

## *Course Flexibility with Attendance/Deadlines Guide for Faculty*

Federal law and the Office of Civil Rights (Department of Justice) mandate that disability services offices must directly interact with faculty regarding flexibility with attendance/deadlines accommodations. The *Course Flexibility Form* is intended to meet Rider's legal obligation in an efficient and timely manner. The *Course Flexibility Form* provides the opportunity to allow the professor to set the limits of flexibility beyond course policies. Since accommodations are required to be provided in a timely manner, a prompt response is essential.

**When you receive a Student Accessibility and Support Services (SASS) email request, follow the procedure below:**

- Faculty receive the *Course Flexibility Form* when a student with this accommodation is registered for one of their courses.
  - Fill out and return the *Course Flexibility Form* to SASS.
  - Provide the information that is pertinent to your specific course, not an individual student. ○ Use the *Course Flexibility Form* as a course analysis tool.
  - Clearly define the parameters of this accommodation on the *Course Flexibility Form* which will be shared with the student.
- It is the student's responsibility to provide an accommodation letter for flexibility with attendance/deadlines for your signature. Once you sign the letter, both you and the student need to follow the flexibility parameters on the *Course Flexibility Form*.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Who qualifies for the Flexibility with Attendance/Deadlines accommodation?**

- Students who are absent more often than their peers due to a **documented** chronic mental or physical illness or unpredictable episodic disabling condition. The accommodation eliminates the need for a doctor's note to excuse an absence or extend a deadline. Most often, students who are approved for this accommodation have been living with the condition for an extended period of time and require self-care rather than a doctor's appointment.

#### **What does this accommodation mean?**

- *Flexibility with Attendance* means that the student qualifies for flexibility beyond the course attendance policy as defined by the professor's *Course Flexibility Form* (e.g., if other students lose points for being absent, a student with a *Flexibility with Attendance* accommodation *may* be exempt from losing points and allowed to make up missed work).

- *Flexibility with deadlines* allows a deadline extension within the parameters defined in advance by the professor's **Course Flexibility Form**.
- It is possible that a student's performance on assignments and exams may be directly impacted by absences; however, a student with this accommodation should not lose points **solely** based on absences.

### **How flexible do I need to be?**

- Although eligibility for the *Flexibility with Attendance/Deadlines* accommodations is determined on a case-by-case basis by Student Accessibility and Support Services (SASS), the professor decides the degree of flexibility by completing the **Course Flexibility Form**. The nature of the course determines the extent of this accommodation. Because professors are the content experts, they are best situated to assess their courses to determine the extent to which flexibility can be granted.
- Once faculty have completed the **Course Flexibility Form** and returned it to SASS, it is then up to the faculty and student to follow the parameters provided on the **Course Flexibility Form**. In order to meet Rider University's legal obligation, faculty must comply with, but not exceed, the parameters on the **Course Flexibility Form**.

### **What are the limits of my responsibility to a student with this accommodation?**

- Faculty are not expected to re-teach the course to students who cannot attend the lectures.
- Faculty are not expected to change a traditional in-person class into an online course or independent study.
- Faculty should not lower course standards or make courses easier for students who cannot attend.

### **What if I have a concern that the student's absences make it unlikely that the student will be able to pass the course?**

- If you are concerned about the student's ability to meet course requirements, please consult with SASS as soon as possible.
- Communicate your concerns to the student.
- If a student is unlikely to pass, discuss options. (Withdrawal or Incomplete)

### **What if I have a student without this accommodation who may have absences because of a chronic mental or physical illness or unpredictable, episodic disabling condition?**

- Refer the student to SASS *early* in the semester before the absences accumulate. SASS will meet with the student to determine whether or not an accommodation is appropriate.

Please direct any questions or concerns to:

**Student Accessibility and Support Services**

**BLC Suite 201**

**Email: [accessibility@rider.edu](mailto:accessibility@rider.edu)**

**Phone: 609-895-5492**