

MAINE COLLEGE OF ART DISABILITY SERVICES: POLICIES + PROCEDURES

Maine College of Art (MECA) is committed to providing equal access for students with disabilities. Under the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and its amendments, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, MECA provides reasonable accommodations to qualified students with documented disabilities. We encourage self-advocacy and early identification of need. Students can expect to work collaboratively with the disability services coordinator to develop an individualized plan for specific accommodations.

Students must contact the Disability Services Coordinator in order to initiate the process and make requests for accommodations. It is recommended that students seeking services contact the coordinator prior to or upon admission. The determination of disability-related accommodations and support services does not affect MECA's admission process. The coordinator will guide students through the process and procedures to access services.

Students can expect that some previous K-12 accommodations may not continue in the college setting and a student's active role in the process of receiving accommodations becomes essential to accessing accommodations. As such, the Disability Services Coordinator strives to individually assess student needs and provide supportive strategies to gain self-advocacy skills and increase awareness of student responsibility.

BRIEF STEP BY STEP GUIDE

1. Admitted or enrolled at Maine College of Art
2. Student discloses need for services/accommodations to the Disability Services Coordinator
3. Student meets with Disability Services Coordinator to start the interactive process which will include reviewing procedures, documentation guidelines and discussion of reasonable accommodations
4. Student completes application and waiver form
5. Student provides documentation
6. Coordinator reviews student's request with documentation
7. Implementation and completion of accommodations or appeals process
8. Each semester, student requests an accommodation memo and notifies faculty of approved accommodation needs

SUPPORT SERVICES

Services for students with disabilities are provided to promote full participation in programs and activities at MECA. The Disability Services Coordinator has the role of reviewing documentation and determining effective and reasonable accommodations. Specific information about the procedures for requesting accommodations may be obtained by contacting the coordinator, **Joanne Benica at disabilityservices@meca.edu or 207.699.5035 (phone) / 207.775.5087 (fax).**

Students who need auxiliary services will be permitted to use aids such as digital recorders, Braille or recorded texts, sign language interpreters, note takers or other adaptive equipment. The college's responsibility for providing auxiliary aids will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

The college does not provide wheelchairs, hearing aids, personal attendants, and other kinds of personal devices or services.

DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES FOR DISABILITY SERVICES

Students are not required to notify the college of their disability either prior to or after the admission process. However, if students with disabilities wish to request support services or program modification on the basis of disability, the college must receive reasonable advance notice of such needs. In addition, the college may require that students provide evidence/documentation that identifies the nature of the disability and its current, functional impact.

The following should be included in the documentation:

- 1.** Name, credentials and contact information of the evaluator
- 2.** The nature of the disability and relevant history
- 3.** Test results, including scores and written evaluation of scores
- 4.** DSM-V or ICD-9 diagnosis with information outlining the duration, severity, treatment and expected prognosis of the condition
- 5.** A description of how the disability impacts engagement in day to day activities as related to life at college
- 6.** Names of any medications and potential side effects
- 7.** Suggested accommodations

It is important to note that submission of documentation does not ensure accommodations. Students must also meet with the Disability Services Coordinator to engage in the interactive process to determine reasonable accommodations.

Documentation should be authored by a licensed clinical professional or health care provider, who is trained and qualified to evaluate the disability and familiar with the student's history. Documentation may not be provided by a student's relative, friend or family member. Accommodations are determined based on documentation content, student's self-report and the coordinator's evaluation at intake. Once determined, accommodations remain the same for the duration of a student's tenure at MECA. Students who experience a change in their disability and accommodations needs, must contact the Disability Services Coordinator for review. Additional documentation may be requested at this time of review. All documentation must be on official letterhead, include the title, professional credentials as well as licensing and certification information, and signed by a qualified evaluator.

STUDENT INFORMATION ON ACCOMMODATIONS

DISTRIBUTION OF ACCOMMODATION MEMO

The accommodation memo identifies the accommodations for which you are eligible. Students must request a copy of their faculty memo each semester and provide the memo to individual faculty.

PROVISION OF ACCOMMODATIONS

Your instructor is notified of your initial request for accommodations through the memo that you provide. It is important that you meet with your faculty individually to discuss your needs for the course and how your accommodations will be implemented. It is the student's responsibility to communicate with the faculty or the disability services coordinator if an accommodation is not working or needs revision. If a disagreement or conflict arises that cannot be resolved satisfactorily between you and the instructor, you must contact the Disability Services Coordinator for further assistance as soon as possible. Instructors have also been notified to contact that office in the event of questions or concerns. You must notify the faculty member of accommodations at the beginning of each semester or as soon as possible upon receipt of the accommodation memo. If you chose not to use accommodations and then decide to implement them in the middle of the semester, the accommodations are put into effect at the time of notice. Accommodations are never retroactive.

FURTHER REQUESTS FOR ACCOMMODATIONS

Students who experience a change in their disability and accommodations needs, must contact the Disability Services Coordinator for review. Additional documentation may be requested. If the additional accommodation is deemed reasonable, the accommodation will be added to your accommodation memo and a copy provided to you to distribute to your instructor(s). The denial of any requested accommodation by the Disability Services Coordinator can be appealed.

USE OF ACCOMMODATIONS

You may decline to use an accommodation if you determine that the accommodation is not needed for a given course. For testing accommodations involving extended time, an alternative test location or alternative format, you should discuss with your instructor(s) how these accommodations will be implemented. Reasonable notice to the instructor is required in order to ensure timely provision of the accommodation. We recommend at least two weeks notice for testing accommodation logistics. If an approved accommodation is not being provided in a timely or effective manner, you must contact the Disability Services Coordinator as soon as possible to seek resolution.

RENEWAL OF THE ACCOMMODATION MEMO

Upon student request, the accommodation memo will be provided to you for distribution to faculty on a semester-by-semester basis. You should contact the Disability Services Coordinator prior to classes beginning or the first week of classes to request a copy of your accommodation memo. Once your request is received, your accommodation letter will be emailed to you so that you can provide a copy to your instructors.

MAINE COLLEGE OF ART DISABILITY SERVICES: GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Discrimination based on disability is prohibited under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and its amendments and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

The following outlines MECA's process for resolving complaints:

- 1. Contents:** The grievance must be in writing; must contain the name, address, and telephone number of the student; and must include the location, date and description of the alleged discrimination. Alternative means of grieving, such as a personal interview or tape-recording, are available upon request.
- 2. Filing:** The student, or, if necessary because of disability, a designee, must submit the grievance to the 504/ADA Compliance Coordinator. The Director of Student Life serves as the 504/ADA compliance coordinator with the role of providing information about services and referring complainants to the appropriate office. The grievance should be submitted as soon as possible and no later than twenty (20) calendar days after the alleged violation. The Director of Student Life may be contacted at: Maine College of Art, 522 Congress Street., Portland, ME 04101; telephone (207) 699.5035.
- 3. Decision:** As soon as practical after receipt of the grievance, the Director of Student Life will meet with the student to discuss the complaint. Reasonable accommodations to participate in the grievance process will be provided to the complainant upon request. As soon as practical after the meeting, the Director of Student Life will respond in a format accessible to the student (such as large print, braille or audiotape). The response will explain the position of the College and, where practical, will offer options for substantive resolution.
- 4. Student Appeal to the Dean of the College:** Within fifteen (15) calendar days after receiving the Officer's decision, the student may appeal to the Dean of the College. Such an appeal should be directed to Ian Anderson, Dean of the College, Maine College of Art, 522 Congress Street., Portland, ME 04101; telephone (207) 699.5036 or ianderson@meca.edu.
- 5. Decision of the Dean of the College:** As soon as practical after the receipt of the appeal, the Dean of the College will meet with the student to discuss the appeal. As soon as practical after the meeting, the Dean of the College will issue, in a format accessible to the student, a final decision regarding the grievance.
- 6. Record Retention:** The College will retain all documentation of grievances, appeals and responses in the above procedure for at least three (3) years.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The nature of your disability, the content of your documentation and other records on file with the Disability Services Coordinator are confidential. You are free to disclose any information that you choose about your disability to faculty or others, but you are not required to disclose any information beyond what is contained in the accommodation memo.

NOTIFICATION POLICY

The disability services policy will be included in the Student Handbook and on the MECA website.

MAINE COLLEGE OF ART DISABILITY SERVICES: ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF MECA COMMUNITY

Students must:

1. Self-identify and meet with the Disability Services Coordinator.
2. Provide documentation.
3. Discuss accommodations with faculty.
4. Meet academic standards of courses.

Disability Services Coordinator must:

1. Maintain the confidential records that identify students with disabilities.
2. Evaluate the documentation and determine eligibility for accommodations.
3. With the student, and with faculty as appropriate, determine reasonable accommodations and provide consultation and assistance as needed for their timely and effective provision.
4. Educate faculty and institutional members on ADA policies and procedures.

Faculty must:

1. Provide notice to students of ADA services and how they can access them via a syllabus statement.
2. Provide approved accommodations to registered students in coordination with program chairs and the Disability Services Coordinator;
3. Ensure that academic standards are met in compliance with ADA policies.
4. Refer students with accommodations to the Disability Services Coordinator when issues arise involving accommodations.
5. Serve as role models to set the tone for sensitivity and acceptance of students with disabilities.

Department Chairs must:

1. Ensure that students are notified of ADA services and access procedures in every class in their department at the beginning of each term; and
2. Ensure that students receive fair and respectful treatment in their departments

Dean of the College must:

1. Serves as the primary source of appeal in accordance with established grievance procedures.
2. Ensures that students receive fair and respectful treatment at the institutional level.
3. Serves as a role model to set the tone for sensitivity and acceptance of students with disabilities to faculty.
4. Ensures that reasonable equal access has been extended to students with disabilities applying to and attending the College.

EXAMPLES OF DOCUMENTATION BY DISABILITY TYPE

Disability	Appropriate Documentation
ADHD/ADD	Neuropsychological/Psychoeducational Testing and Report AND/OR Statement from psychiatrist, nurse practitioner, primary care doctor or other qualified clinical professional
Autism Spectrum Disorder	Neuropsychological/Psychoeducational Testing and Report AND/OR Statement from psychiatrist, nurse practitioner, primary care doctor or other qualified clinical professional
Blind & Low Vision	Report from ophthalmologist or optometrist AND/OR Documentation from an agency that specializes in working with individuals who are blind or have low vision i.e. Iris Network, Bureau of Rehabilitation Division for the Blind Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Deaf & Hard of Hearing	Report from audiologist or otolaryngologist including audiogram AND/OR Documentation from an agency that specializes in working with individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing i.e. Maine Center on Deafness, Division for the Deaf
Learning Disability	Neuropsychological/Psychoeducational Testing and Report
Medical	Statement from physician, medical specialist, physical therapist, occupational therapist or other qualified clinical professional
Mental Health	Statement from psychiatrist, nurse practitioner, primary care doctor or other qualified clinical professional
Physical & Neurological	Statement from physician, medical specialist, physical therapist, occupational therapist or other qualified clinical professional AND/OR Documentation from an agency that specializes in working with individuals with barriers to physical movement i.e. Office of Adults with Cognitive and Physical Disabilities Speech and Language
Speech & Language	Neuropsychological/Psychoeducational Testing and Report AND/OR Documentation from Medical Speech-Language Pathologist, Speech Therapist or other qualified clinical professional
Traumatic Brain Injury & Other Cognitive Disabilities	Neuropsychological/Psychoeducational Testing and Report AND/OR Statement from physician, physical therapist, occupational therapist or other qualified clinical professional

Items not suitable for documentation include but are not limited to:

Prescription bottles, prescriptions, hand written notes on prescription pads, IEP without corresponding testing results, documentation provided by certified but not licensed professionals.