



DSP & S

Disabled Students Programs & Services

STUDENT
HANDBOOK



WLAC MISSION STATEMENT

West Los Angeles College provides a transformative educational experience.

West fosters a diverse learning community dedicated to student success. Through quality instruction and supportive services, the College develops leaders who encourage excellence in others.

A West education enriches students with the knowledge and skills needed to earn certificates and degrees, to transfer, to build careers, and to pursue life-long learning.

GOALS

- 1.) To assist students with disabilities in successful transition towards educational and/or career goals.
- 2.) To identify and provide appropriate accommodations and services needed for successful matriculation.
- 3.) To promote confidence and self advocacy to assist students in maximizing educational and life goals.
- 4.) To promote specialized courses to foster the transitional skills needed to achieve career and/or academic goals.
- 5.) Provide support for first time students with disabilities to ensure successful transition.
- 6.) To provide awareness and information to the campus and community organizations in regards to DSPS.
- 7.) To facilitate access and training to appropriate Assistive Technology.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- 1.) Students will be able to identify the appropriate assistive technology that will assist them in being successful.
- 2.) Students will be able to identify their disability and advocate for appropriate accommodations.

- 3.) Students will have knowledge and demonstrate the ability to use skills for transition.
- 4.) Students will have the knowledge of and access to support services on campus.

DSP&S MISSION STATEMENT

Disabled Students Program and Services, one of the student services at West Los Angeles College, is designed to provide equal access to educational programs. A variety of programs and services are available to eligible students with disabilities, providing them the opportunity to fully participate in West Los Angeles College's programs and activities through appropriate and reasonable academic accommodations.

DSP&S provides academic support services to students with verified disabilities who register with DSP&S each semester. Services are determined on a case-by-case basis by a DSP&S professional who in conjunction with the student identifies which reasonable academic accommodations are appropriate, based upon verification of the disability and the extent of functional limitation(s) caused by the disability.

INTRODUCTION

The members of the Disabled Students Programs and Services Department would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to our program. It is our sincere hope that our services will enhance your educational development and help you meet your academic goals. Advising, counseling, special equipment, note takers, test accommodations and other services are available but you must

request these services. It is important to meet with DSP&S staff to review your strengths, limitations and accommodation needs. We hope this handbook will help you take full advantage of all of the services offered here at WLAC.

We strongly encourage you to take this opportunity to review the information in this Student Handbook and use it in conjunction with information from the WLAC Catalog and Schedule of Classes. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please contact the DSP&S at (310) 287-4450.

ITEMS YOU NEED TO KNOW

Succeeding in College

College involves thoughtful preparation. It is important to start as early as possible. Arranging support services in college can take a lot of time, depending on the services that you need and the resources that are available. Being in college means managing a demanding schedule. It is important to develop and utilize personal skills such as self-advocacy, self-management and study skills.

Self Advocacy Skills

Self-advocacy skills include knowing how to skillfully initiate action and interact with faculty, staff and other students to obtain support services necessary for your learning needs. If you require accommodation, you are the one who must recognize the need, make the initial contacts, follow up on these contacts, and maintain the necessary actions to receive the services needed. Request aid from your instructors. Don't be intimidated by them; they are there to help. Seek help from DSP&S for specific examples of how to initiate dialogue with your instructor.

Self-management Skills

Self-management skills include planning academic and personal schedules that are reasonable and manageable on a day-to-day basis. Take into account your abilities and strengths as well as your disabilities. For some individuals, strength and ability may vary daily. Flexibility is an important factor.

Study Skills

Study skills involve knowing how to effectively learn from academic materials. This entails developing effective strategies for note taking during lectures and labs, completing reading assignments and taking tests. Development of each skill is important in order to have effective overall study habits.

Support Services

To be successful in college, many individuals with disabilities utilize assistance from on- and off-campus offices. An on-campus resource is Psychological Services, a program that provides free confidential counseling, crisis counseling, and assistance with exploring personal issues and decisions that help you continue successfully in college. An off campus resource is the Department of Rehabilitation, which provides support as you pursue your academic and vocational goals. The DSP&S Office is a good place to start and any DSP&S staff member is happy to provide you with a direct referral to any on or off campus personal or vocational services.

Support services can be steady and continuous, or merely temporary. In many instances, a service that provides assistance requires ongoing attention. For example, to continue receiving some services, updates on progress, status reports and/or renewal requests may be required. Make time in your schedule for the support services you need!

Technology

Computer resources are essential tools in college and many work settings. Assistive technologies make it possible for people with a variety of disabilities to make use of these powerful tools. Develop skills in word processing and information access for research purposes. Computers are available in various locations on campus.

Think Ahead

Working toward a career should begin early in your college life. Making wise academic choices (such as, choosing a major, selecting appropriate coursework, obtaining work experience) can assist you in working toward your career. The Career Center provides vital services and classes for students investigating different career options.

Be sensible about the number of credits you take, especially in your first semester. Be aware that the average time for homework is 2 to 3 hours of work outside of class for each hour the class meets. Due to the nature of each individual disability, this time frame may be increased. Consider this when you decide on how many classes to take. Work with your counselor.

Tutoring

Take advantage of the tutoring opportunities on campus - Math, Science, English and Reading. Instructors often organize study groups where students can work together on assignments and projects. Keep on the lookout for these opportunities.

Have Fun!

A social life is important. Make time in your schedule to socialize and get involved in extracurricular campus activities. Forming study groups is a good way to tackle challenging classes and meet new people. Joining campus clubs or organizations will help you connect with others with similar interests. Get involved with student government, meet student leaders and make a contribution to student life on campus.

The DSP&S Office offers students with disabilities a wide variety of support services. Students enrolling at WLAC should contact staff in the DSP&S Office for a pre-enrollment counseling appointment to determine support services needed. Accommodations are provided based upon an individual's educational limitations and may include: registration assistance, disability management counseling, note taking, assistance with obtaining reader services, special parking permit, assistance with classroom access, orientation to the campus, test accommodations and referral and liaison with other campus and community services.

The High Tech Center offers assistance with computer access on campus and provides specialized training in the use of hardware and software adaptations appropriate to a particular student's disability. The Center also provides alternate media services to students, faculty and staff who need their course materials in different formats such as electronic text, Braille, and large print.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

West Los Angeles College is committed to equal opportunity regardless of age, gender, marital status, disability, race, color, sexual orientation, religion, national origin or other similar factors, for admission to the College,

enrollment in classes, student services, financial aid and employment in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (45CFR 86), Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (PL 93-112), and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

DSP&S coordinates and provides academic accommodations and support services to enrolled students who are eligible for such services. Eligibility for program participation is established in accordance with guidelines created by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title V (California Education Code).

STUDENTS RIGHTS

As a college student with a disability, you have the right to “reasonable accommodations” based upon your educational limitations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Provisions of the law states that: “No otherwise qualified person with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of disability, be denied the benefits of, be excluded from participation in, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

Colleges and universities receiving federal financial assistance must not discriminate in the recruitment, admission or treatment of students. Students with documented disabilities may request accommodations, or auxiliary aids which will enable them to participate and benefit from all post secondary educational programs and activities. Post secondary institutions must make such changes to ensure that the academic programs are accessible to the greatest extent possible by all students with disabilities.

Under the provision of Section 504, colleges and universities may not:

- limit the number of students with disabilities admitted;
- make pre-admission inquiries as to whether or not an applicant is disabled;
- use admission test or criteria that inadequately measures the academic qualifications of students with disabilities because special provisions were not made for them;
- exclude a qualified student with a disability from any course of study;
- limit eligibility to a student with a disability for financial assistance, or otherwise discriminate in administering scholarships, fellowships, internships, or assistant ships on the basis of disability;
- counsel a student with a disability towards a more restrictive career;
- measure student’s achievement using modes that adversely discriminates against a student with a disability; or
- Establish rules and policies that may adversely affect students with disabilities.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Students shall demonstrate appropriate adaptive/self help behavior.
2. Students receiving special services (interpreters, mobility assistance, testing accommodations, etc.) must notify the DSP&S Office of their absence prior to the time these special services have been scheduled to be delivered. For your convenience, messages may be left for DSP&S staff at (310) 287-4450, 24 hours per day and on weekends.
3. Every student must meet academic standards established by the college.

4. Students are to assume personal responsibility for taking any medication.
5. The individual students shall be responsible for the provision of personal attendant care.
6. Students shall comply with the Student Code of Conduct adopted by the district as written in the college catalog.
7. Students shall be responsible in their use of DSP&S services.

Misuse of services and/ or inappropriate behavior as identified in the District's Student Code of Conduct may result in termination of services. A student seeking to appeal the termination of services should appeal to the Dean of Student Support Services. If, after consulting with the Dean, the student is still not satisfied, s/he may appeal to the Vice President of Student Services.

TERMINATION OF SERVICES

DSP&S services may be suspended or terminated (partially or in full) when any of the following occur:

1. DSP&S is unable to verify the student's disability based upon information provided by the student.
2. A student fails to act responsibly in the use services provided by DSP&S and/or refuses to follow written services provision policies adopted by DSP&S.

Request for Reinstatement of Services:

Students subject to partial or full service suspension or termination are required to meet with DSP&S professional staff in order to request reinstatement of services. In order to request reinstatement of services the student must schedule an appointment with the Dean or the Dean's designee and provide a written reinstatement rationale. The decision to suspend or terminate (partially or fully) services will be made by the Dean and the Vice President of Student Services based upon the recommendation of the professional staff. The Dean will notify the student in writing of any suspension or termination of services. Copies of such notice will be placed in the student's file.

Requirements for Reinstatement of Services:

A student subject to full or partial services termination may re-apply after one full semester has elapsed from the date of termination. Services may be reinstated on a probationary basis, concurrent with a written commitment from the student to follow DSP&S policies for service provision including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Accept DSP&S recommendations for appropriate course selection.
2. Attend all classes regularly and on time.
3. Report academic difficulties to DSP&S staff in a timely manner.
4. Keep all scheduled appointments or, when necessary, cancel appointments at least 24 hours in advance,
5. Keep DSP&S staff apprised of academic progress through progress reports.

Students Right to Appeal:

The student has the right to appeal the suspension or termination of service decision to the Vice President of Student Services. Any termination of service should not be construed as indicating expulsion or termination from the college itself.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR FACULTY REFUSAL TO PROVIDE APPROVED ACCOMMODATION

It is the obligation of the West Los Angeles College (WLAC or the College) faculty to render accommodations approved by the Disabled Student Program and Services (DSP&S) professionals in accordance with State and Federal laws, as applicable. The following process applies if a student is not receiving approved accommodations from any course of study at WLAC. WLAC takes all matters of disability-related discrimination seriously and will respond promptly. WLAC prohibits any form of retaliation, intimidation, or harassment against any individual who has filed or otherwise participated in the filing or investigation of a complaint, and any individual who believes he/she/they have been subjected to retaliation may file a complaint under the formal resolution procedure below.

Informal Resolution of Faculty Refusal to Provide Approved Accommodation

If a WLAC faculty member is not implementing an accommodation approved by DSP&S, an aggrieved student may engage in the informal resolution procedure described in this section. **Students are not required to engage the informal resolution procedure before filing a formal complaint for disability-related discrimination (see below).** Throughout the implementation of informal resolution procedure and the formal resolution procedure, if an aggrieved student pursues formal resolution, the accommodation originally approved by DSP&S will be provided to the student.

1. Contact the DSP&S office for assistance, specifically the counselor or Dean in DSP&S:

Mr. Eric Wagner
Counselor
9000 Overland Ave.
Culver City, CA 90230
wagnerep@wlaac.edu
(310) 287-4450

Dr. Shalomon Duke
Dean
9000 Overland Ave.
Culver City, CA 90230
dukesa@wlaac.edu
(310) 287-4450

2. Upon notification by the student that a member of the faculty is not implementing a DSP&S approved accommodation, a DSP&S staff member will attempt to resolve the matter within five (5) calendar days.

3. DSP&S will communicate with the instructor and, if needed, the Department Chair and/or Dean of the department for resolution.
4. If there is no resolution within five (5) calendar days, DSP&S will inform the student in writing of his/her rights to file a formal grievance for disability-related discrimination with:
 - a. WLAC through the formal resolution procedure (see below);
 - b. The LACCD Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (<https://www.laccd.edu/Departments/DistrictResources/OfficeOfDiversity/Pages/default.aspx>); and/or
 - c. The Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights (<https://ocrcas.ed.gov/index.cfm>).

FORMAL RESOLUTION OF COMPLAINTS ALLEGING DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION

All allegations of disability-based discrimination at WLAC shall be investigated and resolved in accordance with this formal resolution procedure. This formal resolution procedure applies to complaints by students or third parties that allege discrimination on the basis of disability, including complaints that allege that actions taken by WLAC employees, by students, or by third parties are discriminatory, such as an allegation that a faculty member is not implementing a DSP&S approved accommodation or an allegation that a WLAC policy or procedure (or lack thereof) is discriminatory.

1. The complainant will submit a written complaint to the College ADA Coordinator requesting resolution; if possible, the complainant's written complaint may include a list of witnesses. The contact information for the College ADA Coordinator can be found below. The College ADA Coordinator and designee(s) receive annual training in appropriate investigatory approaches and the applicable legal standards.
West LA College ADA Coordinator
Ms. Iris Ingram
Vice President, Administrative Services
9000 Overland Ave.
Culver City, CA 90230
ingramii@wlac.edu
(310) 287-4367
2. The College ADA Coordinator or designee(s) will immediately begin a reliable and impartial investigation, which includes an opportunity for the complainant to present documents and witnesses, and requires the College ADA Coordinator or designee(s) to gather relevant

documentary evidence and interview relevant witnesses.

3. The College ADA Coordinator will issue a written notice of outcome to the complainant, Dean of Support Services, Dean of Academic Affairs, and respondent within sixty (60) calendar days of receiving the complainant's written complaint. The written notice of outcome will include:
 - a. A determination if discrimination occurred, thus violating the College's and LACCD's discrimination policies based on the preponderance of the evidence, and the rationale for this determination;
 - b. If discrimination is found to have occurred, the College will identify and implement remedies that stop the discrimination, prevent recurrence, and remedy discriminatory effects on the complainant and others, if appropriate; and,
 - c. Appeal rights (see below).
4. If the complainant or respondent disagrees with the determination by the College ADA Coordinator, the following appeal process is available:
5.
 - a. The complainant or respondent may submit a written appeal to the College President within ten (10) calendar days of the date of the College ADA Coordinator's written notice of outcome. The written appeal should include the reason for appeal, such as the complainant or respondent feels there was an error in the College ADA Coordinator's investigation or would like to present new information/evidence.
 - b. The College President shall have ten (10) calendar days from the date of the appeal to issue his/her written decision on the appeal, including the findings of fact and rationale for the decision.
 - c. The College President can alter or change the determination and corrective measures in the College ADA Coordinator's written notice of outcome.
 - d. The College President's decision on the appeal is final.

Los Angeles Community College District Discrimination Policy

It is the policy of WLAC to provide an educational, employment and business environment free from all forms of discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, ethnic group identification, ancestry, religion, creed, sex or gender (including sexual harassment),

pregnancy, marital status, medical condition, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental disability, perceived to be in a protected category or associated with those in protected category and veteran status.

All programs and activities of WLAC shall be operated in a manner which is free of discrimination. Employees, students, or other persons acting on behalf of the District and/or the College who engage in any form of discrimination as defined in this policy or by state or federal law shall be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge, expulsion, or termination of contract.

If you feel you have been discriminated against by a student or a College employee, faculty, staff or administrator, you may contact the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to file a complaint. The contact information for the LACCD Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion can be found below. You may also file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights. The contact information for the Office for Civil Rights can be found below. If you have witnessed discrimination, you may contact the LACCD Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion or the Office for Civil Rights to file a complaint.

LACCD Office of Diversity,
Equity, and Inclusion
770 Wilshire Blvd., 2nd Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90017
Director: (213) 891-2316
Office: (213) 891-2315 &
(213) 891-2317
Fax: (213) 891-2295

Office for Civil Rights
50 United Nations Plaza
Mailbox 1200, Room 1545
San Francisco, CA 94102
Main: (415) 486-5555
TDY: (800) 877-8339
Fax: (415) 486-5570
ocr.sanfrancisco@ed.gov

Reference: LACCD Administrative Regulation C-14 – Procedures for Prohibited Discrimination, Unlawful Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Complaints

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

A student enrolling in one of the Los Angeles Community Colleges may rightfully expect that the faculty and administrators will maintain an environment in which there is freedom to learn.

This requires that there be appropriate conditions and opportunities in the classroom and on the campus. As members of the College community, students should be encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment; to engage in sustained and independent search for truth; and to exercise their rights to free inquiry and free speech in a responsible, nonviolent manner.

Students shall respect and obey civil and criminal, and shall be subject to legal penalties for violation of laws of the City, County, State and Nation. Student conduct in all of the Los Angeles Community Colleges must conform to District and College rules and regulations.

