Stella and Charles Guttman Community College is committed to providing opportunity and access to individuals with disabilities in all programs offered by the college.

The mission of Access-ABILITY Services at Guttman is “to facilitate the academic success of students with disabilities through the provision of appropriate educational supports and settings while nurturing personal development.” This commitment is consistent with the guidelines set forth by the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-325).

Access-ABILITY Services is here to provide the services and support that foster independence and student development on all levels. Students must register with the office to be eligible for accommodations, which are determined on an individual basis.

Did you know?

- According to the United States Census (2000) there are 30,553,793 Americans between the ages of 21-64 who have a disability.
- This means that 19% of this population (one of every five) has a disability.
- The City University of New York (nineteen CUNY colleges) reports a total of 9,000 students with disabilities. The actual number is probably much higher as this figure only reflects the number of students who have disclosed having a disability.

What does this mean for you?

- If you are a student with a disability, you are not alone. Guttman Community College is committed to providing opportunity and access to all members of the campus community.
- Students who require accommodations are urged to register with Access-ABILITY Services
Rehabilitation Act

In 1973, our federal government enacted a sweeping piece of legislation called the Rehabilitation Act that was viewed as a “civil rights” statute for individuals with disabilities. The Rehabilitation Act ensured individuals with disabilities protection from discrimination in federal agencies (Section 501); required the timely removal of pre-existing physical barriers in architecture and transportation, and imposed mandatory structural accessibility requirements for all future enterprises (Section 502); it provided for nondiscrimination in employment practices for all institutions or entities in receipt of federal funding (Section 503); and provided a ‘right of access’ statue (Section 504). This law provided persons with disabilities the right of access into, or to the benefits of, any program or activity in receipt of federal funding (Section 504, as amended in 1978).

Post-secondary institutions, (e.g. Colleges & Universities), were most impacted by sections 503 & 504; however section 504 had the most far-reaching implications.

Under 504, post-secondary schools were required to establish support programs that assisted persons with disabilities within their institutions. These support programs were not special education programs created solely for persons with disabilities, but were instead, mandated measures to assure ‘inclusion with support’ into pre-established programs.

This landmark decision guaranteed that persons with disabilities had the same opportunity to participate in the same programs for the same rewards and prevented the person with a disability from being viewed solely on the basis of disability.

What is the ADA?

In 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed and continued the movement to insure equal access for individuals with disabilities. It continued the 1973 legislation of nondiscrimination in employment practices, but now encompassed both public and private facilities, programs, activities and opportunities, mandating that opportunities be made available “when it can be shown that, with or without reasonable accommodation, the individual can perform the essential functions of the job” (Title I).

What changed in the ADA was the inclusion of all entities that served the public sector. This meant access to programs operated by state and local government agencies and the removal of physical access barriers by public transportation carriers (Title II); it required that private entrepreneurs make programs, goods and services available and accessible to persons with disabilities (Title III); it provided access to telecommunications services for persons with speech and hearing disabilities (Title IV); and included what can be considered an ‘elastic clause’ that covered all other miscellaneous situations within government and private facilities (Title V).

In short, it expanded the scope of the original 1973 ‘civil rights’ legislation by including every level of government (state, local, and federal), and by including enterprises within the private sector that dealt with the public. Today the ADA as amended in 2009 broadens the scope of who has, or what is, a disability.
Definition of Disability
According to the ADA as amended in 2009, a disability is any mental or physical impairment that significantly limits a major life activity or bodily function. These activities may include learning, speaking, walking, seeing, hearing, breathing, working or the ability to care for oneself. A person must have a disability, a record of a disability or be regarded as having a disability that is not considered transitory or minor.

If you have a disability and will require accommodations, you must register with Access-ABILITY Services.

Be sure to stop in the office in room 506-A or 207 D.

Services provided by the Access-ABILITY Office
Depending upon the individual need, supported by appropriate documentation, the following services may be provided:

- Coordination and facilitation of reasonable accommodations on an individualized basis
- Short term Academic counseling
- Technical assistance with reading and/or scribing
- Assistance with arrangements for recorded or alternate format texts/ study materials
- Coordination of ASL interpreting services
- Alternate format print material: i.e. enlarged print, Braille
- Assistive technology (see below)
- Advocacy
- Liaison with college and community

Exam Accommodations
The Office of Testing at Guttman Community College schedules all exams for students with disabilities receiving certain accommodations. In order to facilitate the scheduling of an exam with accommodations, student must complete the Testing Arrangement Form (TAF) for each exam and give to their professor 5 days in advance of their exam. The professor will complete the TAF and return to the Office of Testing who will contact the student to schedule the exam.

Assistive Technology
Assistive Technology (AT) is any item, piece of equipment, or product system used to increase, maintain, or improve access for individuals with disabilities. Access-ABILITY Services offers the following AT to students:
Voice Recognition Software (Dragon Naturally Speaking Professional) - enables students to write and/or navigate the computer screen by simply dictating commands to a computer system that is trained to recognize their voices. Recommended for: motor disabilities and/or students with learning disabilities.

Screen Readers (Jaws) - Provides access to software applications and the Internet to students who are unable to see a traditional computer monitor. Accessibility is created via voice output system that literally reads the contents to users. Recommended for: blind and low-vision students.

Screen Enlargers (Zoom Text) - Enables students who have difficulty viewing the screen on a standard computer monitor to enlarge the content from as little as 1.2 times incrementally up to 16 times. Magnification can be used in conjunction with available speech output features. Recommended for: low-vision students.

Kurzweil 3000 Reading & Writing System - Assists students whose disabilities affect their reading comprehension and/or writing skills by simultaneously reading text aloud and highlighting each spoken word on a computer display. Students can pause on any word, and have instant access to dictionary, thesaurus, grammar check, and note-taking features. Students can also use the system’s scanner, voice-output and recording capabilities to create books-on-tape. Recommended for: learning disabilities and/or low-vision students.

Handheld Scanners - Enables students to scan a copy of class notes from a classmate and view in electronic format so notes can be viewed with a screen reader or with text enlargement. Recommended for: learning disabilities and/or students who require note takers in class.

*Please note there are computers in the Information Commons, Computer Lab on the lower level, and two laptops available for students to check-out with a number of the above AT programs available.*

Additional assistive technology is available upon request through Access-ABILITY Services.

When is Assistive Technology a Reasonable Accommodation?
Assistive technology serves a very important role as a disability related accommodation. It will be approved for use in the classroom or for an exam only upon review of appropriate documentation. While the use of a tape recorder, spell-check device or a calculator can be helpful to anyone, they are only considered a reasonable accommodation under specific documented circumstances. Many students have been permitted to use certain assistive technology devices in high school, but may not have the same accommodations in the college environment.
Personal Aids and Services

An issue that is often misunderstood by postsecondary officials and students is the provision of personal aids and services. Personal aids and services, including help in bathing, dressing, or other personal care, are not required to be provided by postsecondary institutions.

As per section 504 and Title II of the ADA QCC does not provide attendants, individually prescribed devices, auxiliary aide for personal use or study, or other devices or services of a personal nature.

How do I register for Services?

It is the responsibility of AccessABILITY Services to schedule an appointment with the AccessABILITY Services to register for services. It is the responsibility of the student to provide documentation (see documentation guidelines) to support the individual's request for any accommodations.

Students will 1) complete the AccessABILITY Intake form, 2) submit documentation of disability that supports request for accommodation and 3) meet with the AccessABILITY Services to discuss eligibility.

What if I do not have documentation?

In the event that a student has not been previously diagnosed or does not have documentation of disability, it is recommended that the student set up an appointment with AccessABILITY Services to discuss ways of obtaining testing or securing documentation.

The office provides a warm and supportive environment and students are always welcome. While a student may not receive accommodations in the absence of documentation, the office is fully available to provide guidance and recommendations as needed.

Documentation Guidelines

General Guidelines

Students diagnosed with a disability that request services or accommodations are required to provide appropriate and current documentation. In the case of multiple disabilities, students must provide documentation for each disability for which accommodations are requested. Prior documentation such as an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a history of receiving accommodations from a former school does not necessarily validate the need for services or continuation of accommodations at the university level. However, this history can be attached to the current documentation as part of a comprehensive assessment battery. The determination of reasonable accommodations on campus is based on satisfying the documentation guidelines outlined below and a clear demonstration of the functional limitations on his or her performance in an academic setting. These guidelines apply for all disability types recognized by the ADA.

- A qualified professional should conduct the evaluation and provide name, title, professional credentials, including information about state licensure or certification number.
The evaluation should include the diagnosis (ICD-10 or DSM-IV) and be dated. The document will include the original signature of the professional responsible for the assessment of functioning.

The evaluation must be current. Disabilities may change in severity over time and documentation should support current accommodation needs.

Recommendations and rationale for accommodations and/or assistive technology should be based on the analysis of the functional impact of the diagnosis.

Services, accommodations, and/or assistive technology will be determined on an individual basis upon documentation review and consultation with the disability service director at each campus.

Students must provide Access-ABILITY Services consent to speak with your doctor and/or evaluator in order to verify submitted documentation before approving requests for reasonable accommodation(s).

Insufficient documentation may result in the delay of services and accommodations.

Key Points: Qualified evaluator, current evaluation, evaluation signed and dated by evaluator, recommendations for accommodations. (Note: the term evaluation and documentation are used accordingly to that which is more appropriate for disability type). Both constitute acceptable reports or material for supporting services and accommodations.

**Learning Disability Documentation Guidelines**

The evaluation should:

- be conducted by an evaluator with comprehensive training with adolescents and adults with learning disabilities.
- be evaluated within the last three years of high school.
- include a description of functional impact of diagnosis and include specifics of how the learning process may be affected by the diagnosis; and should include recommendations and rationale for accommodations and/or assistive technology.
- include test scores to document the nature and severity of the disability.
- Adult students not previously diagnosed must provide appropriate documentation as per guidelines.

**ADD/ADHD Documentation Guidelines**

The evaluation should:

- be conducted by a qualified professional whose background includes training and relevant experience in the full range of psychiatric disorders.
- be within the past three years and be updated as required.
- include a summary of relevant historical information including initial onset, diagnosis, medication and indication of ADD/ADHD throughout adolescence or adulthood.
• identify functional limitations in the educational setting.
• include rationale for specific recommendations or accommodations.

**Psychological & Psychiatric Guidelines**

The evaluation should:

• be made by a professional who is qualified with appropriate training in diagnosing psychological and psychiatric disorders.
• be within the past three years and be updated as required.
• include a summary of relevant historical information including initial onset, diagnosis, medication and indication of psychological/psychiatric disorders throughout adolescence or adulthood.
• include rationale for specific recommendations or accommodations.

**Visual Impairment or Blindness**

The evaluation should:

• include an ophthalmologic evaluation made by a qualified professional or granted by a recognized resource such as NY State Commission for the Blind (include CBVH Registry Number)
• be current and reflect present condition. In the case of visual acuity changes, new documentation should be submitted.
• identify functional limitations and provide recommendations for academic accommodations/assistive technology.

**Deaf/Hard of Hearing Guidelines**

The documentation should:

• include a recent diagnosis based on an audiological evaluation conducted by a qualified professional.
• include a description of functional limitations and recommendations for academic accommodations, interpreter services, and other services including assistive technology.

**Mobility/Orthopedic Disabilities**

The evaluation should:

• be made by a qualified professional with the appropriate training in diagnosing physical disabilities.
• be current and relevant. If the conditions change, an updated report will be required.
• include a diagnosis, a description of any functional limitations and recommendations for accommodations and/or assistive technology.
Chronic Medical Condition
The evaluation should:

- be submitted on letterhead by a qualified health professional.
- be within the past six months.
- identify medication, if any, and include information describing the possible impact of the medication upon academic performance.
- identify functional limitations in the academic environment and recommendations for accommodations and/or assistive technology.

Substance Abuse / Chemical Dependency
The evaluation should:

- be submitted from a qualified professional with experience in the field of Chemical Dependency.
- be current (within one year of submission).
- identify academic functional limitations and recommendations for accommodations.
- include treatment program and medication information in the report.

Other

- Consult with the Access-ABILITY Clinician.

What are Reasonable Accommodations?
According to federal law, no (otherwise) qualified person with disability shall be denied a benefit or opportunity or excluded from participation solely on the basis of that disability. An individual is considered qualified if with or without reasonable accommodation, they meet the same eligibility requirements and standards of behavior and performance demanded of anyone else.

This means that an accommodation or adjustment may be made on a case by case basis to enable an otherwise qualified person with a disability to have full access to the classes and programs at Guttman Community College. Examples of such accommodations are not limited to but may include extended time for exams, the use of assistive technology (i.e. specialized software), or the use of a tape recorder in class.

It is important to note that an accommodation may be appropriate for one particular course but not for another. Accommodations are determined on an individualized basis for each student and each class. Requests for accommodations must be supported by appropriate documentation and must be submitted in a timely manner. Accommodations cannot be made on a retroactive basis.
Upon determination of accommodations, students will be provided with a complete form (Class Accommodations), which they will bring directly to each professor. This form communicates to the professor the accommodation under the ADA/504. This provides information that the student is covered under the ADA/504, however it does not disclose the nature of the disability.

Final determination of accommodations will be made by the Wellness/AccessABILITY Clinician in collaboration with the student. Students may request a review of recommendations and/or provide updated documentation as necessary.

There are no fees for accommodations provided for students with disabilities. Personal services such as personal aids and specialized transportation are not considered accommodations and are not provided by the college. Please discuss these needs with the disability director if such arrangements are necessary.

How do I Receive Accommodations?

In Class:
Once you have met with AccessABILITY Services and have been approved for accommodations, upon your request, you will be issued an AccessABILITY Accommodations Card (separate from your Student ID Card). You are required to produce this card when requesting accommodations from your professor(s) at the beginning of each semester. The card will indicate approved accommodations and does not disclose confidential information. It is the responsibility of the student to present the card to each professor from who they are requesting accommodations. Please remember that students identified as eligible for accommodations will not be permitted to seek retroactive use of accommodations. Likewise, students who fail to request, and/or use, their accommodations are not permitted to request faculty to provide them retroactively. Faculty are not required by law to provide retroactive accommodations to any student at any time.

For exams:
In order to schedule an exam with accommodations, a Testing Arrangement Form must be completed and presented to the professor 5 days before the scheduled exam. The professor will then complete the form and return to the Office of Testing who will contact the student to schedule the exam with accommodations. It is the student’s responsibility to follow this procedure in order to ensure accommodations. The Testing Arrangement form is available in AccessABILITY Services in Room 506A and 207-D and additionally in the Office of Testing in Room 207-C.

CUNY Exams:

Math & Reading
As per CUNY policy, the Compass Math and CUNY Reading exams are un-timed, therefore any student can take as much time as needed to complete the exams. When a student with disability only needs extended time as an accommodation, they can be tested with the class/group on the date assigned to them by the Office of Testing.
**CATW Exams:**
All students with disabilities requesting accommodations must schedule their exams through the Office of Testing once they have registered with Access-ABILITY Services. All requests will be reviewed and appropriate accommodations will be determined according to documentation.

**Calculators may be approved as a reasonable accommodation only under the following conditions:**

- Disability documentation indicates the presence of a specific cognitive disability that causes problems with arithmetic computation.
- The ability to add, subtract, multiply or divide is not considered to be the essential content of what the exam is intended to test.

**Audio Recorders** may be approved by some professors for use by any student who chooses to record a lecture, however the professor has the right to deny the use of an audio recorder in the classroom. For those students who rely on the audio recorder as a disability based accommodation, supporting documentation must be submitted and approved by Wellness/AccessABILITY Services.

**Spell-Check Devices** are considered as a reasonable accommodation only under the following conditions:

- Disability documentation indicates a specific cognitive difficult with spelling.
- The ability to spell words is not the essential content of the exam for which the student is requesting accommodations.

All requests for assistive technology must be supported by appropriate documentation and will be reviewed on an individualized and course by course basis.

**How do I request an ASL interpreter?**

- All requests for ASL interpreters should be submitted to Access-ABILITY Services in Room 506 A or 207-C.
- For typical courses, you should submit a copy of your course registration bill.
- For situations other than regular classes, you should come to the Access-ABILITY Services, and complete an "ASL Interpreter Services Request Form".

**When should I request an ASL interpreter?**

- All ASL interpreter requests should be made at least 3 weeks in advance, or as soon as you know the class or event date to allow enough time to make the necessary arrangements.
- Access-ABILITY Services will make every effort to provide "reasonable accommodations" as required by law, but cannot guarantee services for last-minute requests.

**Do I need ACCESS VR support to receive interpreting services?**

- ACCESS VR support is not required to receive ASL interpreting services, but it is strongly recommended to assist you with planning and paying for your education.
Inform Access-ABILITY Services if you are receiving support from ACCESS VR, and tell us the name of your counselor and the office where your counselor is located.

Rights & Responsibilities of Students with Disabilities

Students

Students with disabilities at Guttman Community College have the right to:

- Equal access to courses, programs services and activities offered at the college.
- An equal opportunity to learn and to receive reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments and services.
- Choose whether they wish to self-disclose and/or request accommodations.
- All other rights and privileges available to other students at Guttman Community College.

Students with disabilities at Guttman Community College have the responsibility to:

- Meet qualifications and maintain essential institutional standards for courses, programs and activities.
- Demonstrate and/or provide documentation (from an appropriate professional) on how the disability limits participation in courses, programs, services and activities.
- Follow and abide by the college’s procedures for obtaining accommodations, academic adjustments and/or other services.
- Provide their own personal aide(s) to help with bathing, dressing, other personal care, navigating the campus, or after class studies.

Access-ABILITY Services has the right to:

- Request and receive current documentation that supports request for documentation, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids and services.
- Deny a request for accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services if the documentation demonstrates that the request is not warranted or if the student fails to provide appropriate documentation.
- Select among equally effective accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services.
- Refuse an unreasonable accommodation, adjustment, and/or auxiliary aid or service that imposes a fundamental alteration of a college program or activity.

Access-ABILITY Services has the responsibility to:

- Provide information to students with disabilities in accessible format upon request.
- Ensure that courses, programs, services, activities and facilities are available and usable in the most integrated and appropriate settings.
- Review requests for accommodations to determine eligibility for services and the nature of accommodations.
- Provide or arrange for reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments and auxiliary aids or services.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality of records and communications except where permitted or required by law or when the student requests that such information be shared.
- Serve as a liaison between students and faculty.
- Serve as a resource on disability issues for the Guttman Community College campus community.

Faculty & Staff
Faculty and Staff members have the right to:

- Establish and maintain standards for courses and academic programs.
- Provide the approved accommodations independently of Access-ABILITY Services.
- Request assistance and resources from Access-ABILITY Services.

Faculty members are responsible for:

- Fostering an accessible learning environment to all learners
- Working with the student and Access-ABILITY Services to ensure the provision of reasonable accommodations.
- Addressing concerns about disability accommodations with Access-ABILITY Services.

Emergency Procedures

**Important phone Numbers:**

Campus Security - (646) 313-8101

In the event of a campus emergency, students with limited mobility should wait at the designated Emergency Wait Station on each floor. These locations are marked on every floor. Security will assist students to a safe location.

Conflict Resolution and Appeal Process

Access-ABILITY Services is committed to working collaboratively with students and the campus community. Every effort is made to ensure that students with disabilities are provided with the appropriated accommodations when requested. In the event that a disagreement should arise students should take the following steps:

- Arrange an appointment with the Access-ABILITY Services to discuss the situation.
- If the conflict cannot be resolved, the student should then make an appointment with the Assistant Dean of Student Engagement to further discuss the situation.
- If the student and the Dean are not able to come to a resolution, a meeting should be arranged with the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- If the problem still cannot be resolved and the question revolves around access and accommodation, then the student should make a formal written request to the Office of Affirmative Action to investigate the issue.
In the event that the problem cannot be resolved after all steps have been taken, a formal complaint can be filed with the Office of Civil Rights.