

# ***UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO***

## ***HANDBOOK FOR DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING STUDENTS***



Disability Support Services  
Main Hall (Rear Lower Level)

Station 6250  
Montevallo, AL 35115

Spring 2017

## Introduction

The University of Montevallo wants to provide all students with equal opportunity. Disability Support Services (DSS) provides a general resource guide (handbook) for all students with disabilities. As deaf and hard-of-hearing (D/HOH) students sometimes have services which require more time and detail, DSS has prepared this D/HOH Handbook to explain procedures. Students should read it thoroughly and contact staff with any questions.

Disability Support Services  
University of Montevallo  
Station 6250  
Montevallo, AL 35115  
<http://www.montevallo.edu/dss>  
[DSS@montevallo.edu](mailto:DSS@montevallo.edu)  
205-665-6250  
205-665-6255 (fax)

## Registering with Disability Support Services

- **Self-Identify:** Prospective and current students are encouraged to contact DSS directly, as early as possible, to request services. Students should complete a **DSS Application**, which can be obtained in the office or printed from the DSS website: <http://www.montevallo.edu/about-um/administration/student-affairs/disability-support-services/getting-started/forms-and-procedures/>
- **Provide Documentation:** Students requesting disability-related services or accommodations should provide appropriate documentation of disability. In the case of Deaf/HOH students, this documentation usually consists of audiology reports, records of the use of previous school services, and/or recommendations for accommodations from audiologists, deaf education teachers or Vocational Rehabilitation counselors. **Documentation guidelines** for sensory disabilities may be obtained from the DSS office or at the following link to our website: <http://www.montevallo.edu/about-um/administration/student-affairs/disability-support-services/getting-started/documentation-guidelines/>.
- Eligibility for services is determined based on documentation, including evidence of the need for services and accommodations, and DSS professional judgment. If additional information is needed, the DSS staff will notify the student.
- **Make a Request for Accommodations:** Students should contact DSS to schedule an intake appointment. An interpreter should be requested if needed for this appointment. DSS paperwork and procedures will be reviewed with the student at this appointment. Students must meet with DSS staff for the first appointment, but may request accommodations for later semesters by simply completing the accommodation request form. Request forms are available in the office and on the

website at the following link: <http://www.montevallo.edu/about-um/administration/student-affairs/disability-support-services/getting-started/forms-and-procedures/>

## Student Rights

Students at the University of Montevallo receiving services through the DSS office have a right to receive effective accommodations and services. DSS cannot guarantee “success”, but we strive to provide equal opportunity.

- **Qualified Interpreters and Captionists:** Students who use sign language interpreting services or captioning services (including C-Print) have a right to interpreters or captionists who are both qualified and professional. DSS ensures that all our interpreters are in compliance with Alabama state law (<http://www.albit.state.al.us/>). DSS also makes every effort to match captioning needs with the appropriate service provider.
- **Student Satisfaction:** Students who believe their interpreting or captioning services are ineffective should contact the DSS Director immediately. DSS staff will meet with the student to discuss the concerns and seek to find the best possible solution provide effective communication in the classroom and in other campus services.

DSS cannot always guarantee that another interpreter can be found, but does assure that the University will hire only qualified interpreters in compliance with state law. DSS will also address any student request or concern on a case-by-case basis to ensure students have access to communication in the classroom in a manner that is effective and comfortable.

Student may request specific interpreters or captionists, but requests cannot always be honored. DSS will do all that is possible to provide effective services while considering the disability and administrative needs of all students and faculty involved.

- **Evaluations:** Students have a right to complete evaluations on all interpreters/captionists at the end of a semester. The evaluation form is at the end of this handbook, or can be requested in the DSS office or via email.
- **Grievance Procedure:** The University has a student grievance process for disability-related concerns. Students are invited to discuss any disability-related concerns with DSS staff, but all students may follow the University grievance process if they do not feel their concerns were resolved. The specific grievance procedure is included within the *Disability Resource Guide: A Handbook for Students* and is also posted on the DSS website.

# DSS Accommodations and Procedures

## Classroom Accommodations

- Students wishing to use accommodations should complete a Request for Accommodation Letter each term. The request form is available in the DSS office or can be printed from the DSS website.
- Turn the request form in to the DSS office (in person, via email, postal mail or fax). DSS staff will prepare Accommodation Letters, and students must return to DSS to pick up the letters.
- Students should meet with each instructor to review and sign these letters, so the instructor knows what class accommodations are needed. Students will be given two letters (and DSS-addressed envelope) for each requested class. Students should meet with Faculty during office hours or make an appointment. (Do not try to discuss the letters in the classroom.)
- Faculty will keep one copy and return the other copy to DSS in the attached envelope.

## Disability-Related Housing Requests

- Students who may have disability-related housing requests should turn in their housing application as early as possible, indicating the need for the accommodation on the application. For D/HOH students this often includes a flashing fire alarm, but students may have other medical, mobility or psychiatric needs. The University will make every effort to meet such requests, but does require timely notice. The priority deadline for new students for a fall term is May 1.
- Students should send documentation supporting the need for the housing/dietary accommodation, along with a completed Disability-Related Housing & Dietary Request form to the DSS office. DSS will review the request and send a recommendation to Housing. If further information is needed, the student will receive a letter indicating what information is required. **Disability-Related Housing & Dietary Request** forms are available in the DSS office or can be printed from the DSS website using the following link: <http://www.montevallo.edu/about-um/administration/student-affairs/disability-support-services/getting-started/forms-and-procedures/>
- Some rooms in each residence hall are equipped with flashing fire alarms. Please make requests for these rooms early (see note about deadlines above).
- Please advise DSS if any additional alarms/equipment are needed
- Flashing door knocker notifiers are available for check-out through the DSS office. (Residential College has built-in notification systems in specific suites.)

## Sign Language Interpreters/Captionists

- Students who qualify for sign language interpreting or real-time (speech-to-text) captioning can request such services for classes and other University-sponsored events.
- Students should contact DSS to provide classroom interpreting/captioning needs, but should also provide notice for needs outside normal classroom hours, such as group work, meetings with faculty or field trips.
- Interpreting/captioning requests for non-academic university activities is coordinated through DSS, but may require coordination with the sponsoring department or organization. Students should notify DSS and the event sponsor of the need for an interpreter or captionist.

## Timeliness of Requests

- Interpreters and captionists can be hard to find with short notice. There are rarely enough to meet all demands in our community, especially at the university level. DSS requests advance notice in order to more effectively and efficiently serve students.
- For new classes (registration or drop/add) **advance notice** is defined as **at least 3 weeks** before classes begin. **For other requests (such as group work, project meetings, faculty meetings), advance notice is defined as at least 3 days prior to the meeting/event.**
- DSS understands that situations may not always allow for such notice, and staff will make every reasonable effort to locate an interpreter or captionist for all requests, including those received late.
- Students who prefer interpreters should indicate to DSS if a captionist would be an acceptable alternative, in the event that no interpreter can be located, or in the case that an interpreter is absent due to an emergency.

## Priority Registration

- Student receiving accommodations from DSS are eligible to register on the first day of pre-registration, regardless of class status (freshman, sophomore, etc.) This is called priority registration, which is designed to assist DSS in setting up services more quickly and efficiently.
- Eligible students must request early advising appointments (with their advisor) and then notify DSS that they are eligible to register.
- Students are responsible for checking their Banner account for any holds that will prevent registration. These could include unpaid parking tickets or holds from the Cashier, Health Services, Housing, etc. If students have any holds, they will **NOT be able to register**, which means they might miss the benefit of priority registration. DSS

can NOT clear these holds; if there is a hold on an account, the student must contact the office who placed the registration hold.

### **Notetaking Services**

- If notetaking support is needed for a class, the student will need to request an Accommodation Letter from DSS at the beginning of each semester to give to the instructor. The instructor may not know that notetaking is needed without this Accommodation Letter. Students must also complete and return in the gold Notetaking Support form given to them by DSS. This form confirms the classes in which the student is requesting notetaking support.
- Regular attendance is necessary. Notes do not have to be provided for classes if not attended. Notetaking support is to supplement information provided during a lecture, not to replace attendance during the lecture.
- Class notes will be delivered through a student's ForUM email account. Students should review these notes and promptly notify DSS of any concerns.
- If no notes are received within a week or so of notifying faculty of the need for a notetaker, the student should contact DSS.

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

- The University Bulletin states that class attendance is considered essential to a Montevallo liberal arts educational experience. The University wishes to provide interpreting/captioning in a manner that is effective and efficient, so we encourage attendance and advance notification of absences.
- Students are required to notify (email/text information will be provided) the DSS office as early as possible if you will be late or miss a class. Students may also contact the interpreter or captionist as well, if they have the contact information for the service provider. Service providers are also held to a high standard regarding attendance and punctuality.
- If an interpreter or captionist does not arrive, and has not provided any notice to the student that s/he might be late, the student should contact the DSS office. Efforts will be made to locate another service provider, but if there is no one available, DSS may attempt to record the remainder of the lecture so that it may be interpreted or transcribed later. Additional notes or a review of information with the faculty member when an interpreter becomes available can also be requested. Repeated tardiness or absences on the part of an interpreter or captionist can be grounds for dismissal.
- A **No-Show** is defined as a student's failure of any notice regarding an absence before a class begins. Exceptions can be made for true emergencies (car accidents, sudden illness making a text or relay call unreasonable, unexpected serious family illness, etc.). Emergencies do not include a change in work schedule, a scheduled doctor's appointment, studying for another class, etc.

- Late Notice is defined as less than 24 hours before the class or event that the student will miss.
- Repeated *No-Shows* or *Late Notices* can cause a suspension of interpreting or captioning services. Interpreters and captionists are expected to report *No-Shows* and *Late Notices* to DSS staff.
- If a student cannot provide 24 hours' advance notice of an absence, notification is requested as soon as possible.
- If a student will be absent from one class, but plans to attend a later one in the same day, notification to DSS is essential, as a *No-Show* to one class may affect services for the rest of that day. (For example, if car trouble affects the student's attendance at 8 am, but the student plans to be in a 10 am class, he or she should text/call/email DSS staff. No contact may result in DSS releasing the interpreter or changing his/her assignment, meaning there would not be an interpreter available at the second class.)
- Interpreters/Captionists will wait only 15 minutes from the start time of a 50 minutes class/event before leaving (20 minutes for a longer class /event). Students should make every attempt to contact the interpreter/captionists or DSS if they know they will be late. After the set time, an interpreter/captionist may leave and the class will be counted as a *No-Show*.
- After three (3) *No-Shows*, DSS will send a written notice to the student regarding the possibility of services being suspended. If a student misses an additional class without sufficient notice after the written warning, the student will need to make an appointment with the DSS Director to discuss continuation of services.

### **Health Services**

- All enrolled students (including Deaf/HOH students) must turn in a complete medical form, a TB questionnaire and vaccination records to the Student Health Services office.
- If these forms are not provided to the Student Health Services office, a registration hold will be put on the student's account, preventing registration for classes, which also means the student may miss priority registration (explained earlier in this handbook).

### **UM Alert (emergencies, closings, etc.)**

- The University of Montevallo has acquired a rapid alert and notification system called "UM Alert". This system provides the University with an effective tool for informing students, faculty and staff of human or natural threats. Alerts may be sent for emergency events occurring on or near campus, or when the campus is closing due to violent weather or winter storms.
- Students can adjust their settings for notification (such as text, email, voice message, etc.) through the UM Alert section in ForUM. Additional text numbers can also be added.

## Evaluation of Interpreter Services

Interpreter: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester/Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check the column which best describes your reaction to the following areas:

Characteristic/skill	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unacceptable
Clarity of signs					
Adequate sign vocabulary					
Quality of finger spelling					
Use of lip/mouth movements					
Communicates content and meaning					
Requests clarification when needed					
Confident in interpreter voicing for me					
Ability to understand my signs					
Punctual/stays entire class period					
Professional behavior and dress					
Ability to keep up with instructor					
Maintains confidentiality					

If any item above is marked as poor or unacceptable, please indicate item # and explain:

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Comments on this interpreter: \_\_\_\_\_

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Comments on UM's interpreting services: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please indicate your preferred mode of communication:

ASL: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed English: \_\_\_\_\_ Oral: \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**If this form is not returned, DSS will assume you have no complaints or suggestions for improvements for this interpreter or the office. Please note that this information will be used to improve overall interpreting services, NOT to determine future employment or rate of pay for this interpreter. Thank you.**