Louisburg College Disability Services Handbook
2011-2012

Office of Learning Support and Disability Services
Division of Learning Services
Louisburg College
111 Taft Building
501 N. Main St.
Louisburg, NC 27549
(Phone) 919.497.3236
(Fax) 919.496.6733
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Louisburg College Mission Statement and Values

Mission Statement

“Related by faith to the United Methodist Church, Louisburg College is committed to offering a supportive community which nurtures young men and women intellectually, culturally, socially, physically, and spiritually. As a two-year residential institution, we provide a bridge for students to make a successful transition from high school to senior colleges and universities” (Louisburg College 2011-12 Catalog, 10).

Values

- We approach our mission with integrity.
- We respect the dignity of every individual.
- We embrace diverse learning styles.
- We offer opportunities for all of our students to succeed.
- We provide a high quality, accessible education.
- We enable and challenge our students to reach their full potential.
- We value our Christian heritage and foster spiritual growth. (Louisburg College 2011-12 Catalog, 10)

Learning Services Division Mission Statement

The mission of the Learning Services Division is to serve as a resource to students with a variety of learning styles and abilities in ways that empower them to realize their learning potential. The Division’s mission directly relates to several of the Values adopted by Louisburg College. These values include “we respect the dignity of each individual; we embrace diverse learning styles; we offer opportunities for all of our students to succeed; we provide a high quality, accessible education; we enable and challenge our students to reach their full potential” (Louisburg College 2010-11 Catalog, 10).

In order to facilitate its mission, the Learning Services Division consists of two components: the Office of Learning Support and Disability Services (OLSDS) and Learning Partners.

Office of Learning Support and Disability Services (OLSDS)

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities. Louisburg College supports the protection available to members of its community under all applicable federal laws, including those stated above. The Louisburg College Nondiscrimination Policy states, “Louisburg College is committed to the equal opportunity of education and employment and does not discriminate against students, employees, or applicants on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation or sexual preference, national origin, age, or disability” (Louisburg College 2010-11 Catalog, 33). The OLSDS exists to further this end. The Office’s mission is to assist in creating an accessible college community where students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in all aspects of the educational environment. We cooperate through partnerships with students,
faculty, and staff to promote students’ independence and to ensure recognition of their abilities, not disabilities.

The OLSDS fulfills this aim by maintaining disability-related documents, certifying eligibility for services, determining reasonable accommodations and developing plans for provision of such accommodations for students with disabilities. The OLSDS also assists all college departments in providing appropriate accommodations for students in courses, programs, services, activities and facilities.

In addition to determining and facilitating federally-mandated accommodations, the OLSDS serves as a clearinghouse for students who wish to enroll in Learning Partners. Applications for the Learning Partners program are evaluated by the Director in conjunction with the Learning Specialists of the Program. The Director then matches each student with a Learning Specialist and works with them to develop individualized service plans for students based upon application materials, documentation, and student interviews.

**OLSDS Location and Hours of Operation**

The Learning Services Division is located on the first floor of the Taft classroom building. The OLSDS occupies rooms 111 & 112. These offices serve as space for the Director of Learning Support and Disability Services and the Administrative Assistant; this is also where students and their families meet with Learning Services personnel. A small reference library of over thirty books on topics relevant to college students with learning disabilities and ADHD is housed in this office and available for student and faculty check-out.

The OLSDS is open Monday through Friday, 8:30am – 5:00pm. Students, parents, and prospective student families are served on a walk-in basis when possible, but are encouraged to make an appointment with the Director. In order to meet with the Director after 3:30 pm, an appointment must be made.

Phone: 919-497-3236
Fax: 919-496-6733
Email:learningservices@louisburg.edu

**Learning Partners**

**Introduction**

Learning Partners is a unique fee-based program designed to enhance the academic achievement, learning strategies, and self-advocacy of Louisburg College students with learning disabilities (LD) and attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

**History**

In the mid-1990s, it became clear to the provider of disability-related accommodations at Louisburg College that federally-mandated accommodations alone were not providing all of the
services needed for students with learning disabilities to achieve success in the college environment. The concept for the program was based upon the research of faculty member Dr. Jayne Davis in preparation for her dissertation. The Learning Partners pilot program became the subject of her dissertation. In 1998, the faculty and Board of Trustees endorsed the Learning Partners program. In the fall of 1999, twelve students were enrolled in the program and the first full-time learning specialist was hired to partner with students.

Louisburg College offers one of the few comprehensive support programs in the Southeast for college students with LD and/or ADHD. The Learning Partners program at Louisburg College is committed to building partnerships between students with LD and/or ADHD and their Learning Specialist. Learning Partners offers one-on-one tutoring twice weekly by professionals who are trained on the graduate level and have experience working with students. Learning Partners prides itself in providing intensive and interactive tutorials where students gain academic support and insight into their unique learning profiles. The program’s goal is to help students learn to learn; thus the emphasis is on teaching learning strategies more so than content tutoring. As students build self-reliance and learning skills, they gain the self-confidence needed to succeed in college academics and beyond.

Through the Learning Partners program, students are given assistance to enhance academic success; however, academic outcome depends on student motivation, participation, attendance, and output. Learning Partners fosters empowerment by encouraging personal and academic responsibility through self-advocacy. Learning specialists also serve as academic advisors. Parents are notified by monthly letter of student attendance to coaching and tutoring sessions as well as additional times, as warranted by program policies. Feedback sheets are sent out twice per semester to faculty on student attendance and grades, and summary letters are sent home at the end of each semester evaluating student performance and offering suggestions for the next semester.

**** Please note that Learning Partners students must enroll for one academic year at a time, not by the semester, although students may enter the program at any time, providing there is space available.

Confidentiality and Release of Information

The OLSDS is committed to ensuring that all information regarding a student is confidential as required or permitted by the law. Any information collected is used for the benefit of the student. This information may include test data, grades, biographical history, disability information, performance reviews and case notes.

No one has immediate access to student files except the staff of the OLSDS. However, students who request services based on their documented requests acknowledge that some level of disclosure to select faculty may be necessary to provide the requested accommodations. This disclosure will occur with the student’s specific written permission and the understanding that only necessary information for the purposes of accommodation will be communicated by the OLSDS. Certain staff members that have a legitimate need to know may also have access to such records to provide evidence supporting disability-related accommodations. Students are under no
obligation to disclose a disability unless an accommodation is being requested; likewise, faculty and staff have no authority to see disability documentation without a legitimate, educational need to know. Other information in files will not be released except in accordance with federal and state laws, which require release in the following circumstances:

- If the OLSDS staff learns about child abuse or elder abuse, they are required by law to report it to the Department of Social Services.

- If, in the judgment of the OLSDS, a client is dangerous to himself/herself or others (suicidal or homicidal), it is the responsibility of the staff to do whatever they can to protect a person from harm, even if it means breaking confidentiality.

- If the OLSDS is required to present records and/or appear in court to comply with a court order.

Rights and Responsibilities of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities have the right to:

- Equal access to courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities offered through the college,
- Equal opportunity to work and to learn, and to receive reasonable accommodations,
- Appropriate confidentiality of all information regarding their disabilities and to choose to whom information about their disabilities will be disclosed, except disclosures that are required or permitted by law, and
- Information available in accessible formats as warranted by documentation.

Students with disabilities have the responsibility to:

- Meet qualifications and maintain essential institutional standards for courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities,
- Identify themselves as individuals with a disability when an accommodation is needed and to seek information, counsel, and assistance within a reasonable amount of time,
- Demonstrate and/or document (from an appropriate professional) how the disability limits their participation in courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities,
- Follow procedures for obtaining reasonable accommodations, and
- **Arrange test accommodations with each faculty member a minimum of two days prior to each test.**

Self-Advocacy Issues

Students who are enrolled in a post secondary setting have responsibilities as independent adults. Students are expected to:

- Self identify or disclose disability to the OLSDS
- Provide verifying documentation to that office
• Provide medical, psycho-educational, or psychological testing as needed (cost is borne by the student)
• Arrange own weekly schedule
• Arrange own study sessions
• Arrange own transportation
• Contact professors to discuss and adopt accommodations for each class
• Arrange for and obtain own personal attendants
• Meet all the standards of conduct of the College
• Observe all rules and regulations of the College
• Meet all criteria of the courses of study, including attendance and grading policies

Rights and Responsibilities of Louisburg College

Louisburg College has the right to:

• Establish essential functions, abilities, skills, knowledge and standards for courses, programs, services, jobs and activities or facilities and to evaluate students on this basis
• Determine the appropriate standards in developing, constructing, remodeling and maintaining facilities
• Confirm disability status and receive current, relevant documentation that supports requests for accommodations or auxiliary aids and services
• Have appropriate staff discuss students and their disabilities in order to implement requested accommodations
• Deny a request for accommodations or auxiliary aids and services, and/or barrier removal in facilities if the documentation does not demonstrate that the request is warranted, or if the individual fails to provide appropriate documentation
• Select among equally effective accommodations and/or auxiliary aids and services
• Refuse unreasonable accommodations or auxiliary aids and services, and/or facility-related barrier removal requests that impose a fundamental alteration on a program or activity of the university

Louisburg College has the responsibility to:

• Provide information to faculty, staff, students and guests with disabilities in accessible formats upon request
• Ensure that courses, programs, services, jobs, activities and facilities, when viewed in their entirety, are available and usable in the most integrated and appropriate settings
• Evaluate students on the basis of their abilities and not their disabilities
• Respond to requests on a timely basis
• Provide or arrange reasonable accommodations and/or auxiliary aids and services for students with disabilities in course, programs, services, jobs, activities and facilities
• Maintain appropriate confidentiality of records and communication except where permitted or required by law
Eligibility for Disability Services

Students meet with the Director of Learning Support and Disability Services to complete an intake process during which the student’s expressed needs and the disability documentation is reviewed. Eligibility for services is based on a combination of the student’s description of need, the thoroughness of the disability documentation, and documentation guidelines developed by the OLSDS. At the conclusion of the intake, an individualized accommodation plan is developed for each student and training in use of the accommodations or services is provided.

Providing documentation of disability is the responsibility of the student. In general, the less obvious the disability, the more information is required to assess a student’s needs and make accommodation recommendations. Documentation should be recent, relevant and comprehensive and, where appropriate, contain test scores and interpretation (e.g. learning disability). If the original documentation is incomplete or inadequate to determine the extent of the disability or reasonable accommodation, the College has the discretion to require additional documentation. Any cost incurred in obtaining additional documentation is also borne by the student.

Note: Pending the receipt of appropriate documentation, Louisburg College reserves the right to deny services or accommodations to those who fail to meet the legal and professional definitions of “disabled” in this college environment. Students who feel that they have been unfairly denied services may follow the grievance procedures described in this handbook.

Disability Certification Process

Students requesting disability services are required to complete the following certification process:

- **Submit documentation of the disability from an appropriate licensed/certified professional.** A letter or summary statement will not suffice. A complete evaluation is required, dated within three years of the request for disability services. Please note that if we receive this information during the summer, we can begin preparing for your needs even before you arrive on campus.

- **Complete an intake interview with the Director of OLSDS.** An intake interview takes about one hour during which the student will provide information about how the disability impacts his/her life functioning. The intake also provides an opportunity for the student to become acquainted with support services that are offered through Disability Services. Documentation should be submitted before the intake session. Students may make an appointment by calling 919-497-3236.

- Parents may contact the OLSDS and request that the Director contact students, explain the services of the OLSDS, and invite them make an appointment. However, students are responsible for further pursuing eligibility with the OLSDS. From elementary to high school, parents often play an active role in advocating for their children’s educational needs, and rightly so. However, in college, parents shift from being the primary advocate to coaching their young adults in becoming independent self-advocates. Primary goals of the OLSDS are to support families as they experience this transition and to help students...
develop the skills they need to effectively advocate for themselves in academic life and beyond.

- At the college level, changes in the law require the student to take on the responsibility of self-identifying to the OLSDS, submitting proper documentation of a disability, requesting accommodations from the Director, discussing accommodations with faculty members, and alerting faculty and/or the Director if accommodations are not satisfactory.

**Provisional Certification**

Once you have completed the steps for certification it is possible that your documentation may not be sufficient for full certification. In some cases, a provisional status is allowed which enables students to receive disability services for one semester while the student pursues obtaining current and complete documentation.

**Determination of Reasonable Accommodations**

A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a course, program, service, activity or facility that enables a qualified student with a disability to have an equal opportunity to attain the same level of performance or enjoy equal benefits and privileges as are available to similarly situated students without disabilities. The college is obligated to provide accommodation only to the known limitations of an otherwise qualified disabled student. To determine reasonable accommodation, staff may seek information from appropriate college personnel regarding essential standards for courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities.

Documentation required for certification of accommodations is reviewed based on guidelines that were set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). These guidelines are followed to provide consistency among post-secondary institutions with regard to acceptable documentation for disability certification.

Reasonable accommodations are determined by examining:

- The barriers resulting from the interaction between the documented disability and the campus environment
- The possible accommodations that might remove the barriers
- Whether or not the student has access to the course, program, service, activity, or facility without an accommodation
- Whether or not essential elements of the course, program, service, activity, or facility are compromised by the accommodations

**Accommodation Request Analysis**

In reviewing accommodation requests, the following analysis is used:

1. Does the student have a disability?
2. Is the student “otherwise qualified”?
3. Did the student request an accommodation?
4. Was the request submitted in a manner consistent with established college policies and procedures?
5. Is the request reasonable and/or readily achievable?
6. Is the nature of the program or activity fundamentally altered by the provision of the accommodation?
7. Does the provision of the accommodation present an undue financial or administrative burden on the college?

**Note:** If the answer is “yes” to items 1-5 and “no” to 6-7, an accommodation should be provided. If this analysis results in a “no” to one of the questions 1-5 and/or “yes” to 6-7, then an accommodation may be denied or revised during the course of a student’s enrollment due to changes in disability status, disability documentation or program standards and requirements.

Some accommodations and services must be requested well in advance of each semester. For example, authorization for priority registration, interpreter services, and services for the blind all require students to communicate their service needs to the OLSDS staff well before the beginning of each semester.

Adhering to deadlines for service requests enables the college and the staff to allocate resources and provide necessary services in a timely manner.

**How to Receive Accommodations**

In order to receive academic accommodations the following steps must be completed each semester the student requests accommodations:

- **Each semester, meet with the Director of OLSDS for an Accommodation Review.** To ensure the most accurate and appropriate accommodations for each course, the student is required to meet with the Director of OLSDS to discuss which accommodations the student will need for each course.
- **Accommodation letters are processed.** The OLSDS will mail letters of accommodation to each instructor letting them know what accommodations each student is eligible for.
- **The student should meet with each faculty member to discuss his/her accommodations.** The student and faculty will meet privately to discuss the implementation of appropriate accommodations for the particular class.
- **The faculty member signs the accommodation letter and sends it back to the OLSDS.** The signed accommodation letter serves as a contract. The letter is kept on file in the OLSDS. A second copy is provided for the faculty member to keep.
- Students who are not yet comfortable or trained at explaining the impact of their disability to others (self-advocacy) are encouraged to meet with the Director to learn more about how to effectively discuss their needs with faculty members. The Director is also available to accompany students to these meetings during their first semester of eligibility.

**Note:** Students enrolled in Learning Partners must also renew accommodation information with the Director. Although learning specialists generally remind their students to make this
appointment at the beginning of each semester, the responsibility for making and keeping an appointment with the Director to renew accommodation information ultimately rests on the student.

Test Proctoring

Faculty members are responsible for proctoring exams for the students in their classes and should make arrangements with individual students for a time to proctor their tests.

- Students should verbally inform professors 2 days prior to an exam that they will be needing accommodations. If a student fails to do so, it is at the discretion of the professor whether or not to offer them.
- Professors should keep their own records for liability purposes, recording the name of the student, the type of accommodations offered, and the date they were provided.

Students who are in the Learning Partners Program (identified as such in the accommodations letter), may request to have their tests proctored in the Learning Labs by their Learning Specialist.

- Learning Partners students requesting accommodations in the Learning Labs will need to complete an exam proctoring checklist from the OLSDS 2 days prior to the exam.
- If a student does not give at least 2 days’ notice, it is up to the professor and Learning Specialist whether or not accommodations will be offered.
- On the proctoring sheet, the Learning Specialist will sign off on the type of accommodation the student is eligible for and the date and time of the proctor.
- Then the student will have the professor sign off on any special instructions, the method of exam delivery, and the method of exam return.
- The student will then bring the proctoring sheet to the Administrative Assistant, Taft 112, who will await the delivery of the exam by the method noted.
- The time a test is proctored must be arranged around both the schedule of the Learning Specialist and the student, so while an effort will be made to proctor as close as possible to the regular exam time, this is not always feasible.
- If the professor has a specific deadline for the test to be completed, he/she may indicate that on the proctoring sheet under “Special Instructions.”
- The Learning Specialist will contact the professor if she is unable to meet the deadline, and the professor may opt to proctor the test instead.
- If the student does not complete the test at the arranged time, it is at the discretion of the professor if a student will be allowed to reschedule.
**Assistive Technology Resources**  

The Learning Services Division provides assistive technology hardware and software designed to support the learning of students with a variety of needs.

**Reading Software**

*Kurzweil 3000*, text-to-speech software, has been installed in the Cecil W. Robbins Library and in the Learning Partners labs. *Kurzweil* assists students with reading by projecting text onto a computer screen and reading the text aloud. Students are able to manipulate the text size and speed at which it is read, to highlight specific portions of the text and save those changes, and to utilize dictionary and thesaurus capabilities while reading. A scanner and headphones are also available to support the *Kurzweil* program. Students with dyslexia and other difficulties related to language-based learning disabilities are especially encouraged to utilize this software.

**Writing Software**

*Dragon Naturally Speaking*, speech-to-text software, has been installed in the Cecil W. Robbins Library, the Writing Center, and in the Learning Partners labs. This program allows the user to speak to the computer rather than manipulating the keyboard to achieve typed text. The writer may orally or manually edit the text. A headset with earphones and a microphone is available to support this program as well. *Dragon Naturally Speaking* increases the writing efficiency of students with dyslexia, dysgraphia, and other symptomology of language-based learning disabilities. This program also offers word processing capabilities to students with motor impairments.

**Additional Technology**

The *AlphaSmart* is a portable keyboard with an on-board computer that allows students to take notes in class or work on any writing task in a remote location and save up to seven document files. The on-board computer offers dictionary and thesaurus capabilities. The *AlphaSmart* document files can be easily downloaded onto a standard computer and printed in one of the labs within Learning Services. *AlphaSmart* keyboards are available for student use. They are designed to especially facilitate writing for students facing dysgraphia and motor-visual integration difficulties.

The *Reading Pen II* is a handheld scanner that scans text, displays the entry on a small screen, and reads the entry aloud. The *Reading Pen* will read aloud a word, phrase, or sentence and pronounce the letters, syllables, or words of each entry. Additionally, it allows students to define scanned words with an on-board collegiate dictionary. This offers a portable means of increasing learning in students who face significant reading challenges, such as those with dyslexia.

Students may check out the *AlphaSmart or the Reading Pen* by signing a borrower agreement form in the OLSDS.
Students who have a print disability are also encouraged to consider subscribing to individual memberships for either *Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic* (RFB&D) audio book lending program or *Bookshare University Partnership*. Students may make an appointment with the OLSDS for certification and training in using the RFB&D audio book service, as well as digital texts through Bookshare.

**Residence Hall Accommodations**

Students requesting residence housing accommodations must be certified with the OLSDS. Louisburg College provides support services and reasonable accommodations to students with medical and/or psychological disabilities pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. In order to ensure the provision of reasonable and appropriate accommodations and services for students with disabilities, students requesting housing accommodations **must** complete the following steps:

- **Meet with the Director of OLSDS.** Call 919-497-3236 to schedule an appointment. During your meeting you will complete an intake interview which will take about an hour.

- **Submit documentation of your disability directly to the OLSDS** (located in Taft Building). You will need to submit documentation prior to your appointment so that the Director will have time review it before your intake. This documentation should be on letterhead and include the following information:
  1. Specification of diagnosis;
  2. Date of diagnosis;
  3. Identification of the instruments and procedures used to make the diagnosis;
  4. Accounting of the “major life activities” impacted by the student’s impairment and level of severity;
  5. Description of the student’s functional limitations in a college residential setting (i.e. how does the impairment significantly limit a major life activity in a residential setting); and
  6. Recommendations regarding effective accommodations to equalize the student’s educational opportunities at the post-secondary level; and
  7. Signature of qualified evaluator who is trained to make the diagnosis and recommendations

Both of the previous steps must be completed by March 1st if you are a returning student and by June 20th if you are a new student. This is to allow time for your request to be reviewed so that a recommendation may be made that is reasonable and appropriate based upon the intake interview and documentation. The information you provide may be shared with appropriate staff, including but not limited to Residence Life and Facility Services at Louisburg College, to the extent required to evaluate the request and make a recommendation. It is important to note that not all requests are determined appropriate or reasonable accommodations under ADA and Section 504. Requests submitted after this date will be reviewed but may not be able to be granted.
Grievance Procedure

An individual with a disability is defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA-1990) as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such impairment. An individual with a disability should meet the essential eligibility requirements of the college to participate in its academic and extra-curricular life. The college has an obligation to provide reasonable accommodations for an individual with a disability if it substantially limits access to facilities or services. Reasonable accommodations include, but are not limited to, adjustments to rules, policies, or practices and environmental adjustments such as removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or auxiliary aids and services. Reasonable accommodations do not include changes that involve a significant alteration of admission or academic curriculum requirements, actions that create an "undue hardship" on the operation of the college, or services/aids considered to be personal in nature.

Filing a Grievance

Informal Process

If the OLSDS denies a student request for accommodations due to a disability or a student has a complaint about an action that potentially violates the ADA or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the student should first engage in new or continued contact with OLSDS (i.e. submission of additional documentation, meeting in person, exploration of alternative options) to identify a solution. OLSDS will consult with faculty, staff, department chairs, or other college personnel involved in the dispute to understand their perspectives and solicit additional potential solutions. Every effort will be made to reach a solution informally.

Formal Process

Please note that the burden of proof rests with the student filing the grievance to prove that he/she has been subject to unfair treatment and/or injustice, which has adversely affected the student’s status, rights, or privileges at the college. All grievances must be filed within 90 days of the alleged injustice.

A student may file a formal grievance if the efforts to informally resolve the request for accommodations are not considered satisfactory by the student. The grievance should be submitted in writing to the ADA Committee. The student must describe the nature of the grievance, the accommodation requested of the college and accompanying rationale, and supporting documentation related to the condition.

The grievance should be formatted as follows:

- Date of act or decision being challenged
- Description of the alleged act or decision
- Explanation for the basis of the challenge
- Narrative explaining the chronology of the events leading up to the decision being challenged
- Description of the attempted informal resolution of the grievance
- Statement of the outcome the student is seeking

The ADA Committee will meet to review the matter within 30 calendar days of receipt of the grievance. The ADA Committee and student may mutually agree to postpone the proceedings to a specified date for further information gathering purposes. The committee can request witnesses, materials, and opinions related to the case as it deems necessary. The ADA Committee will make a final decision and communicate the findings in writing to OLSDS, faculty, or staff directly involved and to the student.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Portions of this handbook were adapted from the following college and universities’ handbooks:

Duke University – Durham, NC
Florence-Darlington Technical College – Florence, SC
Florida State University – Tallahassee, FL
Georgia Southern University – Statesboro, GA
Illinois State University – Normal, IL
Meredith College – Raleigh, NC
Pennsylvania State University – University Park, PA
University of Minnesota – Minneapolis, MA
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill – Chapel Hill, NC