

St Elizabeth College of Nursing



2025-2026

Disability Services for Reasonable Accommodations Handbook

**Disability Services Coordinator
(315) 801-3078**

St Elizabeth College of Nursing



St. Elizabeth College of Nursing (SECON) recognizes its responsibility to provide equal access to opportunity for students with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The College's physical environment complies with Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and provides the appropriate accommodations throughout the facility to ensure student access. The College provides reasonable adjustments and/or accommodations to assure that students will have equal opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed during their time at St. Elizabeth College of Nursing. The entire College community (administration, faculty, staff, and students) has the broad responsibility to adhere to this philosophy of equal access to opportunity.

SECON utilizes the current best practices for complying with the rules and regulations of disability support services. The Disability Services Coordinator provides leadership for our efforts to assure equal access for our students. The College supports the authority of the Disability Coordinator in these efforts.

To contact the Office of the Disability Services Coordinator, Julie Wells-Tsiatsos, at St. Elizabeth College of Nursing:

Telephone: 315-801-3078
E-mail: jwells-tsiatsos@secon.edu
Regular Mail:
St. Elizabeth College of Nursing
Coordinator of Disability Services
2215 Genesee Street
Utica, New York 13501

The Office of the Disability Services Coordinator is located on the first floor, Room 109, of the St. Elizabeth College of Nursing campus. Office hours are by appointment.

To contact the New York State Education Department, Office of the Professions for reasonable accommodations for the NCLEX-RN:

Telephone: 518-474-3817 ext. 290
Fax: 518-473-8577
e-mail: opexams@nysed.gov

Regular mail:
New York State Education Department
Office of the Professions
Professional Examinations Unit
Education Building, 2nd Floor, East Wing
89 Washington Ave.
Albany, NY 12234-1000

The Reasonable Accommodations form can be printed from the following website:

<https://www.op.nysed.gov/sites/op/files/documents/pls1ra.pdf>

ADMISSIONS INFORMATION

MAKING THE TRANSITION FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE

The following chart summarizes the differences in student rights and responsibilities from high school (K – 12) to college (Post – Secondary).

	K – 12	Post - Secondary
Regulations	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Section 504 (subsection D) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.	Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) Section 504 (subsection E) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
Intent	To provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment.	To ensure access to the educational program for persons otherwise qualified to meet the standards of the college.
Identification	Schools are responsible for identifying, evaluating, and classifying students.	Students are responsible for self-identifying and providing appropriate documentation.
Educational Plan	Schools are responsible for creating an individualized education program (IEP).	IEP / 504 Plan from high school does not continue into college.
Service Provision	Schools provide special education program and services as part of student's schedule.	No special education. Students are responsible for their education. Accommodations are available for students who choose to use them.
Advocacy	Parents and school personnel advocate for the student.	Students are self-advocates.
Parents	Parents are active participants in the educational process. They attend meetings and share in decision-making.	Students are responsible for their own educational process. Parents are not actively involved.

DISCLOSURE INFORMATION

Students have the opportunity to disclose a disability during the admissions process. St. Elizabeth College of Nursing does not have an alternate admissions process for students with disabilities. They are admitted under the same highly selective criteria as other students—admissions requirements are not waived or altered based upon a disabling condition.

If you have questions about the admissions process, please contact our Admissions Offices:

Admissions Office

By phone: (315) 801-8347

By email: conadmis@secon.edu

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, all accepted candidates must be otherwise qualified for program acceptance and must fulfill program requirements. Once admitted, students with disabilities are **strongly advised** to contact the Disability Services Coordinator as soon as they decide to attend St. Elizabeth College of Nursing and prior to beginning course work. This will allow time to submit the required documentation in a timely fashion if they plan to request accommodations. This contact will also allow the Disability Services Coordinator to answer any questions that the student might have.

See Technical Standards for Nursing Students, CNG-100.9

THE PROCESS FOR DETERMINING APPROPRIATE ACCOMMODATIONS

St. Elizabeth College of Nursing has charged the Disability Services Coordinator, the Dean of Student and Faculty Development, with the responsibility for making decisions regarding the accommodations necessary to provide equal access for students.

Accommodations for St. Elizabeth College of Nursing students are determined on an individualized basis in a collaborative process between each student and the Disability Services Coordinator.

This is the usual sequence for the process:

- The student contacts the Disability Services Coordinator and/or the nursing course facilitator to self-declare as a student with a disability and to request accommodations.
- If the student notifies the course coordinator of the need for special accommodations, the course coordinator will refer the student to the Disability Services Coordinator.
- The Disability Services Coordinator provides the Disability Services for Reasonable Accommodations Handbook and informs the student as to the required documentation (See Appendix A) they may need for accommodations to be provided.
- Once self-report or when the appropriate documentation is received, the student and the Disability Services Coordinator meet to discuss:
 - the student's understanding of their disability
 - the disability documentation records that were submitted
 - if the student's documentation supports a need for accommodations
 - how the disability affects or may affect the student in the classroom
 - what accommodations and strategies the student has used in the past
 - what accommodations the student believes would be beneficial at St. Elizabeth College of Nursing
- Based on the discussion of the self-report or the documentation received, the Disability Services Coordinator determines what accommodations would be appropriate for that student's needs.
- A student requesting accommodations that require significant lead time such as books in audiotape, must make these needs known and supply the appropriate documentation at least two weeks prior to the start of classes.
- After meeting with the Disability Services Coordinator, a form for reasonable accommodations, with specific accommodations identified for the student, will be initiated.
- Copies of the form will be given to the course coordinator, student and the original maintained by the Disability Coordinator
- It is the student's responsibility:
 - to determine to whom, they wish to disclose the disability
 - to inform their faculty of the accommodation required by providing a copy of the completed form to the course coordinator or faculty member
 - to meet with the course coordinator to discuss the form that outlines reasonable accommodations
 - notify the course coordinator of each course in the program at the beginning of the semester of the need for special accommodations
- Except for circumstances of educational need to know or an emergency situation, the Disability Services Coordinator will not initiate a discussion about the student's disability or accommodations with any faculty or staff person: the student is responsible for doing so.
- The Disability Services Coordinator will continue to assist the student as an advocate and advisor for as long as the student is enrolled at St. Elizabeth College of Nursing.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Student Records

The Disability Services Coordinator is responsible for collecting and holding student disability documentation. Student documentation information is private and sensitive, and the Disability Services Coordinator holds this information in the context of assuring that the students have access to necessary accommodation and support.

The student records held by the Disability Services Coordinator are protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). As such, the records are considered to be educational records, not medical records. They are kept in secure files, with access limited to the Disability Services Coordinator.

There may be occasions when the Disability Services Coordinator will share information regarding a student's disability with other St. Elizabeth College of Nursing personnel if circumstances necessitate such sharing due to an appropriate legitimate educational need to know. Circumstances that may warrant such release may include, but are not limited to:

- Faculty/Staff requests to the Disability Services Coordinator for assistance
- Requests for a course substitution
- Concerns for the student's well-being
- Complaint procedures
- Special financial aid considerations

Confidentiality is not maintained in the case of abuse, suicidal, or homicidal intent.

If a student wishes to have information about their disability shared with others outside the College, the student must provide written authorization to the Disability Services Coordinator to release the information.

Maintenance of Records

The Disability Services Coordinator maintains a file on each student that includes documentation of the disability. These student files will be shredded seven years after either the last contact with the student or the student's graduation date; therefore, students should make certain that they maintain their own copies of their disability documentation and their accommodation letters.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Rights and Responsibilities of Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities at St. Elizabeth College of Nursing have the right to:	Students with disabilities at St. Elizabeth College of Nursing have the responsibility to:
Equal access to courses, programs, services, and activities offered by the College.	Meet qualifications and maintain essential institutional standards for courses, programs, and activities.
An equal opportunity to learn, and to receive reasonable accommodations in an effort to diminish the effect of the disability on academic functioning.	Self-identify as an individual with a disability when requesting accommodations, and to seek information, counsel, and assistance as necessary in a timely fashion.
Self-determine who will receive student released disability-related materials and information within and outside the College.	Provide documentation from an appropriate professional on how the disability limits participation in courses, programs, services, and activities.
All other rights and privileges available to other students at St. Elizabeth College of Nursing.	Follow College procedures for obtaining reasonable academic accommodations and/or auxiliary aids and services.

Rights and Responsibilities of St. Elizabeth College of Nursing:

St. Elizabeth College of Nursing has the right to:	St. Elizabeth College of Nursing has the responsibility to:
Identify and establish essential functions, abilities, skills, knowledge, requirements, and standards for courses, programs, services, and activities, and to evaluate students on this basis.	Ensure that courses, programs, services, and activities, when viewed in their entirety, are available in the most integrated and appropriate settings.
Request and receive, through the Disability Services Coordinator, current documentation that supports requests for academic accommodations and/or auxiliary aids and services.	Evaluate students on their abilities and not their disabilities.
Deny a request for academic accommodations and/or auxiliary aids and services if the documentation demonstrates that the request is not warranted, or if the individual fails to provide appropriate documentation.	Provide or arrange for reasonable academic accommodations and/or auxiliary aids and services for students with disabilities in courses, programs, services, and activities.
Select among equally effective academic accommodations and/or auxiliary aids and services.	Maintain appropriate confidentiality of records and communication except where permitted or required by law or when the student requests that such information be shared.
Refuse an unreasonable academic accommodation and/or auxiliary aid or service that imposes a fundamental alteration of a program or activity of the College.	

APPENDIX A

ST. ELIZABETH COLLEGE OF NURSING DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES

Documentation must be current. “Current” refers to the content of the documentation, rather than to the date on which it was created. Current documentation will provide SECON with a clear understanding of how the student is performing/functioning **right now**. For some disabilities, current documentation would need to be no more than six months old. For other disabilities, documentation may need to be within three years to be current. A school plan, such as an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a 504 Plan, is insufficient as documentation in and of itself, but can be included as part of a more comprehensive evaluative report.

The following disability-specific documentation guidelines are not meant to be used exclusively or as a replacement for direct communication with the Disability Services Coordinator regarding the individual nature of a disability. While submitted documentation meeting these guidelines may be acceptable to SECON, it is important to be mindful that they may/may not meet the documentation guidelines required in the future by other academic or testing organizations (e.g., special certification, board examinations, standardized tests for admission to graduate schools, etc.).

The Disability Services Coordinator will make the determination of whether or not submitted documentation is appropriate, and whether or not reasonable accommodations are warranted and can be provided to the individual.

LEARNING DISABILITY

Documentation must be typed on letter head, provide current information, and be recent (within the last three years).

Documentation should include each of the following *essential components*.*

1. The credentials of the evaluator(s).
2. A diagnostic statement identifying the disability.
3. A description of the diagnostic methodology used.
4. A description of the current functional limitations.
5. A description of the expected progression or stability of the disability.
6. A description of current and past accommodations, services and/or medications.
7. Recommendations for accommodations, adaptive devices, assistive services, compensatory strategies, and/or collateral support services.

Additional Information:

Documentation should include a comprehensive assessment battery **using adult measures**. Also included should be a diagnostic review composed of an interview; assessments of aptitude, academic achievement, and information processing; and a summary with a diagnosis of a specific learning disability and recommendations for appropriate classroom accommodations. Appropriate documentation may include:

- Information from a standardized aptitude test, including subtest scores (such as the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-Revised).
- Information regarding academic achievement (i.e. Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised: Test of Achievement), including all subtests and standard scores reported for those subtests. The battery should include current levels of academic functioning in relevant areas such as reading (decoding and comprehension), mathematics, and oral and written language.
- Information regarding information processing (e.g., Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised: Tests of Cognitive Ability). Specific areas of information processing should be assessed.
- A recent DSM diagnosis of a specific learning disability.
- Identification of learning strengths and weaknesses.
- The report should include a description of the impact of the diagnosed learning disability on the student's ability to function in a demanding college environment which requires independent, social functioning.
- Diagnostic summary with recommendations for appropriate classroom accommodations as substantiated by assessment and diagnosis in report.

*Association on Higher Education and Disability website (www.ahead.org) article: *AHEAD Best Practices: Disability Documentation in Higher Education*. The specific section in the article is: *Seven Essential Elements of Quality Disability Documentation*.

ATTENTION DEFICIT/HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

Documentation must be typed on letter head, provide current information, and be recent (preferably within the last three years).

Documentation should include each of the following essential components.*

1. The credentials of the evaluator(s).
2. A diagnostic statement identifying the disability.
3. A description of the diagnostic methodology used.
4. A description of the current functional limitations.
5. A description of the expected progression or stability of the disability.
6. A description of current and past accommodations, services and/or medications.
7. Recommendations for accommodations, adaptive devices, assistive services, compensatory strategies, and/or collateral support services.

Additional Information:

The diagnostic report should include the following components:

- A specific diagnosis of AD/HD based on the recent DSM diagnostic criteria.
- A complete psycho-educational evaluation, including a cognitive assessment (a major, adult-normed aptitude test). All subtest scores and standard scores should be included, and an interpretation of this data should be provided.
- Relevant historical information is essential. A comprehensive assessment should include a clinical summary of objective historical information that establishes symptomatology indicative of AD/HD throughout childhood, adolescence, and adulthood.
- A medication history and current recommendations regarding medications. Given that many individuals benefit from prescribed medications and therapies, a positive response to medication by itself does not confirm a diagnosis, nor does the use of medication in and of itself either support or negate the need for accommodation.
- A description of the impact of the diagnosed AD/HD on the student's ability to function in a demanding college environment which requires independent, social functioning.
- Recommendations for accommodations, and an explanation as to how each recommendation correlates with specific functional limitations determined through interview, observation, and/or testing.

**Association on Higher Education and Disability website (www.ahead.org) article: AHEAD Best Practices: Disability Documentation in Higher Education. The specific section in the article is: Seven Essential Elements of Quality Disability Documentation.*

EMOTIONAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL DISABILITY

Documentation must be typed on letter head, provide current information, and be recent (preferably within the last year).

Documentation should include each of the following *essential components*.*

1. The credentials of the evaluator(s).
2. A diagnostic statement identifying the disability.
3. A description of the diagnostic methodology used.
4. A description of the current functional limitations.
5. A description of the expected progression or stability of the disability.
6. A description of current and past accommodations, services and/or medications.
7. Recommendations for accommodations, adaptive devices, assistive services, compensatory strategies, and/or collateral support services.

Additional Information:

Due to the changing nature of emotional/psychological disabilities, accommodations are based upon the current impact of the disability. Therefore, the documentation must address the individual's current level of functioning and the need for accommodations (e.g., due to observed changes in performance or medication changes since previous assessment). If the diagnostic report is more than one academic year old, the test taker must also submit a letter from a qualified professional that provides an update of the diagnosis, a description of the student's current level of functioning during the preceding twelve months, and a rationale for the requested academic accommodations.

Documentation should be based on a comprehensive diagnostic/clinical evaluation that adheres to the guidelines outlined in this document. The diagnostic report should include the following components:

- A specific diagnosis based on the recent DSM diagnostic criteria.
- A description of student's ability to function in a demanding college environment which requires independent, social functioning.
- Relevant information regarding medications. Significant side effects that may affect physical, perceptual, or cognitive functioning within the academic setting should be identified and described.
- Relevant information regarding current treatment.

*Association on Higher Education and Disability website (www.ahead.org) article: *AHEAD Best Practices: Disability Documentation in Higher Education*. The specific section in the article is: *Seven Essential Elements of Quality Disability Documentation*.

PHYSICAL/MEDICAL DISABILITY

Documentation must be typed on letter head (notes on prescription pads or photocopies of physician / nurse notes from the patient's file are not acceptable), provide current information, and be recent (within the last year).

Documentation should include each of the following *essential components*.*.

1. The credentials of the evaluator(s).
2. A diagnostic statement identifying the disability.
3. A description of the diagnostic methodology used. (A summary of assessment procedures / evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis, and a summary of evaluation results).
4. A description of the current functional limitations. (A statement that includes the nature and current status of the disability, including the impact of any medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of the college environment).
5. A description of the expected progression or stability of the disability.
6. A description of current and past accommodations, services and/or medications.
7. Recommendations for accommodations, adaptive devices, assistive services, compensatory strategies, and/or collateral support services. (These recommendations should be supported by the diagnosis).

*Association on Higher Education and Disability website (www.ahead.org) article: AHEAD Best Practices: Disability Documentation in Higher Education. The specific section in the article is: Seven Essential Elements of Quality Disability Documentation.