Accommodation Procedures Manual
SELF-ADVOCACY: COMMUNICATING WITH PROFESSORS

Professors at Northern Illinois University are committed to helping students achieve academic excellence. Therefore, it is important for a student and professor to have a discussion about challenges and accommodations. The Disability Resource Center recommends this discussion occur with each professor as soon as possible, preferably by the end of the first week of classes.

The student has the right to decide what will be shared in regards to any discussion about a disability. Communicating with professors helps achieve a higher level of academic success. Lack of communication with professors may lead to perceptions that are not accurate. If a student needs assistance in preparing for this conversation, he/she may contact the Disability Resource Center.

The following topics are suggested for the initial meeting/discussion with each professor:

- Make an appointment with faculty members to meet during office hours. The student will not need to tell his/her life story to the instructor. Before the appointment, the student may want to discuss and/or practice what he/she is going to say with his/her Access Consultant.
- Make sure the student knows how to explain the types of accommodations, if any, he/she needs. Even if the student doesn’t plan on using any accommodations during the semester, it is important to at least make the instructor aware of the possible request.
- The student may need to discuss the resources he/she will use at the Disability Resource Center such as testing services. If instructors are not familiar with support services offered through the Disability Resource Center, the student can give them some background information and suggest that they contact the Disability Resource Center.
- The student may describe his/her learning style. The student can also provide concrete examples of how his/her learning may affect him/her in that particular class.
- The student may develop a plan of action with the instructor. Will the student need extended time on exams? Will the student need a note taker who is willing to share class notes? Will the student need to take the exam in a quiet room with a proctor? Will the instructor allow the student to use a calculator or dictionary during exams?
- What if an instructor is skeptical and/or not receptive to accommodation requests? Discuss the situation with Access Consultants.

PROFESSOR NOTIFICATION

The Disability Resource Center requires students to communicate directly with their professors regarding accommodations. Students will notify their professors of all accommodations with the following procedure:

1. The student would contact the Disability Resource Center to request a letter of accommodation. The request can be made in person, by phone (815-753-1303) or email (drc@niu.edu).
2. The Disability Resource Center staff will then print the letter and have the student’s
access coordinator sign the letter.
3. The student can come in two working days later to pick up the letter of accommodation.

Please Note: Northern Illinois University is not required to provide accommodations to students who have not engaged in the interactive accommodations process to obtain a letter of accommodation and/or failed to self-identify to professors.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

EXAM ACCOMMODATION PROCEDURES
The Disability Resource Center provides exam accommodation services to eligible students. In conjunction with current professor(s), eligible students may make arrangements to take exams in the Disability Resource Center rather than in class. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate this service and to comply with the following procedures:

Accommodation Forms

1. Students can download the Exam Accommodations Form online or pick it up in the Disability Resource Center.

2. The Exam Accommodations Form has a student section and a professor section. The professor must complete and sign his/her portion of the form. An Exam Accommodations Form must be completed, in full, for each exam.

3. The Exam Accommodations Form must be submitted by the student to the Disability Resource Center no later than two business days (Monday through Friday) before the exam date. If the exam is on a Monday, the form needs to be submitted on the Thursday before.

4. If the student will take midterm and final exams at the Disability Resource Center, the Exam Accommodations Form must be completed 5 business days before the exam date. If a final is on a Monday, the form needs to be submitted the Monday before.

Other Testing Center Rules

1. Exam Accommodations Forms received less than two business days prior to the date of the exam will be scheduled as testing space is available and as the staff is available to adapt exams.

2. If the student is more than 15 minutes late to a scheduled appointment, he/she will need to contact his/her professor in order to reschedule the exam. Whether the student receives permission to take the exam despite being late or reschedules it, the student will still receive all of the allotted time.
3. Exams will be scheduled at the same time as the student’s regular class is scheduled to take them. Exceptions will be made with the instructor’s approval, or when the student has back-to-back classes and an extended exam time conflicts with his/her class schedule.

4. If a change in exam arrangements is necessary, the student must notify the Disability Resource Center as soon as possible. If the student cancels an exam and/or needs to reschedule, the Disability Resource Center staff must have written approval from the instructor.

Equipment Needs

1. When turning in the Exam Accommodations Form, students should ensure that the request includes any requisite equipment needs (e.g. tape recorders, computers, CCTVs)

2. Students using equipment provided by the Disability Resource Center (e.g., Franklin Spellers, screen readers) must know how to use the equipment or software before taking the exams. No instructional assistance will be provided during the exam. Students unfamiliar with equipment may schedule time outside of completing exams to do an equipment review with an Access Consultant.

Exam Security

The following procedures apply to all students when taking exams at the Disability Resource Center:

- Only such materials as indicated by instructors on the Exam Accommodation Form will be allowed in the exam room.
- Food or drinks are not allowed in the exam rooms unless accommodations specify otherwise.
- Students may use the restroom and drinking fountain but may not leave the testing location/building until they have given their completed exam to a staff member.
- All exams will be proctored. Should a student leave the exam room for any reason it will be documented, and the instructor will be notified.
- All materials must be held by proctor until student returns from his or her break.
- Students who do not qualify for breaks for accommodations should plan on remaining in the exam room until exam is completed. The Disability Resource Center staff will notify instructors of students who arrive late, do not show at all, or of any other discrepancies related to the exam.
- If students are caught, or suspected of, cheating while taking an exam at the Disability Resource Center, instructors will be notified. The instructor will determine what consequences will occur.
EXTENDED TIME ON ASSIGNMENTS ACCOMMODATION
At times, a student may have problems finishing an assignment on time due to the nature of his/her disability. In those cases, the student may be eligible for extended time on assignments. When the accommodation is needed, the student should discuss with the instructor how the student should make these requests. Should the student ask for extensions for assignments when the assignment is given? Should the student ask for extensions before the assignment is due? Should the student ask for extensions on all assignments? By collaborating with the instructor earlier in the semester, a process can be developed and expectations can be discussed.

FLEXIBILITY WITH ATTENDANCE ACCOMMODATION
Attendance is an integral part of the learning process. Therefore, attendance policies are set by professors at the individual course and department levels. Similarly, professors determine policies regarding make-up work and missed quizzes/exams.

Students are responsible for following each instructor’s requirements regarding attendance and make-up policies. Most professors include this information in their course syllabus. If a student is not sure about a professor’s policies, he/she should request clarification.

For episodic conditions (i.e., chronic conditions that may unpredictably debilitate), the Disability Resource Center may include a statement on the accommodation letter which indicates that periodic disability-related absences may occur. This statement verifies the legitimacy of periodic absences and may be used by students with these conditions to initiate discussions of attendance and make-up policies and procedures with professors.

Because working with the professor is vital to success, students are encouraged to discuss this accommodation at the onset of the semester. At times, a student’s condition may be unpredictable, and disclosing this possibility may help in discussing this process.

In addition, each time a student is absent and has this accommodation, the student is strongly encouraged to contact his/her professor via email. This email simply needs to say that the student is absent for a disability-related reason and will follow up with the professor.

This accommodation does not excuse the student from assignments or course work. Nor does this accommodation void attendance policies that are tied to essential elements of the course.

GETTING MATERIALS IN ADVANCE
Some students will receive an accommodation of getting course materials in advance of a class lecture. The purpose is to allow students time to process information and materials before learning about them in a lecture setting.

Students who receive this accommodation should talk about a process of how to receive materials in advance during the initial meeting with the professor. Will the professor place materials on Blackboard? Will the professor email the materials the student directly? By setting up a specific process, it will be easier for the student and the instructor to coordinate. If the
professor has concerns about providing materials in advance, he/she may speak with the student’s Access Consultant.

INTERPRETING AND CAPTIONING
Interpreting and captioning may be provided as an accommodation for students connected with the Center. Following the procedures below will help ensure that these accommodations are provided in a timely and efficient manner.

Captioning: Provision of captioning services will be provided as a reasonable accommodation based upon documentation of a disability, its functional limitations that warrant communication access via print, and through discussion with the student and faculty. Transcripts of the communication are typically provided to the student. Should a student feel the need for a notetaker for the class, it should be discussed with the Access Consultant.

Request for Interpreting or Captioning in the Classroom
- Students needing interpreting or captioning for classes should inform the Access Consultant when initially meeting with him/her.
- Students must immediately notify the Coordinator of Interpreting/Captioning Services of any changes in the student’s schedule. Late notification of changes in a student’s schedule or late registration may result in delayed provision of interpreting/captioning services.
- The Coordinator of Interpreting/Captioning Services will schedule interpreters or captionists for classes based on the student’s class schedule.

Requests for Interpreting or Captioning Outside of the Classroom
- To request an interpreter or captionist for anything other than regularly scheduled class time (meeting, field trip, counseling, etc.), the student must complete a "Service Request Form." This should be done as early as possible and at least 48 hours in advance.
- The "Service Request Form" should be filled out completely and accurately and given to the Coordinator of Interpreting/Captioning Services. The “Service Request Form” can be found at the Disability Resource Center or online at http://www.niu.edu/disability/forms/interpreter_guidelines.shtml.
- Additional requests will be covered on a first-come/first-served basis, depending on interpreter/captionist availability. Incomplete requests may not be filled.
- If, for some reason, the request cannot be filled, an effort will be made to notify the student ahead of time.

As the Disability Resource Center strives to provide student-centered services, the following policies and procedures have been created for clarity and direction:
1. Students unable to attend a class or participate with an assignment must notify Interpreting/Captioning Services in advance, as follows:
   a. For classes between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m., the student must call the Disability Resource Center at 815-753-1303 no later than 7:00 a.m.
   b. For 10:00 a.m. or later classes, the student must call the Disability Resource Center at 815-753-1303 at least 2 hours before the beginning of the class.
   c. The student must call, even if there are other students in the class using the interpreter(s) or captionist(s).

2. Students who do not show up for class multiple times may have their services suspended.
   a. If the student does not show up for a class or assignment two times without advanced notice, services will be suspended for that class until the student arranges a meeting with the Coordinator of Interpreting/Captioning Services. After this meeting, services will resume should it be determined that this is the most reasonable and appropriate course of action.
   b. The third no-show for that class will result in cancellation of regular services for that class. To obtain services for future sessions of that class, the student must schedule another meeting with the Coordinator of Interpreting/Captioning Services to review policy and discuss any concerns with the class and the accommodation.
      i. A decision will be made during that meeting regarding interpreting/captioning for the remainder of the semester. It is possible that the student will need to turn in a completed "Service Request Form" for each remaining session. Should this be the outcome, the form should be turned in between 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon at least one day before the class session (or as arranged with the Coordinator of Interpreting/Captioning Services). Services will be assigned based on availability.

3. The interpreter/captionist will wait at the class/assignment for ten minutes, and will then leave if the student has not arrived.
   a. This will be considered an absence without advance notice.
   b. If the student knows in advance that he or she may be late, the student should contact the Coordinator of Interpreting/Captioning Services and an attempt will be made to notify the interpreter/captionist.

4. Avoid having personal conversations with the interpreter/captionist during class and allow the interpreter/captionist to have a break during break time.

5. The student and the interpreter/captionist may wish to meet to discuss or develop new sign vocabulary for the class.
   a. If the student has any difficulties understanding his/her interpreter/captionist, or concerns about the interpreter or captioning services, the student is encouraged to meet with the interpreter/captionist to discuss them.
   b. If the student is unable to resolve an issue, he/she should contact the Coordinator of Interpreting/Captioning Services. The student may request that the Coordinator
of Interpreting/Captioning Services observe the interpreter/captionist in her or his class (see "Service Request Form").

6. If the student is giving a presentation or speech in class, and would like the interpreter to voice interpret, it is recommended that the student meet with the Interpreter in advance and provide an outline or copy of the presentation to the interpreter at that time. Interpreters have scheduled office time that can be used for this purpose.

Each semester, students are asked to anonymously evaluate their interpreters/captionists. The student feedback will be summarized and shared with each interpreter/captionist in order to improve and provide the best possible services to the student.

A high standard of professionalism is required of NIU interpreters. They are expected to follow the Code of Professional Conduct established by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID). In addition, they are expected to adhere to the policies and procedures of NIU Interpreter Services. These policies include:

a. The interpreter is expected to treat all assignment-related information confidentially.
b. The interpreter should not talk about what happens in the student’s class, meeting, or counseling session.
c. The interpreter is expected to interpret the full message accurately and should not censor or add to the message.
d. The interpreter should remain impartial and not become involved in the situation they are interpreting.
e. The interpreter should not offer or give personal information about the student, but instead suggest the person speak to the student directly.


In the educational environment, interpreters/captionists may, at times, need to share accommodation-related issues with other staff on a need-to-know basis. The Disability Resource Center staff adopts a team approach in the collaboration and sharing of work-related information. As a result, there will be times when interpreters share information about students and work experiences for the purpose of improving the quality of the Disability Resource Center Interpreting/Captioning Services.

**LAB ASSISTANCE ACCOMMODATION**

On occasion a student with a disability will require an assistant for a lab or non-lecture classroom setting due to the nature of his/her disability. This lab assistant may assist the student by reading, writing/scribing, or by manipulating lab tools/materials. Clear boundaries are absolutely necessary in these situations. In all cases, the student is responsible for directing the actions of the lab assistant, not vice versa. A college student with a disability is always responsible for doing his/her own work.
Any student who qualifies for lab assistance must contact the Disability Resource Center at least four weeks in advance. In addition to the date and time of the lab, students need to include information about dress requirements for the lab assistant. Requests for lab assistance services received with less than four weeks’ notice for on-going classes can result in delayed services.

**NOTE-TAKING ACCOMMODATION PROCEDURES**
A student who receives a Note-Taking Accommodation should visit the Disability Resource Center and receive a *Note-taker Accommodation* card.

In order to obtain a note-taker for each class, the student may either:

1. Ask a student in class to volunteer and provide him/her with the *Note-taker Accommodation* card.

2. Ask the professor to read the card in class to obtain a note-taker (there is a scripted statement on the card).

If a student is not able to secure a note-taker through the above two options, he/she should contact the Disability Resource Center.

The note-taker must register with the Disability Resource Center in order to be considered a note-taker. Please ask the volunteer to bring the *Note-taker Accommodation* card to the Disability Resource Center to register.

**Receiving a Note-Taking Accommodation does not mean an accommodated student is exempt from taking notes.**

- A student who works with a note-taker is still required to take notes in class unless the disability precludes it. Utilizing a note-taker provides access to additional notes enabling a student to fill in missing information.

- Students who receive a note-taking accommodation must attend class in order to receive note-taking services. Exceptions are made when absences are due to an emergency. Note-takers are not required to take notes for students choosing to be absent from class. If a student is absent more than twice in a term, the note-taker will bring his/her notes to the Disability Resource Center. The note-taker is not made available so that a student may be absent from class.

- In order to retrieve notes due to unexcused absences, the student must schedule an appointment in the Disability Resource Center. At that time, an Access Consultant will discuss attendance habits and reserves the right to suspend the note-taking accommodation. The Disability Resource Center should be contacted by any student who will be absent for a significant amount of time. This allows the Disability Resource Center to notify the note-taker about the absences and approve continued note-taking services when appropriate.
• It is the student’s and the note-taker’s responsibility to arrange how the notes will be transferred. If a student has difficulty retrieving notes, he/she should contact the Disability Resource Center.

• It is optimal that notes be provided to the student on the day the class occurred.

PRIORITY REGISTRATION
After their first semester, students who are connected with the Disability Resource Center may receive priority registration as an accommodation. Priority registration is a window of opportunity for students to register early, based on stated deadlines. It is not a guarantee of class admission, nor does it provide additional opportunities for students to have access to closed courses after they have been filled. Therefore, it is critical that all students eligible for priority registration follow the stated times to complete their registration. Students who utilize sign language interpreters or captioners are strongly encouraged to register during priority enrollment periods to assist with the scheduling of appropriate services.

Priority registration dates are typically the first full week of April for the summer and fall, and the first full week of November for the spring semester. Students should verify the dates each semester that they have priority registration. Exact dates are posted to students’ My NIU Student Center, listed under Enrollment Dates, and are typically posted on the Disability Resource Center website.

Priority registration is provided as an accommodation to:

• enhance the opportunity for students to obtain the most appropriate classes and class schedule for meeting accommodation requests;
• enable students to contact instructors, before classes start, to discuss accommodation needs and request a course syllabus;
• enable students to acquire alternate format of printed materials in a timely manner;
• enable students to plan a course schedule that allows student to arrange classes in the most easily accessible locations to ensure appropriate travel times; and
• students using sign language interpreting/captioning.

REQUESTS FOR ALTERNATIVE FORMAT OF MATERIALS
These services are made available to the students when approved as a reasonable and appropriate accommodation. Examples of alternate format of materials include electronic text (in MS Word, PDF, straight text, etc.), audio recordings, Braille, and tactile drawings.

Students requesting alternative format should submit requests and materials to be adapted at least eight weeks prior to the date that materials are needed. Although that seems like a long time, the process of acquiring or producing alternate format is quite intensive due to copyright issues and the various conversion processes involved. The Disability Resource Center will make every
reasonable effort to ensure that the student secures the material and that the conversion is completed in a timely fashion, but the following are important points to understand:

- The Center can only convert materials that are in its possession.
- Requests are processed in the order received.
- If the course structure does not allow timely provision of adapted materials, Disability Resource Center staff, the course instructor, and the student will discuss whether an alternative, reasonable accommodation is available.
- The Center retains the right to determine the most effective and timely accommodation after appropriate consultation with the student.

As the Disability Resource Center is committed to providing student-centered services, the following processes are being shared for clarity and direction:

It is important for students needing alternative media for textbooks and/or required classroom materials to begin early and work with the course instructor and the Center to develop a plan for the provision of print materials in alternative formats.

Students should contact the instructor of each course well in advance of the semester (preferably 8 weeks prior) or contact the Bookstore in order to:

- inquire about required textbooks;
- identify all printed materials that will need to be adapted, such as handouts, PowerPoint slides, visual aids that will be used, and/or additional readings (e.g. Library reserve or e-reserve readings); and
- discuss with the instructor the option of him or her providing Word/text files of materials directly to the student or to the Disability Resource Center when appropriate.

Students should also contact the Disability Resource Center and follow the appropriate steps, depending on the type of format needed, to obtain the alternative media.

**Electronic Text (e-text)**

Students seeking electronic format of text (e-text) will be required to:

- complete the “Alternative Format Request Form” located in the Center;
- purchase the text to be converted, as required by publishers and industry standards;
- provide the Disability Resource Center with proof of purchase (receipt from the bookstore) for the text(s); and
- provide a textbook for the process of conversion.

The student will be provided one copy of the alternate format for each material required for academic use. This electronic file is copyrighted and may not be reproduced or distributed. Any further reproduction or distribution is an infringement of the agreement with the publisher.

Some publishers require that students return any material received from the Center at the end of the semester. In most of these cases the Center will have an agreement from the publisher the student will need to sign. If a student does not return the materials, an encumbrance is placed on
the student’s account which will suspend the release of grades, registration of classes, release of transcripts, or receipt of degree upon graduation.

The Center will accept any e-text books students wish to return at any time. On occasion, the electronic text conversion method may not be the most appropriate accommodation. In these instances, audio recordings may be provided. This is determined on an individualized basis.

Braille, Enlarged Print, and Screen Magnification
Across the NIU campus, there are resources that student can use independently:

- Closed-Circuit TV (CCTV) in Founders Library, room 102.
- CCTV in the DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER for testing use.
- Information Technology Services (ITS) computer labs with specialized assistive technology computers. Visit the ITS website at www.its.niu.edu/its/csupport/comp_labs/adapt.shtml or keyword search “Adaptive Technology” for more information.

Students needing materials in Braille, enlarged print, or tactile drawings must complete an “Alternate Format Request Form” and supply the printed information to the Coordinator at the Center. Please note that books are seldom available in Braille or Large Print, but sections can be made available, as needed. The student should discuss his or her needs with the coordinator, but realize that it can take a couple of months to get the material in these formats.

Pick-up of Completed Materials
Students will be notified when requested materials have been completed. Students should pick up completed materials within five working days of notification unless other arrangements are made. If the student consistently does not pick up completed materials, additional materials will not be converted until the student has met with the coordinator to discuss and evaluate the need for the accommodation.

SCRIBE AND TRANSCRIPTION SERVICES
Scribe and transcription services are available for students who are unable to write or type due to disability-related needs. Scribe and transcription services require advance planning and notification. Eligible students who plan to use this service need to provide notice to their Access Consultant to schedule an appointment. Scribe and transcription services are not available for assignments or papers.

In order to maintain academic integrity, the student will be required to voice his/her desires of the transcriber. For example, the student must say “period” at the end of each sentence in order for a period to appear. The transcriber will not be responsible for sentence structure.

The transcriber will use spelling and grammar check programs in order to check for transcription errors in the final document. However, the student is required to proofread the document to ensure accuracy of the transcription. If the transcriber is unsure of the spelling of a word or name, they will indicate it in the text immediately after the word with the mark “SP.” Once
transcribed, the document will be sent as an email attachment directly to the student’s email account for review and final editing.

TAPE-RECORDING ACCOMMODATION
When necessary, it is possible to tape-record class lectures as an accommodation. The student should speak to his/her faculty member about permission before beginning to tape record lectures. In the state of Illinois, it is illegal to tape record someone without his/her permission. Students and faculty members will need to coordinate a way to gain the permission of students within the course to tape record lectures. If the faculty member has concerns, he/she should contact the Disability Resource Center.
CAMPUS ACCOMMODATIONS

ACCESSIBLE HOUSING
NIU Residence Halls offer rooms and facilities that are accessible to students with disabilities. If a student needs housing arrangements because of a disability, the student should discuss his or her needs with an Access Consultant. The Access Consultant will be able to explain options and recommend the correct procedures to follow. The student should indicate on the NIU Housing application that he or she needs accommodations for a disability. Students must still comply with all University Housing timelines. The NIU Housing Accommodations information and request form can be found at http://housing.niu.edu/housing/reshalls/disabilities.shtml.

Students seeking single rooms due to a disability should contact the Disability Resource Center via email (drc@niu.edu) or phone (815-753-1303).

Emergency Evacuation
If a student needs assistance for emergency evacuation, he or she should contact the Community Advisor (CA) and Hall Director regarding the procedures.

ACCESSIBLE PARKING
All arrangements for parking permits are made through NIU Campus Parking Services. More information is available on their website at http://www.niu.edu/parking/index.shtml. The student can also contact Parking Services directly at 815-753-1045 or parking@niu.edu. All students choosing to park on campus must purchase an NIU parking permit.

A license plate or parking placard is required before purchasing an NIU parking permit for accessible parking. A license plate or parking placard is also required for the student who needs accessible parking for a temporary time. Please visit http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/services/persons_with_disabilities/home.html for information regarding the license plate or parking placard application process.

NIU Campus Parking Services is located at 121 Normal Road, DeKalb, IL, on the corner of Normal Road and Highway 38/Lincoln Highway.

ASSISTANCE ANIMALS (Assistance animals are comfort or emotional comfort animals only)
Under the Fair Housing Act, therapy pets may be allowed in public housing, but are not required to be allowed across campus.

Responsibilities of the Individual with Disability Using an Assistance Animal
A person with a disability who utilizes an assistance animal is encouraged to register with the Disability Resource Center. Registering with the DRC provides an opportunity to discuss additional accommodations, beyond the assistance animal.
University housing staff may consult with or refer a student with a disability to the DRC to assist with determining the reasonableness of the use of an assistance animal as a housing accommodation.

The cost of care, food, arrangements, supervision, and responsibilities for the well-being of an assistance animal are the sole responsibility of the owner at all times. Service animals on campus must:

- meet all requirements for the presence of animals in public places (vaccinations, licensure, ID tags, etc.) mandated by State or Local ordinances.
- be in good health. Animals to be housed in University Housing must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian.
- be under control. The person with a disability must be in full control of the animal at all times. Reasonable behavior is expected from assistance animals while in University housing. If an assistance animal, for example, exhibits unacceptable behavior, the handler is expected to employ the proper training techniques to correct the situation.
- not cause damage to the campus. A person who has an assistance animal in University housing is financially responsible for property damage caused by his or her assistance animal.
- defecate in appropriate places. Individuals using assistance animals must follow local ordinances in cleaning up after the animal defecates, must take their assistance animals to the marked toileting areas for assistance animals, when appropriate, and must also clean up all assistance animal waste and immediately place the waste in the appropriate trash receptacle.
- not cause undue financial burdens to the University. All functions of assistance animal use, including assistance animal training or re-training, independent travel, animal food purchasing and maintenance, grooming, veterinarian care, and hygiene work is considered a personal aid or service and is the full responsibility of the individual with the disability.

**Assistance Animals in University Housing**

The DRC will work with University Housing and the resident with the assistance animal to ensure appropriate accessible housing is provided. The student must make a request for housing accommodations.

- Disturbing vocalizations or noises from the animal must be kept to an absolute minimum.
- The assistance animal must be “walked” in a specific area designated by the Residence Hall Director or designated staff member. The droppings must be picked up and deposited in a trash can provided specifically for that purpose in the area.
- Assistance animals may not be bathed in the shower rooms, bathtubs, or sinks of the residence halls; food dishes must be cleaned only in the large sinks located for resident use on each floor; and service animal food must be kept in a covered storage container.
- Assistance animals will not be allowed in dining centers. Assistance animals will only be allowed in other public residential spaces to be taken in and out of the building to defecate, or to travel to an off-campus location.
• Assistance animals must be able to remain in the residence unattended while the handler (student) is in class or attending other University events.

Removal of Assistance Animals
The handler of an assistance animal that is unruly or disruptive (e.g., barking, running around, bringing attention to itself) may be asked to remove the animal from University housing if the handler does not take effective action to control the animal. If the improper behavior happens repeatedly, the handler may be told not to bring the assistance animal into University housing until the handler takes significant steps to mitigate the behavior. Mitigation can include muzzling or refresher training for both the animal and the handler.

Assistance animals that are ill should not be taken into public areas. A handler with an ill animal may be asked to remove the animal from University housing or leave University housing until the animal is healthy.

Handlers with animals that are unclean or noisome may be asked to leave University housing. An animal that becomes wet from walking in the rain or mud, or from being splashed by a passing automobile, but is otherwise clean, should be considered a clean animal. If the animal in question is usually well-groomed, the University may consider the animal that appears messy due to environmental conditions (rain, snow, sleet, mud, etc.) well-groomed until the handler is able to groom the animal appropriately (give it a bath, brushing, towel dry, etc.).

Grievances and/or Complaints
An individual with a disability dissatisfied with a decision made concerning his or her assistance animal should follow the applicable institutional Appeal/Grievance Procedure. Other individuals who have complaints regarding the use of service or assistance animals in University Housing should direct those to Housing & Dining staff.

Veterinarian Care
Local veterinarians can be found in the DeKalb / NIU phone book or through directory assistance. The following veterinarians are located within the area operated by the Huskie Bus Line and the paratransit service (the FreedomMobile). Each veterinarian may offer some type of discount to service animal owners. Students should check on the discount when making an appointment. The Disability Resource Center is providing this contact information simply as a service to the students and does not imply, endorse, or guarantee the services provided by these independent veterinarians.

• Bethany Animal Hospital, 2400 Bethany Road, Sycamore, Illinois 60178; (815) 756-8925 or after hours 815-756-8926.
• Prairie View Animal Hospital, 24 Rich Road, DeKalb, Illinois 60115; (815) 756-9976 or after hours, same number.

LIBRARY SUPPORT SERVICES
Founders Memorial Library also offers a variety of services and adaptive technology equipment for students. Contact the Coordinator of Library Services for Persons with Disabilities for more information at 815-753-9853 or www.ulib.niu.edu/services/disabilities.cfm.
PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS
Some students may require assistance from a Personal Care Attendant or PCAs. PCAs are
allowed on campus with students with disabilities, though PCAs must abide by NIU policies and
codes of conduct. It is the student’s responsibility to recruit, interview, hire, train, and pay for
PCAs.

Students hiring PCAs should analyze their needs to know how much assistance will be required.
Students should be clear and specific when talking to potential PCAs so they will understand
specific needs and expectations. The student and the PCA need to negotiate the details of the
work arrangement. In addition, students should plan on employing one or two back-up PCAs to
be on-call, when a substitute is needed. Students working with the Illinois Department of
Rehabilitation Services should consult with their counselor to determine eligibility for financial
reimbursement of PCA costs.

Students living on campus at NIU who employ a PCA should familiarize themselves with the
Housing & Dining Guidepost. If the student has questions or concerns about the process of
employing PCAs, they should discuss them with an Access Consultant.

PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY ON CAMPUS
Students who encounter classes or service spaces that are inaccessible should contact the
Disability Resource Center. Access to most campus locations is provided through NIU on
campus transportation. See the Transportation section for additional information.

In the event of an unanticipated situation, such as wheelchair or scooter breakdown, the student
may contact the Disability Resource Center during business hours for assistance in getting to
classes or may contact the FreedomMobile for class-to-class transportation.

For the student with severe mobility disabilities, proximity-to-proximity transportation on the
FreedomMobile can be arranged from Thanksgiving break until Spring break. For more
information, see Transportation or the “FreedomMobile Adaptive Transportation Information
and Policies” handbook.

SERVICE ANIMALS
A person with a disability who utilizes a service animal is encouraged to register with the DRC.
Registering with the DRC provides an opportunity to discuss additional accommodations,
beyond the service animal.

The cost of care, food, arrangements, supervision, and responsibilities for the well-being of a
service animal are the sole responsibility of the owner at all times.

Service animals on campus must:

• meet all requirements for the presence of animals in public places (vaccinations,
  licensure, ID tags, etc.) mandated by State or Local ordinances.
• be in good health. Animals to be housed in University Housing must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian.
• be under control. The person with a disability must be in full control of the animal at all times. This may include the use of a harness, leash or tether, unless these devices interfere with the service animal’s work or the individual’s disability prevents using these devices. Reasonable behavior is expected from service animals while on campus. If a service dog, for example, exhibits unacceptable behavior, the handler is expected to employ the proper training techniques to correct the situation, which may include voice, signal, or other effective controls.
• not cause damage to the campus. A person who has a service animal on campus (including University Housing) is financially responsible for property damage caused by his or her service animal.
• defecate in appropriate places. Individuals using services animals must clean up after the animal defecates, must take their service animals to the marked toileting areas for service animals, when provided, and must also clean up the waste and immediately place the waste in the appropriate trash receptacle.
• not cause undue financial burdens upon the University. All functions of service animal use, including service animal training or re-training, independent travel, animal food purchasing and maintenance, grooming, veterinarian care, and hygiene work is considered a personal aid or service and is the full responsibility of the individual with the disability.

Service Animals in University Housing
The Disability Resource Center will work with University Housing and the resident with the service animal to ensure appropriate accessible housing is provided. The student must make the request for housing accommodations. Service animals must always be kept under control and on a leash/lead, except in the resident’s own room with the door shut.

• Disturbing vocalizations or noises from the animal must be kept to a minimum.
• Service animals must be “walked” in a specific area designated by the Residence Hall Director or designated staff member. The droppings must be picked up and deposited in a trash can provided specifically for that purpose in the area.
• Service animals may not be bathed in the shower rooms, bathtubs, or sinks of the residence halls; food dishes must be cleaned only in the large sinks located for resident use on each floor; and service animal food must be kept in a covered storage container.
• In dining centers, service animals must:
  o remain quietly by the student’s chair or under the table out of the way of other visitors.
  o not disturb others at the table, in any way, including other service animals.
  o Keep their noses and all body parts, off tables, trays, and food-servicing counters at all times.
• Service animals will not be allowed in food preparation areas.

Removal of Service Animals
The handler of a service animal that is out of control or not housebroken may be asked to remove the animal from University facilities if the handler does not take effective action to control or housebreak the animal.

If the improper behavior happens repeatedly, the handler may be told not to bring the animal into any University facility until the handler takes significant steps to mitigate the behavior. Mitigation can include muzzling or refresher training for both the animal and the handler. If a service animal is removed from University facilities, the individual with a disability must still be provided the opportunity to participate in the service, program, or activity without having the service animal on the premises.

Service animals that are ill should not be taken into public areas. A handler with an ill animal may be asked to leave University facilities.

Handlers with animals that are unclean or noisome may be asked to leave University facilities. An animal that becomes wet from walking in the rain or mud, or from being splashed by a passing automobile, but is otherwise clean, should be considered a clean animal. If the animal in question is usually well-groomed, the University may consider the animal that appears messy due to environmental conditions (rain, snow, sleet, mud, etc.) well-groomed until the handler is able to groom the animal appropriately (give it a bath, brushing, towel dry, etc.).

Grievances and/or Complaints
An individual with a disability who is dissatisfied with a decision made concerning his or her assistance animal should follow the applicable institutional Appeal/Grievance Procedure. Other individuals who have complaints regarding the use of service or assistance animals in University Housing should direct those to Housing & Dining staff.

SIGHTED GUIDES
Sighted guides may be provided to the student for travel to an unfamiliar area on campus on a case-by-case basis, as determined by impact of disability. A request for a sighted guide can be made during business hours by coming to the reception desk of the Disability Resource Center or by calling the Center at 753-1303. The student requesting a sighted guide will need to provide specific information regarding the time, the location, and the destination for which a sighted guide is needed. Sighted guides are typically provided on a volunteer basis, so advance notice of at least 24 hours is recommended. If the student needs sighted guide assistance on a regular basis for classes or for other regularly scheduled activities, the student can seek voluntary assistance by:

- Checking with friends to see if they would assist.
- Posting requests on the residence hall floor or in other areas of his or her residence hall. The student might make an announcement at a floor meeting. Students with similar schedules may be willing to assist.
- Asking the instructor of the class to make an announcement during one of the initial class sessions. The student may wish to write up an announcement for the instructor to read to the class.
The student should exchange addresses and phone numbers with sighted guides. It is suggested that the student have some "back-up" persons available in the event that a regular sighted guide would be unavailable.
TRANSPORTATION
The following information is provided for students seeking information about transportation on the NIU campus and in the DeKalb area. Please contact an Access Consultant for assistance or further information.

Huskie Bus Line
The NIU Student Association Mass Transit Board (SAMTB) has a bus system which runs throughout campus and some areas of the DeKalb community. The busses are accessible with wheelchair lifts and tie-downs. Preferential front seating is available to students with severe mobility and/or visual disabilities. Be sure to inform the driver to verbally announce stops. Please visit http://www.huskieline.com/ for bus routes.

FreedomMobile
The SAMTB also offers an accessible paratransit system, the FreedomMobile, which runs during the same hours as the Huskie busses. The FreedomMobile is an on-call door-to-door service throughout the DeKalb community. To use the FreedomMobile the student must:

1. Be an NIU student, faculty, or staff member (non-students will need to pay the current per ride charge); and

2. Have a physical disability which limits the ability to walk independently, a serious health condition requiring travel accommodations, or a visual disability severe enough to warrant the use of a white cane or dog guide during independent travel. Medical verification of such disability must be on file with the Disability Resource Center.

Proximity-to-proximity transportation is available to the student with severe mobility impairments or the student requiring special transportation due to a severe health condition. Students with severe temporary disabilities may also be eligible. Eligibility is determined by the Disability Resource Center on a case-by-case basis.

Late Night Ride
The NIU Department of Police and Public Safety provides a Late Night Ride Service. The accessible van is available for free, door-to-door, no questions asked service from 10:00 p.m. – 6:00 a.m. Please call 753-2222 to make arrangements for this service.

TransVAC
TransVAC in DeKalb County provides transportation for persons with disabilities who are registered with the Voluntary Action Center (VAC). For more information about the VAC, the TransVAC service, or specific routes in DeKalb please visit http://www.vacdk.com/index.html.
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

DIVERSITY-RELATED APPEAL & GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES
It is hoped that everything goes smoothly for students while attending Northern Illinois University. If a student has concerns or encounters problems related to a disability, accommodations or discrimination, he or she may wish to use one of the grievance procedures listed below.

The first is for a concern with the Disability Resource Center and/or a particular Disability Resource Center staff member. The second procedure is for filing a complaint because of a disability-related concern or a problem encountered with an office or someone at the University, but outside of the Disability Resource Center.

For issues that are not related to a disability, the student should follow general NIU grievance procedures, which apply to all students.

Resolving Disability-related Conflicts with the Disability Resource Center and/or a Disability Resource Center Staff Member

If the student has a performance-related complaint about a Disability Resource Center staff member, the student should first discuss the problem with the staff member. If the complaint is unresolved, the student should speak with that person’s supervisor.

If the student would like to appeal a disability-related decision made by a Disability Resource Center staff member, he or she should initially discuss it with the staff member. If that does not resolve the issue, the matter should be brought to the Director of the Disability Resource Center, in writing. The Director will investigate the issue and respond to the student within 10 class days. If this does not resolve the disability-related issue, the student may appeal to the Assistant Vice-President for Student Affairs (Section 504 Compliance Officer). The appeal should include a written statement regarding the nature of the complaint, results of the previous appeal, and requested resolution. This appeal will be investigated, and a decision will be rendered within 10 class days of the request. This will be a final decision.

Resolving Disability-related Conflicts within the University, outside of the Disability Resource Center

If a student has a disability-related grievance/concern about a department, faculty, or staff member at the University, he or she may wish to contact his or her Access Consultant who may be able to assist the student in resolving the problem. If the grievance is discrimination-related, it should be filed with Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources. Information can be found at http://www.hr.niu.edu/ServiceAreas/DiversityResources/Complaints.cfm. If the grievance is academically-related, the student should follow the process outlined in the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual. Information can be found at http://www.niu.edu/provost/resources/dchandbook/contents/IV-complaints.shtml.
Note: Northern Illinois University has a “Non-Discrimination-Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedure.” The student may choose to utilize this process for any complaints involving a claim of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, citizenship, intending citizenship, sex, sexual orientation, age (over 40 years), disability, Vietnam-era veteran status, or special disabled veteran status. The student can contact NIU’s Affirmative Action and Diversity Resource Center to initiate this process. A copy of the policy and process can be found at http://www.hr.niu.edu/ServiceAreas/DiversityResources/Index.cfm.