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| POLICY TITLE: <i>Disabilities: Student Policies and Procedures</i> | APPROVAL DATE: <i>August 2, 2018</i> |
| RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT: <i>Disability Services & Office of Student Affairs</i> | APPLIES TO: <i>All Students</i> |

POLICY STATEMENT

Procedures for Students Requesting Initial Eligibility for Accommodations

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine (UCCOM) grants reasonable and appropriate accommodations to medical students with documented disabilities. All reasonable requests will be considered. For the most expeditious assistance, the student is advised to adhere to the following procedures:

1. Medical students who report or suspect they have a disability may go directly to, or will be referred to, Accessibility Resources located on West Campus at 210 University Pavilion, <http://www.uc.edu/aess/disability.html>.
2. Students will need to provide documentation of the disability from a healthcare professional to Accessibility Resources.
3. Documentation such as Individual Education Program (IEP), Summary of Performance (SOP), Teacher Observations, full psychological evaluations, psycho-educational evaluations (with test scores), physician's medical records, etc., may be submitted to our office for review. Documentation should be relevant and from a qualified professional or professionals that are licensed or credentialed with expertise in the diagnosed area of disability, i.e., a psychologist should not diagnose an orthopedic disability.

We prefer documentation (even from multiple sources) that offers the following information:

- A diagnosis of disability or impairment that limits a major life activity;
- How the condition will impact the student within the academic environment;
- A listing of reasonable, appropriate accommodations that will lessen the impact of the disability within the academic setting.

4. Accessibility Resources maintains the ability to ask for more documentation to clarify how the disability will impact the student within the academic setting.
5. Documentation can be faxed, mailed, e-mailed, or dropped off in person:

Accessibility Resources
University of Cincinnati 210
University Pavilion
PO Box 210213
Cincinnati, OH 45221-0213
Email: accessresources@uc.edu

Fax: 513-556 1383
Phone: 513-556-6823

6. Once the documentation is provided, an intake will follow to discuss the impact of the disability within the academic environment. Students should contact Accessibility Resources to verify the documentation has been received and is appropriate. If documentation is appropriate, an intake appointment is scheduled.

UCCOM has an internal review committee called the Disability and Accommodations Committee. The Assistant Dean for Academic Support serves as the Chair of the Disability and Accommodations Committee (hereafter referred to as “Chair”) and acts the liaison between UCCOM and Accessibility Resources. The Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education is responsible for appointing members to the committee.

Consultation between the UCCOM Disability and Accommodations Committee and Accessibility Resources

Upon receiving a request for accommodations from a medical student, the Accessibility Resources Coordinator will review the documentation and make a determination regarding eligibility for accommodations. During the intake meeting between the student and the resources coordinator, the resources coordinator will work with the student to develop a list of the requested accommodations. If the requested accommodations include only testing accommodations of extended time on written or computer based exams (including gross anatomy practical exams) and/or a limited distraction testing room (and the provided documentation supports such accommodation) the plan will be approved through Accessibility Resources and does not typically require consultation with the UCCOM Disability and Accommodations Committee.

Accessibility Resources will provide the Chair with an email listing the approved accommodations for each medical student. The Chair will ask the student to sign the Description of Academic Accommodations document indicating an understanding of and compliance with the UCCOM testing procedures. The Chair will notify relevant course directors of the approved plan at the time of approval and at the start of each academic year. See “Communication regarding approved accommodations plans” section for responsibilities of student communication.

If the requested accommodations include other academic accommodations (beyond extended time on exams and distraction limited testing room) and/or if the requested accommodations will apply in educational settings/activities that are clinical in nature, Accessibility Resources will submit the accommodations request via email to the Chair within 24 hours of the intake appointment. The Disability and Accommodations committee will review the request for feasibility, reasonableness, and plans for implementation of the accommodation plan. Possible clinical settings/activities include but are not limited to, emergency management courses (HCEM 1-4), clinical skills courses (CS 101, 102, 201, 202), Longitudinal Primary Care Clerkship (LPCC), Interprofessional Experiences (IPEX), Objective structured clinical exams (OSCE), third year clerkships and fourth year rotations. The UCCOM Disability and Accommodations Committee, in consultation with Accessibility Resources, will review accommodations requests for medical students within 15 business days of being notified by the Accessibility Resources Coordinator.

While all reasonable accommodation requests will be considered, the UCCOM cannot waive any Essential Technical and Health Standards and must not compromise the competency standards for admission, retention and graduation. Accommodations should not entail a fundamental alteration of educational outcomes, competencies, or standards or represent an undue burden on the university.

Accommodations in the academic and/or clinical settings are designed to remove barriers and to allow for equal access to the educational environment, they do not guarantee success in the educational program.

When the Disability and Accommodations Committee has reviewed the accommodation plan in consultation with Accessibility Resources, and the interactive process has come to an agreement, the Accessibility Resources Coordinator will provide a an email listing the approved accommodations to the student and the Chair. The Chair will notify relevant course directors of the approved plan at the time of approval and at the start of each academic year. See “Communication regarding approved accommodations plans” section for responsibilities of student communication.

Communication regarding approved accommodation plans

Subsequent to the process described above, Accessibility Resources will provide the medical student and the Chair with an email listing the approved accommodations. If the approved accommodations include testing accommodations, the Chair will ask the student to sign the Description of Academic Accommodations document indicating an understanding of and compliance with the UCCOM testing procedures. The Chair will notify relevant course directors of the approved accommodations at the time of approval and at the start of each academic year.

Throughout the academic year, students should communicate with relevant course directors/coordinators at the start of

each course regarding the specifics of implementing the accommodations. For students in M1 and M2, the plan for administering weekly and biweekly exams will be arranged at the beginning of the course. Students should contact the course coordinator again at least two weeks before the end of course examination to make specific arrangements for the final. Students in M3 should notify the clerkship director/coordinator at the start of the clerkship and again two weeks in advance of the shelf exam to make arrangements.

Temporary Accommodations

A student who suspects he/she has a disability can begin the process for requesting accommodations with Accessibility Resources as described above. The Accessibility Coordinator will ask the student to complete the Student Self-Report document. Based on the student's self-description of physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, the Resources Coordinator will assist the student with identifying reasonable accommodations. Consultation between the Resources Coordinator and the Chair will occur as described in section "Consultation between the UCCOM Disability and Accommodations Committee and Accessibility Resources" above. The Accessibility Resources Coordinator will inform the Chair when accommodations are categorized as "temporary" status vs. "documented" status.

The plan may be approved temporarily pending the receipt of supporting documentation from an appropriate health professional. Temporary accommodations will not exceed one semester without the appropriate supporting documentation.

Procedures for Renewal of Accommodations

The Chair will notify medical students previously registered with the Accessibility Resources via email that it is time to renew accommodation plans. Accommodations plans are renewed for each academic year. Neither Accessibility Resources nor the Disability and Accommodations committee need to review renewal requests for determination of a disability unless there is a change in the nature of the disability or a substantial modification to the previously approved plan. A written request to renew accommodations is required to be submitted by the student for each academic year using the Request for Accommodations form. Whenever possible, accommodation requests should be submitted in a timely manner and are not applied retroactively. For processing prior to the first day of class, such requests must be submitted at least 15 business days prior to the first day of class.

In consultation with Accessibility Resources, the Disability and Accommodations Committee may review the provision of accommodation to any student at any time, including at the time of the request for renewal of accommodations.

The Chair writes a new eligibility verification letter for each academic year verifying that the student is eligible for accommodations and specifies the approved accommodation plan. The letter is sent to the student via email.

For students who are approved for testing accommodations, each year when presented with the verification letter, the student must sign the Description of Academic Accommodations document indicating an understanding of and compliance with the UCCOM testing procedures.

No course director or faculty may grant accommodations without specific approval from the Accessibility Resources and the UCCOM Disability and Accommodations Committee.

Requests for accommodations on NBME licensure exams

The Chair will provide assistance to students who apply for accommodations on NBME licensure exams. All decisions regarding accommodations requests on NBME licensure exams are handled directly through the NBME. There is no guarantee that approval through UCCOM/ UC will also mean approval through NBME.