

Disability Accommodation Appeal Policy for Students

Goucher College welcomes qualified students with disabilities. The college provides reasonable accommodations for academically qualified students with disabilities so that they can participate in the college's academic programs and activities. Goucher adheres to all applicable federal and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations, but like all colleges, Goucher is not required to provide accommodations that fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity or create undue financial or administrative burdens.

I. PURPOSE

The policy addresses student complaints under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) related to the denial of accommodations. Other complaints concerning discrimination on the basis of a disability will be addressed through Goucher's [Non-Discrimination Policy](#).

II. ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

The process for filing an appeal from the denial of a request for academic accommodations is as follows:

A. Informal Appeal Process for Students

The determination of reasonable academic accommodations is a collaborative process between the student and the director of Accessibility Services ("OAS director"). Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. If, after a student has completed the [process](#), a mutually acceptable accommodation cannot be determined, the student may request a meeting with the director of the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) to discuss the student's request, after which the ACE Director or their designee shall communicate a decision to the student.

The student may choose to have an advisor to support and accompany them throughout the informal or formal procedure. The advisor serves in a supporting role, and students may contact the advisor at any point during the informal and formal process. The advisor can be any faculty or staff from the Goucher community.

Participation in the informal process is not required, and a student may opt out at any time and proceed directly to the formal appeal process.

B. Formal Appeal Process for Students

If a student disagrees with the decision of the OAS director to deny a request for an accommodation or with the specific accommodations approved by the OAS director, the student can appeal the OAS director's decision through the following formal appeal process:

1. An appeal must be submitted in writing to the associate provost for undergraduate studies (or their designee). The student's appeal must set forth the specific action disputed, the specific accommodation(s) sought by the student, and must include all pertinent documentation. The student is encouraged to file the appeal promptly so that the college can address concerns quickly.
2. The student will have the opportunity to identify any witnesses and evidence they consider relevant to the appeal.
3. While the appeal is being decided, the student will be provided accommodations originally recommended by the OAS director.
4. The associate provost will notify the OAS director of the appeal and will convene a meeting to discuss the appeal with the student and the OAS coordinator within one week of receiving a written appeal.
5. The associate provost may consult with the college's legal counsel and other administrators as necessary.
6. The associate provost will review the file and documentation as well as any additional information presented at the meeting, and will issue a written decision on the appeal to the student within two weeks after the meeting.
7. The decision of the associate provost represents the final decision of the college.

III. NON-ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS (INCLUDES SPECIAL HOUSING, REQUESTS FOR SERVICE ANIMALS, AND OTHER NON-ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS)

The process for filing an appeal from the denial of a request for non-academic accommodations is as follows:

A. Informal Appeal Process for Students

The determination of reasonable non-academic accommodations is a collaborative process between the student, the OAS director, and other college administrators, as appropriate. Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. If, after a student has completed the process for non-academic accommodations and a mutually acceptable accommodation cannot be determined, the student may request a meeting with the OAS director and other administrators, as appropriate.

The student may choose to have an advisor to support and accompany them throughout the informal or formal process. The advisor serves in a supporting role, and students may contact the advisor at any point during the informal or formal process. The advisor can be any faculty or staff from the Goucher community.

Participation in the informal process is not required, and a student may opt-out at any time and move directly to the formal appeal process.

B. Formal Appeal Process for Students

If a student disagrees with the decision of the OAS director to deny a request for an accommodation or with the specific accommodations approved, they can appeal the decision through the following formal appeal process:

1. An appeal must be submitted in writing to the vice president for student affairs (VPSA) (or their designee). The student's appeal must set forth the specific action disputed and the specific accommodation(s) sought by the student and include all accompanying documentation. The student is encouraged to file the appeal promptly so that the college can address concerns quickly.
2. The student will have the opportunity to identify any witnesses and evidence that they consider relevant to the appeal.
3. The VPSA will notify the OAS director of the appeal and convene a meeting to discuss it with the student, the OAS director, and other administrators, as appropriate, within one week of receiving a written appeal.
4. The VPSA may consult with Goucher's legal counsel and other administrators as necessary.
5. The VPSA will review the file, documentation, and any additional information presented at the meeting. Within two weeks of the meeting, the VPSA will issue a written decision on the appeal to the student.

The decision of the VPSA represents the final decision of the college.

IV. TIME LIMITS

Time is of the essence in considering appeals under this policy. Nevertheless, the time periods may be extended by agreement of the parties, or if necessary, to accommodate the schedules of those involved in the appeal process or to obtain additional information needed to decide the appeal.

V. PROTECTION AGAINST RETALIATION

Threats, intimidation, and retaliation against a student for requesting an accommodation or filing an appeal under this policy, or against any person for participating in the appeal process, or serving as a witness, are violations of the ADA, Section 504 and this policy, and thus may be grounds for disciplinary action and/or the imposition of sanctions. All individuals are encouraged to report instances of retaliation to the Title IX coordinator. Complaints of retaliation will be addressed under Goucher's [Non-Discrimination Policy](#).

VI. CONTACT INFORMATION

Director of Accessibility Services
Office of Accessibility Services
1021 Dulaney Valley Road

Baltimore, Maryland 21204
Access@goucher.edu
410-337-6146 (TTY/TDD, dial 711)

Vice President for Student Affairs

Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs & Dean of Students
1021 Dulaney Valley Road
Baltimore, Maryland, 21204
vpsa@goucher.edu
410-337-6150

Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies

Office of the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies
1021 Dulaney Valley Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21204
associateprovost@goucher.edu
410-337-6210

VII. NON-DISCRIMINATION NOTICE

The Title IX coordinator has been designated to coordinate the college's efforts to comply the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability.

Title IX Coordinator

Office of Title IX
1021 Dulaney Valley Road
Baltimore, MD 21204
titleixcoordinator@goucher.edu
410-337-6570

Goucher's [Non-Discrimination Policy](#) can be found on Goucher's website.

Inquiries may also be referred to the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education at the following address:

Philadelphia Office
Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
The Wanamaker Building
100 Penn Square East, Suite 515
Philadelphia, PA 19107-3323
Telephone: 215-656-8541
FAX: 215-656-8605; TDD: 800-877-8339
Email: OCR.Philadelphia@ed.gov

VIII. RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL

For any questions or additional information about this policy, please contact the Director of the Office of Accessibility Services (access@goucher.edu).