

VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

A visual impairment substantially limits a student's central vision, peripheral vision, night vision, color perception, or visual acuity. The condition may be permanent or temporary, partial or total, reversible or progressive. A student may be limited in his/her ability to distinguish the presence of light and darkness, or colors. Common visual impairments include macular degeneration, retinitis pigmentosa, and diabetic retinopathy.

ACCESSIBILITY

Students with a visual impairment will be limited in their ability to read written material. They may need directions and detailed descriptions of visually presented course materials. All course materials need to be fully accessible. There are many technical aids available to students with visual impairments, though technical skill levels will vary from student to student.

REGISTERING WITH STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES (SAS)

To be eligible for academic accommodations at FAU, a student must first be accepted to the University and then apply for services with SAS.

There are two steps to apply for services:

1. Register with SAS by completing an Application for Academic Accommodations. Applications can be found at:

<https://clockwork.fau.edu/ClockWork/user/intake/default.aspx>.

2. Provide appropriate documentation. Following are documentation requirements.

** Documentation on prescription pad is not accepted. IEPs/504 plans are not acceptable as documentation. Documentation requirements are firm.*

DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

- Documentation must be in the form of a letter or a medical report from an ophthalmologist, optometrist, or other practitioner qualified to make the diagnosis. Include a copy of the business card.
 - A specific diagnosis must be included as well as the anticipated effects of the student's functional limitations within the academic setting.
 - Suggestions for accommodating the student should be included. The suggestions must be linked directly to functional limitations of the student's condition.
 - The evaluation must have been conducted within the last five years; however, SAS reserves the right to make modifications to this time frame.
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DETERMINING ACCOMMODATIONS

Once the application and documentation are submitted, they will be reviewed by SAS. *Incomplete applications are not accepted.* The student will be notified if any documentation is missing and will be asked to submit additional documentation to meet the requirements. *The cost for obtaining appropriate documentation is the student's responsibility.*

It may take one to two weeks for the Application for Academic Accommodations to be processed, even with appropriate documentation. If the documentation submitted is inadequate, the processing time will increase.

Once the documentation requirements are met and the application is complete, the student will meet with an SAS consultant for a collaborative interview. During the interview, the student will be asked to provide information about his/her disability experience, barriers to learning, and effective / ineffective prior accommodations. Appropriate accommodations are then determined based on an interactive process between the student and the SAS consultant.

The student may be eligible for one or more of the following accommodations:

- Notetaking assistance
- Audio recording of lectures
- Books and course materials in alternate format, e.g., enlarged, Braille, digital, audio recorded.
- Assistive Technology, e.g., CCTV, OCR software, JAWS.
- Exam adaptations, e.g., extended time to take exams, distraction reduced setting, audio recorded, enlarged font, Braille, exemption from Scantron, use of a computer.

Accommodations are drafted into an official letter, an Academic Accommodation Agreement (AAA). The AAA is submitted by the student to each professor every semester, officially informing the professors of the approved accommodations. Professors then confirm the accommodations, thereby agreeing to provide them to the student. Once the accommodations are confirmed, the student can use them

Accommodations are necessary to ensure complete access to, and full participation in, the educational process. Academic standards cannot be lowered nor can the essential nature of the course or degree requirements be altered.



Division of Student Affairs
Florida Atlantic University

Accommodating Students with a Visual Impairment

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www.fau.edu/sas

*Alternate format is available upon request.