

## **Student Development Center Frequently Asked Questions: (FAQS):**

**Q: Who is responsible for identifying and documenting need for special accommodations?**

**A:** University System of Georgia college students, unlike high school students, are responsible for self-identification and for obtaining documentation from a professional qualified to assess their specific disability. The cost of the evaluation(s) must be covered by the student and not the institution.

**Q: Who is responsible for initiating service delivery for special accommodations?**

**A:** ABAC students, unlike high school students, are responsible for notifying ABAC's Student Development Center staff, Ms. Annie Sims or Dr. Maggie Martin, of their disability and of their need for accommodations. Specifically documented accommodations are provided on a semester-by-semester basis in order for students with diagnosed disabilities to have equal access to ABAC's programs and activities.

**Q: What about advocacy?**

**A:** University System of Georgia college students, unlike high school students, must be able to communicate to their professors what their disability is, their strengths and weaknesses, how the disability impacts and functionally limits major life activities, and they should identify any requested accommodations based on approved documentation. Students are expected to develop study skills, manage time effectively and to learn how to best use any adaptive technology (eg, scanners located in both the Student Development Center and the Library).

**Q: Are specialized separate classes available for persons diagnosed with a disability?**

**A:** No. ABAC strives to provide excellent educational opportunities for all students. One course exception is an adaptive physical education activity course which is tailored on an individual basis.

**Q: I have a diagnosed disability. How may I receive services from the Student Development Center?**

**A:** The formal process begins when you receive your acceptance letter from ABAC. All students who are accepted to ABAC will receive a "Voluntary Declaration of Disability" (VDD) form. When you return the Voluntary Declaration of Disability form to the Student Development Center, you will receive a letter requesting appropriate documentation for your specific disability that we will send to the Regents Center for

Learning Disorders for approval. If you are granted approval to receive disability services, you will need to call The Student Development Center at 229-391-5135 for an appointment when you arrive on campus. At that point, your services will begin. Early planning is very important. One exception is a June 15 deadline for that upcoming Fall Semester for notifying the Office of Student Life and Housing and the Student Development Center for any needed Housing Accommodations.

**Q: What if I do not have adequate documentation?**

**A:** After the Student Development Center receives your “Voluntary Declaration of Disability” (VDD) form, you will be contacted about proper documentation. If you do not have appropriate documentation, options for obtaining what is needed will be discussed. When you receive approval by the Regents Center for Learning Disorders, you will be notified by the Student Development Center about the process for obtaining accommodations for your classes.

**Q: Does ABAC provide testing to document a disability?**

**A:** No. However, we do provide referral services for appropriate testing, diagnoses and documentation. Georgia Southern University in Statesboro, GA houses a center funded by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. The Regents Center for Learning Disorders (RCLD) provides psychological testing for students with Attention Deficit Disorder, Learning Disabilities and Acquired Brain Injuries. The cost is \$500.00. A Student Development Center professional will walk you through the process. Other referral resources outside of the University System of Georgia can be provided upon request. However, the results from sources outside of the RCLD must still be approved by the RCLD. This approval process is completed through the Student Development Center at ABAC.

**Q: What are the needed documents for my disability?**

**A:** Standards vary across different disability diagnoses for documentation. Standards for Learning Disabilities, Attention Deficit Disorder and psychological diagnoses have been established by the Board of Regents. For more information visit these sites:

<http://www.abac.edu/ADA/>

<http://www.abac.edu/sd/Disability/toc.htm>

<http://www.abac.edu/sd/Disability/Determining%20Eligibility.htm>

**Q: If I do not choose to disclose my disability when I am admitted to ABAC, may I do that later and receive accommodations?**

**A:** Yes. You may disclose at any time and receive accommodations with appropriate and required documentation. However, you cannot receive accommodations until the proper documentation requirements are satisfied. ABAC strongly urges students to satisfy documentation requirements prior to registration for classes. If problems later arise and

accommodations are needed, they can then be put in place immediately. Accommodations are not retroactive.

**Q: Are students with disabilities provided with priority registration?**

**A:** Yes, if your documentation and list of accommodations include early registration. No, if your documentation and list of accommodations do not include early registration. The best action is to have documentation in place in the Student Development Center, make an appointment to acquaint yourself with your ABAC academic advisor and provide your letter stating accommodations you will require. In this way, time of classes, spacing between classes, location of classes and parking considerations can be arranged. However, all students can be advised before early registration, register on their assigned registration date and are encouraged to do so.

**Q: Does the Student Development Center staff provide Academic Advisement?**

**A:** While the Student Development Center is over Undeclared Majors Advising, we do not typically provide academic advising for specific majors. You will need to see your assigned Academic Advisor for advisement. We do not always know the specific requirements for all majors, as many majors require certain courses, internship or experiential learning experiences. However, we can guide you through following the degree requirements listed in the College Catalog:  
<http://www.abac.edu/registrar/catalog>

**Q: What if one of my classes is in King Hall, an inaccessible building that cannot be renovated due to the Historic Preservation Act?**

**A:** Let Dr. Maggie Martin know as soon as you find out you have a class in King Hall. An accessible building and room can then be arranged.

**Q: Must I receive accommodations every semester?**

**A:** No. You may choose to receive accommodations at any time during the semester or not at all, as long as you have the appropriate and approved documentation listing your specific accommodations on file with the Student Development Center. You may wish to have accommodations for only one or two classes rather than for all of your classes. It is up to you as a student in college at ABAC to arrange for your accommodations.

**Q: I have a diagnosed psychological, mental and/or emotional disability that causes me, at times, to be disruptive. Could this be a problem for me in college?**

**A:** Yes, because all students, including students with psychological, mental and/or emotional disabilities, have the responsibility to meet ABAC's Student Code of Conduct <http://www.abac.edu/student-services/handbook/conduct.htm> by adapting behavior to the educational environment. If disruptive behavior persistently occurs or the Student Code of Conduct is violated, the issue will be defined as a disciplinary issue. In any case,

if personal safety is ever threatened by anybody, with or without a disability, call ABAC Police at 391-5060.

**Q: I have a recent injury (for example, a broken writing arm, eye injury, broken leg, fractured foot). May I receive disability services if I am still able to attend class?**

**A:** Yes and anyone can become disabled at any time. Individuals with a temporary disability, usually due to an injury or surgery and after receiving medical treatment, need to provide appropriate documentation of the disability. Depending on the documentation, a student may be eligible to receive services such as temporary note takers, special test administrations, taping lectures, copies of overheads from instructors or special seating. If a student is going to be absent for an extended time after the Midterm Withdrawal Without Academic Penalty deadline (for example, hospitalization), assistance can be provided in making a request for a medical withdrawal when applicable. To learn more about a medical withdrawal, please contact Dr. Maggie Martin in the Student Development Center.

If you are not sure of the type of accommodations you need specific to your temporary impairment, please schedule an appointment with the Student Development Center staff.

If the duration of your impairment is expected to have long-term or permanent effects, please schedule an appointment with the Student Development Center staff to determine what classroom accommodations are appropriate and how to most easily and appropriately arrange them. Please follow all of the steps outlined earlier in this section to insure that your academic needs can be met in a timely manner.

## **Accommodations**

**Q. What kinds of accommodations are available?**

**A.** A University System of Georgia Institution, including ABAC, is required to make reasonable accommodations to students meeting the University System criteria for a disability that impacts learning. However, a diagnosis of a specific learning disability or ADHD or any disability does not automatically provide students with accommodations. There must be appropriate and approved evidence that the disability is interfering with academic performance. Any accommodations provided at ABAC must be appropriate for a specific student's strengths and weaknesses. Services to students with disabilities must be individualized, but must also be consistent across students with similar evaluation results.

Few University System policies may be waived for students with a disability. Means should be sought to assist students in meeting all academic requirements through accommodations and modifications of instructional techniques and testing procedures.

Examples of classroom accommodations that can be provided if justified and approved by documentation through the Regents Center for Learning Disorders (RCLD) may include:

- Extended time on exams
- A less distractible place for taking tests than the classroom
- Permission to record lectures and/or have note taking assistance
- Use of a non-programmable calculator
- Use of computer based technologies for written work
- Use of texts in alternative format

**Q. Who decides which accommodations will be provided to an individual student?**

- A. Eligibility for accommodations at a University System of Georgia state college or university, including ABAC, is determined by the University System's Regents Center for Learning Disorders (RCLD). Accommodations approved previously at the high school level, or at a non-University System of Georgia institution, may or may not be granted.

If a student has been evaluated at a Regents Center for Learning Disorders and/or Attention Deficit Disorder, the RCLD's written report will include a list of recommended and/or approved accommodations that are consistent with University System policy. If the student has been evaluated elsewhere, the Disability Service Providers at ABAC (Ms. Annie Sims and Dr. Maggie Martin) will seek consultation from the RCLD to identify appropriate accommodations based on that student's specific needs.

For a smaller more targeted group of accommodations, referred to as Regents level accommodations, a Regents Center for Learning Disorders must approve the accommodations, based on either the RCLD evaluation of the student, or a review of the student's documentation from another professional.

Regents level accommodations may include:

- e. A course substitution for the high school College Preparatory Curriculum (CPC) foreign language requirement
- f. Additional semesters in Learning Support
- g. Regents Test, Collegiate Placement Exam (CPE) or COMPASS modifications other than those specified in the Regents Testing Program Administrative Procedures.

**Q. Does approval of a CPC foreign language substitution guarantee a similar substitution for any foreign language courses that are required in the student's chosen major or program of study?**

- A. The CPC foreign language substitution is for admission purposes only; it does not guarantee a substitution for a foreign language requirement in the student's chosen major. Students may petition to a designated committee at each institution for a substitution of any foreign language course(s) required for the major. In some fields of study, the institution may decide that the foreign language requirement is an "essential course/program requirement" which cannot be substituted, regardless of a documented disability.