

UMassAmherst

Disability Services

Welcome Class of 2023!

Phone: 413-545-0892

Fax: 413-577-0122

[www.umass.edu/disability](http://www.umass.edu/disability)

# How to Register

- Fill out an **intake form**, available online at [www.umass.edu/disability](http://www.umass.edu/disability). Submit as early as possible.
- Provide diagnostic **documentation** from a licensed qualified professional. Submit as early as possible.
- If all you have is older documentation or an IEP, but you feel it is relevant to a current accommodation need, submit it. We can often provide conditional status until you can provide more updated documentation.
- If you have **housing** needs, require Communication Access (**ASL, captioning**), **accessible text**, Classroom Access Assistance, physically **accessible classrooms** or **classroom furniture needs**, please contact us as soon as possible. These accommodations take considerable time to put in place.

You will be contacted by our office once your materials have been received and reviewed. You'll be assigned to a Consumer Manager (CM). Please call the office at 413-545-0892 to schedule an appointment with your CM for the start of, or prior to, the school year.

- New students can **make an appointment at any time** to answer questions about the registering process.
- **Meet with a Consumer Manager** to get your accommodations in place and have notifications sent out to faculty and relevant offices.

# Consumer Management

## **Managed Process:**

- All students with disabilities who are new to the University, new to Disability Services or at academic risk
- Work with a designated Consumer Manager
- Meet regularly throughout the year

## **Express Process:**

- Seasoned students, self-advocates
- Students notify Disability Services staff to send out accommodation letters to instructors.
- Can speak to any Consumer Manager but are not required to meet regularly

# Major Differences between K-12 & Higher Education

## K-12

- School is responsible for identifying who needs accommodations and supports and providing them.
- Parents play an active role in this process.
- Teachers can incorporate accommodations directly into the curriculum and the curriculum can be modified.
- Homework and readings are addressed in the classroom and sometimes re-taught.
- Parents can advocate for and speak with teachers without the consent of the student.
- Parents can access grades (Power School) in nearly real-time.
- Exams can be modified.
- Students have a right to participate in public schooling until graduation or they age out of services at 22.

# Major Differences between K-12 & Higher Education

## Higher Education

- Student is responsible for self-advocacy and must choose to identify their needs by registering and communicating with instructors, staff and Disability Services.
- Parents can inform Univ. staff of concerns, but the University works with the student to address issues.
- Professors will provide accommodations after DS has informed them of the students right.
- Students must adhere to the Code of Conduct in order to maintain their student status.
- Students must speak with their instructors.
- Curriculum for the class and exams cannot be modified. Accommodations can be put in place to level the playing field.
- Reading, writing and course workload are far more rigorous than high school and students must achieve the requirements for continuity.
- Material is not re-taught in class and readings/homework may not be addressed in class although it is germane to the course.
- Self-regulation is key to success. Student must be able to make sound, healthy decisions, independently.

# Words of Wisdom

## Students

- Find a community
  - *This is your new home. Meet people, try new things, make space for yourself.*
- Actively work on self-regulation
  - *Eat, sleep, spend time*
- Enhance critical thinking skills
  - *It matters less that you did the work, than what you learned from doing it. How does it apply?*

## Parents/Guardians

- Practice growing independence
  - *Waking up, following up, etc.*
- Discuss your expectations and communication as a family, in advance.
  - *What are your values, expectations for contact, how can they reach you for support?*
- Recognize that failure is a part of growth, not a way of being.
  - *Everyone fails at something. Sometimes this can change your path, sometimes this can help you decide what is important. Failure is never fun, but it is always informative.*