximum number of classes per Mount Mary University’s policy, and then they provide their accommodation letter, the instructor is not required to allow them to miss additional courses.

That being said, some students are not able to set up disability-accommodations until later in the semester for a large number of reasons. Instructors should use discretion when determining how these accommodations could be applied going forward.

For additional questions please contact Sara Sharpe Krenke at (414) 930-3173 or sharpes@mtmary.edu.

Mount Mary University (MMU) is committed to providing equal opportunities in higher education to academically qualified students with disabilities. We work towards an appreciation of students’ abilities through partnerships with students, faculty and staff to create a campus community that values the unique talents each person brings.

The University is committed to providing a supportive environment for students with disabilities as well as to complying with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended (ADAAA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Fair Housing Act (FHA).

Adopted with permission from Marquette University

Mount Mary University, Office of Accessibility Services, 2019