

NTC Learning Services Guide



This guide is available in alternative formats. Please contact the Learning Services Director.
Revised 6/21/07

This guide is designed to provide information about the services available at Northwest Technical College for learners with disabilities, for learners who need academic assistance, and for learners with limited English proficiency. It will help explain how to access accommodations or academic support services on the college campus.

In order to respect the independence, rights, and dignity of people with disabilities, requesting an accommodation or identifying oneself as having a disability will be voluntary. In addition, Northwest Technical College will treat documentation on disabilities with confidentiality in accordance with data privacy laws, NTC policy, and MnSCU policy. No information will be collected for administrative purposes except information that is essential for verification of disability, determination of reasonable accommodations, or required by law. Unless otherwise requested by the learner, information may be shared with the learner's instructor(s), on a need-to-know basis, to further facilitate successful completion of his/her program. Instructors will also be bound by confidentiality.

Northwest Technical College Mission Statement

Northwest Technical College integrates the value of work with the educational experience to develop resourceful lifelong learners with knowledge, skills, and attitudes to secure rewarding careers and satisfying lives in an increasingly technologically focused, globally interdependent, multicultural society.

Learning Services Mission Statement

The mission of Learning Services is to provide academic support services to all learners and appropriate accommodations for learners with disabilities. The academic support services will supplement the curriculum in order to give all learners every possible opportunity for success in reaching their education goals.

I. Academic Support Services

Learning Services at Northwest Technical College provides tutoring services for courses that lead to a certificate, diploma, or degree. In order to ensure that this service is properly utilized, these policies are followed:

1. Serving learners with Accommodation Plans and/or learners who are having difficulty with course materials is the top priority of the tutoring program. Tutoring is NOT an accommodation.
2. Learners receiving tutoring support are NOT to schedule tutoring sessions during times in which they are scheduled to be in the classroom. Tutoring is to be used as supplemental support ONLY.
3. The college reserves the right to deny tutoring services to any learner who has demonstrated a lack of respect for the tutors.
4. The primary delivery of tutoring services occurs in small groups so that learners benefit from the expertise of the assigned tutor and from the shared knowledge of the group members. Learners need to simply come to the tutor room during the posted hours to access tutoring.

Learning Services makes every effort to meet the learners' learning needs. Learning Services will facilitate the formation of learner-led study groups. The Learning Services Director will announce the desire to begin the study group via learner e-mail. The Learning Services Director will also serve as the contact person for other learners who are also interested in forming a study group. A group will be formed if two or more learners express interest. Learners are responsible for leading and continuing the groups.

Contact the Learning Services Director for any questions regarding tutoring services. Keep in mind that the tutoring schedule may change each semester according to class schedule and learner need. Hours for the tutor room are sent to learners via learner email. Please stop by the Learning Enrichment Lab located in Room 209 in the library.

II. Academic Improvement Plans For Learners on Academic Probation or Suspension

Standards of academic progress are established to encourage learners to progress satisfactorily toward the completion of their program. Learners should work closely with their academic advisors to ensure that they are successfully completing the graduation requirements for their program. Individual programs may have additional requirements for academic progress. Details regarding academic progress can be found the NTC Campus Handbook. Also refer to the Campus Handbook for any stipulations regarding academic progress for financial aid.

Learners who do not achieve successful progress will be placed on academic probation. All learners who are on academic probation must see the Learning Services Director to write an Academic Improvement Plan. The purpose of an Academic Improvement Plan is to assist the learner in learning habits that create academic success.

III. Limited English Proficiency

Lack of English skills is not a barrier to admission and participation in programs at Northwest Technical College. Northwest Technical College recognizes Limited English Proficiency (LEP) as speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language such that those skills may affect an individual's ability to communicate. Limited English Proficiency is also known as English as a Second Language (ESL). A person may not have sufficient proficiency if they were if they come from a culture in which English is not the dominant language.

English Proficiency will be assessed by the LOEP assessment and Accuplacer. Learners not meeting the cut-off scores will be required to have a Personal Education Plan. The purpose of a Personal Education Plan is to provide support with English skills. Contact the Learning Services Director for more information.

IV. Disability Services

A disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits a major life activity. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, MnSCU policy, and NTC policy support the rights of individuals with disabilities to have equal access to an education. Equal access includes an equal opportunity to learn and to participate in the academic community. Accommodations are available to assist learners with documented disabilities to achieve their educational goals. Learners are not charged a fee for the accommodations. They are free. Requests for accommodations will not affect a learner's placement in a program.

This material can be provided in different formats, like large print, Braille, or on tape.
Contact the campus Learning Services Director.

Steps to accessing disability services:

1. The learner must self-identify as a person with a disability to the Learning Services Director; and then request services. Please note that the learner must both self-identify and request services.
2. The learner must provide current documentation from an appropriate professional to the Learning Services Director. The documentation may not be more than three years old. IEPs may be no more than five years old.
3. The learner must complete an Accommodation Plan with the Learning Services Director.

Specific accommodations are determined on a case-by-case basis. Examples of some accommodations are (but not limited to) e-files, note takers, tape recorded lecture, extended test time, test reader, and test scribe. Some accommodations, such as an interpreter and e-files, take time to arrange. Please see the Learning Services Director as soon as possible.

Tennessee Warning

Northwest Technical College is asking you to provide information which includes private information under State and Federal law. The College is asking for this private information so that the College can process your request for supplemental services.

This information will be used to evaluate your request and to help the College determine whether you are eligible for services.

You are not legally required to provide the information the College is requesting and you may refuse to provide some or all of the information requested. However, the College may not be able to process your request if you do not provide sufficient information.

With some exceptions, unless you consent to further release of private information, access to this information will be limited to individuals involved in the supplemental services process. However, federal and state laws do authorize release of private information without your consent to:

- **other school officials, including faculty within the College, who have legitimate educational interests in the information**
- **other schools in which you seek or intend to enroll, or are enrolled, if you are first notified of the release**
- **the federal Comptroller General or other federal, state, or local education officials for purposes of program compliance, audit or evaluation**
- **as appropriate in connection with your application for, or receipt of, financial aid**
- **the juvenile justice system, if you are a juvenile, and the information is necessary, prior to adjudication, to determine the juvenile justice system's ability to serve you**
- **an alleged victim of sexual assault, if you are the alleged perpetrator of the assault, and the release is of the results of a disciplinary proceeding against you related to the alleged crime**
- **your parents, if your parents claim you as a dependent learner for tax purposes**
- **a court, grand jury, or state or federal agency, if the information is sought with a subpoena**

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- an institution engaged in research for an educational institution or agency related to testing, learner aid, or improved instruction
- an accrediting organization in connection with its accrediting functions
- appropriate persons in connection with an emergency, if necessary to protect your health or safety or the health or safety of others
- if required by a court order, or permitted by other state or federal law

V. Policies

NTC endorses and complies with MnSCU Policy for Individuals with Disabilities. The following MnSCU policy can be found at www.mnscu.edu

MnSCU Policy B.4 Access for Individuals with Disabilities

Part 1. Definitions.

Subpart A. An individual with a disability:

1. Any person who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities.
2. Any person who has a record of such impairment which means that a person has a history of or has been classified as having a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.
3. Any person who is regarded as having such an impairment which means:
 - a. Has a physical or mental impairment that may not substantially limit major life activities but that is treated by others as constituting such a limitation;
 - b. Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits major life activities only as a result of the attitudes of others toward such impairment;
 - c. Has no impairment but is treated by others as having such an impairment.

Subpart B. Personal devices and services: Examples of personal devices and services include wheelchairs; individually prescribed devices, such as prescription eyeglasses or hearing aids; readers for personal use or study; or services of a personal nature including assistance in eating, toileting, or dressing.

Subpart C. Qualified individual: A person who, with or without reasonable modifications to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for receipt of services or participation in a system office, college, or university program or activity. Essential eligibility requirements include, but are not limited to, academic and technical standards requisite to admission or participation in an education program or activity.

Part 2. General Access Policy.

The system office, colleges, and universities will provide access to programs, services and activities to qualified individuals with known disabilities as required by law. Where an individual asks for an accommodation, the system office, college, or university may require the individual to provide documentation.

Part 3. Availability and Notice.

<p>This material can be provided in different formats, like large print, Braille, or on tape. Contact the campus Learning Services Director.</p>
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Each college and university shall post notices in an accessible format to the public describing 1) college or university prohibition against discrimination, and 2) college or university contact for requesting reasonable accommodation or information.

Part 4. Reasonable Accommodations to Ensure Access to Programs, Services, and Activities.

The system office, colleges, and universities shall make reasonable accommodations to ensure access to programs, services, and activities as required by law. Access means that a qualified individual with a disability will not be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities, nor will the individual be subjected to discrimination. Reasonable accommodations may include modifications to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, provision of auxiliary aids or the provision of equally effective programs, services, or activities. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, accommodations will **not** be provided 1) for personal devices or services even though the individual may be a qualified individual with a disability, or 2) that result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a service, program, or activity or in undue financial or administrative burdens.

Part 5. Offered and/or Sponsored Services or Activities for Qualified Students with Disabilities.

Colleges and universities have a responsibility to provide access to services and/or activities that are operated or sponsored by the college or university or that receive significant assistance from the college or university. Such access shall be provided in a reasonable manner as required by law. At a minimum, the following must be offered to qualified students with disabilities: 1) support, counseling, and information services that may include support groups, individual counseling, career counseling and assessment, and referral services, 2) academic assistance services that may include assistive devices, early registration services, early syllabus availability, course selection, and program advising, course work assistance, testing assistance, and modification, and tutoring, and 3) coordination services that may include personnel acting on the student's behalf and serving as the primary contact and coordinator for students needing services, assistance in working individually with faculty and administrators, intervention procedures, and grievance procedures.

Part 6. Procedure.

In consultation with the system office, each college and university shall establish a procedure for individuals with disabilities to make requests for accommodations to access programs, services, or activities at the college or university, consistent with state and federal laws. Such procedure for access to programs for individuals with disabilities must, at a minimum, include the following:

- a. The system policy statement and system definitions.
- b. Assignment and identification of a staff member responsible for administering the delivery of services to individuals with disabilities.
- c. Provide a process for appealing a denial of a request for program access.

Notice to the Public

Northwest Technical College is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment and educational opportunities. A full copy of this policy can be found at: www.mnscu.edu
To receive a paper copy of this policy, contact the school counselor. Questions and/or concerns about this policy and be addressed to the school counselor or the Learning Services Director.

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board Policy1B.1:

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment and education opportunity. No person shall be discriminated against in the terms and conditions of employment, personal practices, or access to and participation in, programs, services, and activities with regard to race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation. In addition, discrimination in employment based on membership or activity in a local commission as defined by law is prohibited.

Harassment of an individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation is prohibited. Harassment may occur in a variety of relationships, including faculty and student, supervisor and employee, student and student, employee and employee, and other relationships with persons having business at, or visiting the educational or working environment.

This policy is directed at verbal and physical contact that constitutes discrimination/harassment under state and federal law and is not directed at the content of speech. In cases in which verbal statements and other forms of expression are involved, MnSCU will give due consideration to an individual's constitutionally protected right to free speech and academic freedom. However, discrimination and harassment are not within the protections of academic freedom or free speech.

The system office, colleges and universities shall maintain and encourage full freedom, within the law, of expression, inquiry, teaching and research. Academic freedom comes with a responsibility that all members of our education community benefit from it without intimidation, exploitation or coercion.

This policy shall apply to individuals affiliated with MnSCU, including but not limited to, its students, employees, applicants, volunteers, agents, and Board of Trustees, and is intended to protect the rights and privacy of both the complainant and respondent and other individuals, as well as to prevent retaliation or reprisal. Individuals who violate this policy shall be subject to disciplinary or other corrective action.

This policy supersedes all existing system, college, and university non-discrimination policies.

ADA Campus Grievance Procedures

The State of Minnesota has established grievance procedures that provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action that is prohibited by Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This grievance procedure is to be used by persons with disabilities who are eligible for services, benefits, programs, or activities of Northwest Technical College.

Title II states in part, that *no otherwise qualified disabled person shall, solely by reason of such disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination* in programs or activities sponsored by a campus.

In accordance with college procedures, complaints should be sent to:

**Debbie Drinkard-Grovum
Counselor and Co-Curricular Services Coordinator
905 Grant Ave. SE
Bemidji, MN 56601-4907
218.333.6618**

Step 1. A complaint should be filed in writing containing the name and address of complainant, a brief description of the violation and the accommodation sought. The complaint shall be filed within 90 working days after the complainant becomes aware of the alleged violation. Within 10 working days of the receipt of the written complaint, the Co-Curricular Services Coordinator will acknowledge, in writing, receipt of the written complaint. The Co-Curricular Services Coordinator shall review the complaint for completeness and validity, shall make all parties to the complaint aware of the violation, obtain additional information related to the complaint if necessary, and shall attempt to resolve the complaint.

Step 2. If the Co-Curricular Services Coordinator is not able to resolve the complaint in step 1, she shall schedule a meeting with representative(s) of the College and the complainant within 15 working days. The College Dean of Co-Curricular Affairs will respond in writing to the complainant detailing any actions taken or proposed by the College within 15 working days of the meeting.

Step 3. If the complainant is not satisfied with the College's proposal to resolve the complaint, the complaint shall be referred to the ADA Advisory Committee, in care of the State ADA Coordinator at the Department of Employee Relations. The ADA Advisory Committee will review the complaint and any documentation associated with the complaint and respond to the complainant in writing within 30 days of their recommendation for action.

Alternative Grievance Procedures

Nothing in this procedure prevents any individual who believes they have a grievance under the ADA from taking other legal action to seek resolution. The complainant is informed that at any time prior to 365 days having elapsed from the date of occurrence; the complainant may file a formal charge with the State Department of Human Rights, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or the U.S. Department of Justice.

Waivers

Any timelines established by these procedures may be waived by mutual consent.

FACILITIES ACCESS

Questions or concerns regarding the accessibility of Northwest Technical College facilities and/or facilities where programs and activities sponsored by Northwest Technical College are conducted should be addressed to:

Tom Kuhrke
Facilities Services Supervisor
905 Grant Ave SE
Bemidji, MN 56601
218.33.6653

OR

Sarah Plahn
Learning Services Director
905 Grant Ave SE
Bemidji, MN 56601
218.333.6650

Title IX Policy

The Learner Services Center supports the College policy not to discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs, activities or employment policies as required by Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Inquiries regarding compliance with Title IX or Section 504 may be directed to:

Northwest Technical College
905 Grant Ave. SE
Bemidji, MN 56601
218.333.6600

SECTION 504: Sarah Plahn, Learning Services Director

TITLE IX: Debbie Drinkard-Grovum, counselor
Minnie Oakgrove, Multicultural Advisor

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

Within the first week of classes, persons with disabilities, who will be in need of specific accommodation assistance during an emergency evacuation, are asked to contact:

Tom Kuhrke
Facilities Services Supervisor
Or
Sarah Plahn
Learning Services Director

CLASSROOM INSTRUCTORS ARE EXPECTED TO INTERRUPT CLASS ACTIVITY AND DIRECT LEARNERS TO EVACUATE THE BUILDING. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PERSON IN CHARGE OF EACH CLASSROOM AND/OR SERVICE AREA TO INSURE THE SAFETY OF EACH LEARNER IN THEIR AREA AND ASSIST WITH THE ACCOMMODATIONS NEEDED BY PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

Persons with disabilities should be provided assistance during emergency evacuations. The person with a disability will work with the ADA Coordinator or the Learning Services Director to develop a plan to meet his/her needs should an emergency evacuation be necessary. The learner will then inform the instructor or staff member of his/her needs.

Moving persons in wheelchairs down a stairway is not recommended. If necessary, four people (one at his/her front, back, and sides) should be there to assist the person in a wheelchair. One person should remain with the disabled person during an evacuation, if this can be done without unreasonable risk. Others should evacuate the building and be advised of the location of the persons remaining in the building so that the evacuation may be used to move persons with disabilities quickly.

During a tornado, in most university buildings, the safest area is the basement. If a basement is not available, occupants should move to the central portion of the building away from outside walls and glass. Large unsupported roof structures, as typically found in auditoriums and gymnasiums, should be avoided.

Personnel should anticipate a tornado warning will extend for a significant time, perhaps thirty (30) minutes or longer. A battery-operated radio tuned to any local AM or FM station will provide current weather information. Personnel should not leave the shelter until a period of at least ten minutes has elapsed without sounding of the alert sirens or local news media announce an "all clear".

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