Southern Connecticut State University
DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER

Online Learning- Accommodations FAQ

Dear Faculty:

As we continue with online learning due to the pandemic, please note that ADA requirements in terms of both access and accommodations apply to all online formats and platforms of delivery. All approved accommodations for students with disabilities apply. The Disability Resource Center is open and available to address any questions or concerns regarding online access. We realize the continued impact this change is having on all of us. To assist faculty in preparing for this experience the Office of Online Learning has been providing technical training over the past two semesters regarding online transition, learning, and ensuring materials are fully accessible. If you need further assistance or have questions about this, please contact Bo Zamfir (Zamfirb1@southernct.edu) or myself.

Online learning can be challenging for students with disabilities. As you interact with your students virtually, please pay special attention to how students are navigating the learning experience, and refer any student who you feel may need accommodations or assistance.

In order to ensure the accessibility needs of the students are addressed, we have provided some guidance on common online FAQS

1. **How do I verify exam accommodations?** If you need to verify a student's accommodations, please contact us.

2. **Does additional time for tests and exams apply online?** Yes, it does apply. Please note that Blackboard does provide the opportunity to adjust the test time for specific students. The Office of Online Learning (https://inside.southernct.edu/online-learning) provides guidance around this issue.

3. **Do materials uploaded have to be accessible?** Yes, they should be. Please ensure that your PowerPoints and materials uploaded are accessible. Use the Accessibility Checker within MS Word and PowerPoint to produce accessible documents. To do this, go to File – Check for Issues – Check Accessibility.

4. **What about students using text to speech technology**? Materials should be accessible. If a student uses text to speech software (Google read and Write etc.), exams and class materials should be uploaded to Blackboard as a PDF document.

5. **Should materials uploaded be accessible to screen readers**? Yes, they should be. Students who use screen readers (JAWS), will need class materials and exams uploaded to be accessible.

6. **Does flexibility with class assignment deadlines apply online?** Yes, it applies to online assignments. Please continue to provide flexibility for approved students.

7. **Does recording of class lectures apply?** Yes, it does. First, if you plan on recording your class lectures and sharing them on Blackboard, please make sure you speak clearly. If you are using a PowerPoint, please ensure you specify the pages as you go through your presentation. If a student is approved to tape-record lectures, it applies to online video and audio lectures.

8. **Will approved students still use note-taking express/smart pen**? Yes, they will. Please continue to support students approved for this accommodation by permitting them to tape-record the video and audio portions of the class.

9. **Does office hours help?** Please continue to make yourself available to our student via phone, teams/webex/zoom, and email as much as possible. Being pro-active and doing a check-in also helps; invite them to connect with you during office hours.

10. **What about ASL services?** If a student in your class indicates to you that they are deaf/hard of hearing and use sign language services, they will invite their interpreter to join any video-taught classes. The service will be provided remotely by the interpreter.

11. **What about videos uploads?** If you upload any videos, please make sure they are closed-captioned. Kaltura is a platform Southern provides, which can assist with this requirement. The Office of Online Learning provided guidance on this (https://inside.southernct.edu/online-learning).

12. **How do I check accessibility of content?** Utilize the Blackboard Ally accessibility tools for checking your content and providing alternate formats for your students. It provides a meter that checks accessibility of documents. Your target is an "A", a green icon with an arrow. In order to fix any inaccessible documents, click on the arrow for an alternate document format.

13. **What else can I do?** Considering the large-scale effect of the coronavirus and switch to online learning, please be pro-active in engaging students with disabilities. Reach out

and check-in to see how the online experience is going. For our students with mental health diagnoses, this experience can be very challenging. Reach out to our office for assistance, if needed. In addition, the Dean of Students' office is another valuable resource for non-accommodation issues.

14. **Can I get access to the online trainings?** Yes, you can.
https://inside.southernct.edu/online-learning/recordings

15. **How do I contact the DRC?**
DRC@southenrct.edu (203 392 6828)

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Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions and thanks for all you do to support our students.

Goldie Adele, M.S., J.D
Disability Resource Center, Director