Shelton State Community College
Office of Disability Services
Student Handbook
Policies and Procedures
Shelton State Community College (SSCC) is committed to the achievement of maximum human potential. In keeping with this, the college fully supports and complies with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and the American Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), SSCC endeavors to provide students an opportunity for success with as few deterrents as possible. SSCC strives to create a welcoming environment and works in good faith to meet the needs of all populations.

SSCC provides services and reasonable accommodations pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and the American Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA) and in compliance with the policies established by The Alabama Community College System. The Alabama Community College System is committed to making its academic programs and services accessible to qualified students with disabilities. It is a goal of The Alabama Community College System and Shelton State Community College to provide students who have disabilities equal opportunities to develop and demonstrate their academic skills, while maintaining the academic integrity of College programs.

All applicants must meet the academic and technical standards requisite to admission or participation in programs and/or activities at Alabama Community College System institutions. Alabama Community College System institutions will not reduce standards in the grading and/or evaluation of students. Academic requirements that are determined by the respective college to be essential or fundamental will not be modified.

Shelton State Community College (SSCC) policy calls for reasonable accommodations to be made for students with disabilities on an individualized and flexible basis. It is the responsibility of students with disabilities, however, to seek available assistance at SSCC and to make their needs known. The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is the designated office that obtains and files disability-related documents, certifies eligibility for services, determines reasonable accommodations, and develops plans for the provision of such accommodations for students with disabilities. This document is intended to acquaint students with the procedures for ensuring access to Shelton State Community College for students with disabilities. If you have any questions regarding disabilities or reasonable accommodations, contact the Office of Disability Services:

Office of Disability Services
Shelton State Community College
9500 Old Greensboro Rd.
Box 280
Tuscaloosa, AL 35405
Phone and Fax: 205.391.3958

Shelton State Community College is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation.
The Alabama Community College System institutions abide by the following guidelines for assisting students with disabilities.

1. Alabama College System institutions are not subject to IDEA. Community colleges comply with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and the American Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA).
2. Alabama College System institutions are not required to seek out and identify disabled students needing reasonable accommodations. STUDENTS MUST SELF-IDENTIFY AND REQUEST ASSISTANCE.
3. Students must furnish adequate documentation of disabilities from medical or other appropriate professionals. IEP’s are NOT acceptable forms of documentation. Documentation is confidential and will not be released without permission.
4. It is recommended that students needing accommodations provide documentation and requests for accommodation one to two months in advance of the first term of enrollment.
5. Accommodations provided will depend upon (1) nature and type of disability, (2) requirements of course or activity, and (3) skills and functional limitations of the student.
6. Requests for accommodations must be made with the Office of Disability Services each term of enrollment.

Alabama Community College System institutions will not fundamentally alter or modify course or program requirements. The student must discuss accommodations with each instructor.

PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS ADMISSION TO SHELTON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The Office of Admissions handles all applications for admission to Shelton State Community College. Admissions standards are described in the SSCC Catalog/Student Handbook and must be met by all students, regardless of disability. When to self-identify as a student with a disability is a decision for the student. However, prospective students are encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services for information regarding services and facilities and to discuss questions pertinent to admission as well as the essential functions related to individual programs.

NEW STUDENT REGISTRATION

The Admissions Office and the Advising Center offer a series of S.T.A.R.T. Up Days (Special Time for Advising, Registration, and Touring the Campus) for entering students. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services during these sessions. Students who need accommodation during S.T.A.R.T. Up Days should contact the Admissions Office and the Office of Disability Services upon receiving registration materials.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

To be eligible for disability-related services, students must have a documented disability condition as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the American Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Under the ADA and Section 504, a person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities (such as walking, standing, seeing, speaking, hearing, sitting, learning, and breathing).

OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES AND THE OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENT SERVICES

At Shelton State Community College, the Office of Disability Services and the Office of the Dean of Student Services are the designated offices that obtain and file disability-related documents, certify eligibility for services, determine reasonable accommodations, and develop plans for the provision of
such accommodations. Reasonable accommodations are provided to ensure access to all College courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities. Services for students with disabilities focus upon providing individualized accommodations and support services, where necessary, for meeting SSCC demands while promoting student responsibility and self-advocacy. The Office of Disability Services and the Office of the Dean of Student Services view the provisions of reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities as a collaborative effort, requiring the cooperation of faculty, staff, students, and appropriate agencies.

Students who choose not to self-identify when they enter SSCC do not forfeit their right to identify themselves and to receive accommodations at a later date. However, SSCC is not obligated to provide accommodations or services for students with disabilities until students are registered with the Office of Disability Services and have made known their need for accommodations each semester. Accommodations are not retroactive.

**LIBRARY ACCESS AND ASSISTANCE**

For library users with physical disabilities, reasonable efforts will be made to maintain a barrier-free facility. Although some book stacks have shelves beyond the reach of someone in a wheelchair, assistance is available at the Circulation and AV/Reserves desks upon request. Other types of assistance may also be requested at these service areas or in any library office.

Additional accommodations for library services or facilities for persons with disabilities will be made on a case-by-case basis in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Determination of "undue burden" under that act will be made by the Director of Library Services in conjunction with the Dean of Student Services, who is the Title 94-504 Coordinator for the college.

**PARKING**

Special blue zone parking areas are available for students who qualify for accessible parking by their home state. Students with disabilities must obtain a handicapped zone parking permit by presenting a copy of their state certification (which specifically names the student as operator of vehicle) to the Security Officers. The fee for accessible zone parking permits is identical to other student parking fees.

**ADVISING SERVICES**

Career and academic advising is provided by the Advising Center. Contact the department at 205.391.2232.

**SOAR CENTER**

The SOAR Institute is available to all students from 7:30 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and from 8:00 a.m. until noon on Friday. Students are welcome to use the computers for internet services, email, research, or word processing. The SOAR Center also provides tutorial help with English and Math concepts. A schedule of times when tutors are available can be found online. For questions, please call 205.391.2984.

**DOCUMENTATION ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES**

It is the responsibility of the student to request accommodations each semester from the ADA coordinator. The ADA coordinator (ODS) requests disability-related documents from the appropriate licensed professional to certify a student as having a disability and to determine reasonable accommodations. The cost of obtaining documentation is borne by the student. If the initial documentation is incomplete, outdated (more than three years old), or inadequate to determine the extent of the disability and reasonable accommodations, the ADA coordinator (ODS) has the discretion to require additional documentation. Any cost of obtaining additional documentation is also borne by the student.

A detailed description of the required documentation is available at the end of this document and from the Office of Disability Services.
DETERMINING REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS
A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a course, program, service, activity, or facility that enables a qualified student with a disability to have an equal opportunity for access of the program or information. An equal opportunity means an opportunity to attain the same level of performance or to enjoy equal benefits and privileges as are available to a similarly-situated student without a disability. SSCC is obligated to make a reasonable accommodation only to the known limitations of an otherwise qualified disabled student. To determine reasonable accommodations, the ADA coordinator may seek information from appropriate college personnel regarding essential standards for courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities. Final determination of reasonable accommodations is made by the ADA coordinator. Reasonable accommodations are determined by examining:

1. the barriers resulting from the interaction between the documented disability and the campus environment;
2. the possible accommodations that might remove the barriers;
3. whether or not the student has access to the course, program, service, activity, or facility without accommodations; and
4. whether or not essential elements of the course, program, service, activity, or facility are compromised by the accommodations.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS
Providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities requires an individual assessment of need and is a problem-solving process. Specific accommodations depend upon the nature and requirements of a particular course or activity and the skills and functional abilities of a particular student. ODS may recommend the following academic accommodations, based upon appropriate documentation and individual class requirements.

• Academic Classroom Aids: Students may be allowed to use calculators, dictionaries, word processors, or spell checkers for in-class work when reasonable.
• Assistance with Registration: Students registered with the ODS may be eligible for early registration. ODS does not advise students on curriculum and course selection. Academic advisors are located in the Advising center.
• Reading Assistance: Students may request use of screen readers, text-to voice computer software, and/or books in alternate format.
• Audio Recording and Note Taking Assistance: Students may tape record class lectures and/or request assistance locating a peer note taker. ODS may be able to help provide scribes and/or readers for students requiring such assistance on exams. Ample notice must be given to the ODS department.
• Testing Accommodations: Testing accommodations may include extended time and/or reduced-distraction testing environments, and/or alternate test formats (such as Braille or orally administered tests). Students are to discuss testing accommodations with the instructor at the beginning of each semester.
• Sign Language Interpreting: Students who are deaf or hard of hearing may be provided with state licensed/permitted interpreters.

Services of a personal nature are not considered academic accommodations. Examples of personal services include tutoring, transportation, and attendant care.

Students with disabilities are responsible for informing SSCC about the disability and the need for reasonable accommodation. This should be done prior to or upon enrollment at SSCC and each subsequent semester. Students must furnish adequate documentation of their disabilities from medical or other appropriate professionals in order to substantiate the need for services.
OBTAINING ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS
1. Students with disabilities who require accommodations must seek assistance from the Office of Disability Services in a timely manner, usually prior to the start of classes or as soon as a disability becomes known. It is recommended that students needing accommodations complete the appropriate application and requests for accommodation at least one month in advance of the first term of enrollment.
2. Students with disabilities will provide documentation as needed or requested.
3. The Office of Disability Services will file official documentation of the disability, including information about the manifestations of the disability.
4. The Office of Disability Services will ensure that disability related documents are kept confidential and shared with college personnel on a limited and need-to-know basis only.
5. The Office of Disability Services and the student with a disability will discuss the interaction between the disability and the academic environment and determine reasonable accommodations.
Consultation with faculty, staff, and outside professionals regarding essential elements and reasonable accommodations will occur in situations that are new, complex, or sensitive.
6. The Office of Disability Services will outline the process for the provision of reasonable accommodations and will present this verbally and in writing to the student.

In determining reasonable accommodations the following questions will be answered for the student:
• what accommodations will be provided;
• why they will be provided;
• when they will be provided;
• who is responsible for providing them;
• how they will be provided.

Standard policies and procedures established by the Office of Disability Services for auxiliary aids and services will be included in the plan.
7. The Office of Disability Services staff will write individualized letters to faculty members certifying that the student has a disability and stating the determined reasonable accommodations.
The provision of accommodations is often shared among faculty, the student, the Office of Disability Services staff, and the Dean of Student Services; the letter details the provision of the recommended accommodations, including who is responsible for the provision of the accommodations; when the accommodations will be provided; and how they will be provided. The letter also invites faculty to contact the Office of Disability Services if there are concerns or questions about the accommodations. Instructors are expected to provide and/or assist with the provision of accommodations when reasonable and necessary. Instructors are not expected to compromise essential elements of the course or evaluation standards.
8. Students with disabilities will be responsible for contacting the Office of Disability Services if reasonable accommodations are not implemented in an effective or timely way. The Office of Disability Services staff will work with college personnel and students to resolve disagreements regarding recommended accommodations.
9. Students with disabilities who believe they have been discriminated against on the basis of their disability may file a grievance with the Office of Disability Services and the Office of the Dean of Student Services.

ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS
Accommodations are provided on a semester-by-semester basis. ODS prepares a letter addressed to the instructor of each class for which students request accommodations. Students are responsible for requesting accommodation letters from ODS at the beginning of each semester, delivering these letters to instructors, and discussing the requests with the instructors. Students may request accommodation letters at any time during a semester, but instructors are not allowed to provide accommodations until they
receive official ODS accommodation letters from students. Finally, students are responsible for reporting to the ODS any concerns about implementation of accommodations.

An intake meeting with one or more of the ODS staff is required by all students in order to receive accommodation letters. Students must report back in with the ODS staff and provide a new schedule each term in order to be supported for accommodation requests.

Receiving academic accommodations at SSCC is a simple process:
1. Students obtain accommodation letters from the ODS at the beginning of each semester.
2. Students hand-deliver accommodation letters to each instructor.
3. Students contact each instructor several days before accommodations such as extended test time and reduced distraction testing are needed.
4. Students report any concerns about accommodations to ODS as soon as possible.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND RELEASE OF INFORMATION
ODS and the Office of the Dean of Student Services are the only offices that have access to documentation and information related to students’ disabilities. Documentation is confidential. In addition, confidentiality is maintained in verbal conversations between the ODS staff members and students. Generally, no information is released to anyone outside of the ODS, or persons involved in providing accommodations, without the students’ informed and written consent. ODS may release information to SSCC officials if there is a direct threat to the health or safety of SSCC students, faculty, or staff.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES
Students with disabilities are responsible for contacting the Office of Disability Services if reasonable accommodations are not implemented in an effective or timely way. The Office of Disability Services works with college personnel and the student with a disability to resolve disagreements regarding recommended accommodations. Students with disabilities who believe they have been discriminated against on the basis of their disability may file a grievance with the Office of Disability Services. Questions and concerns regarding accommodations and services for students with disabilities should be directed first to ODS. If ODS staff members cannot resolve an issue, a meeting with the student, the instructor (if appropriate), an ODS staff member, and the Office of Disability Services Director may be requested. If an agreement is not reached at this point, the student may file a formal, written appeal. The appeal should clearly describe the complaint in detail and should be transmitted as a confidential document to:

Dean of Student Services, 9500 Old Greensboro Road, Tuscaloosa, AL 35405

During the grievance process, students are entitled to receive all accommodations recommended by ODS. It is important that concerns are addressed promptly so that the student’s participation in courses is not affected.

PROCEDURE FOR FILING A DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT BASED ON DISABILITY
• Consult with ODS staff members. Fill out a complaint form.
• If the situation is not resolved in Step 1, meet with the instructor (if appropriate), ODS staff members, and the Dean of Student Services. A student who believes she or he has been discriminated against on the basis of disability can file a complaint with the Office of the Dean of Student Services. To file a complaint alleging discrimination, notify the Office of the Dean of Student Services in writing and provide the following information:
  1. the issue involved in the alleged discriminatory act;
  2. identification of the complaining party’s alleged disability;
  3. the date of the alleged discriminatory act(s);
  4. details of what allegedly occurred; and
  5. identification of witnesses who have knowledge of the alleged discrimination.
If it is determined that law and/or college policy was violated, a remedy to the problem will be offered. If it is determined that there was no violation, the complainant will be informed, and other options for possible resolution of the complaint will be explained.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS FOR VERIFICATION OF DISABILITIES APPLICATION AND DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES OVERVIEW

Students with disabilities who attend or plan to attend Shelton State Community College and who need support services in the form of academic adjustments, modifications to policies, or auxiliary aids and services to ensure equal access to programs and services offered by Shelton State Community College are encouraged to apply for assistance through the Office of Disability Services. The Office of Disability Services assists Shelton State Community College in meeting its ethical and legal obligations. The application process includes the following:

• Submitting the appropriate application for services;
• Providing documentation of the disability that meets the enclosed guidelines;
• Receiving communication from the Office of Disability Services explaining the status of the student’s eligibility for services and/or what additional information is needed to further consider the application; and
• Meeting with the ADA coordinator to collaboratively discuss and plan for disability-related needs and services at Shelton State Community College.

Criteria for Disability Documentation

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment Act state that qualified students with disabilities who meet the technical and academic standards at Alabama College System institutions are entitled to reasonable accommodations. Under these laws, a disability is defined as any physical or mental impairment which substantially limits a major life activity, a history of such impairment, or the perception of such impairment. Alabama College System institutions do NOT provide disability documentation for students. It is the student’s responsibility to provide appropriate documentation to the College office responsible for handling the request and to request accommodations. Appropriate documentation is defined as that which meets the following criteria.

Health Condition, Mobility, Hearing, Speech, or Visual Impairment

A letter or report from treating physician, orthopedic, specialist, audiologist, speech pathologist, or ophthalmologist (as appropriate), including:

1. Clearly stated diagnosis
2. Defined levels of functioning and limitations
3. Current treatment and medication
4. Current letter/report (within one year), dated and signed by specialist

Psychological Disorder

A letter or report from a mental health professional (psychologist, neuropsychologist, licensed professional counselor), including:

1. Clearly stated diagnosis (DSM-IV criteria)
2. Defined levels of functioning and any limitations
3. Supporting documentation (i.e. test data, history, observations)
4. Current treatment and medication
5. Current letter/report (within one year), dated and signed by specialist

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

A comprehensive evaluation report by a rehabilitation counselor, speech-language pathologist, orthopedic specialist, and/or neuropsychologist (or other specialist as appropriate), including:
1. Assessment of cognitive abilities, including processing speed and memory
2. Analysis of educational achievement skills and limitations (reading comprehension, written language, spelling, and mathematical abilities) Defined levels of functioning and limitations in all affected areas (communication, vision, hearing, mobility, psychological, seizures)
3. Current treatment and medication
4. Current letter/report (post-rehabilitation and within one year), dated and signed by specialist

Learning Disabilities
A comprehensive evaluation report from a clinical psychologist, psychiatrist, neuropsychologist, school psychologist, learning disability specialist, or diagnostician, including:
1. Clear statement of presenting problem; diagnostic interview
2. Educational history documenting the impact of the learning disability
3. Alternative explanations and diagnoses are ruled out
4. Relevant test data with standard scores are provided to support conclusions, including at least: (a) WAIS-R; (b) Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-educational Battery-Revised, including Written Language; (c) Woodcock-Johnson Cognitive Processing Battery to substantiate any processing problems
5. Clearly stated diagnosis of a learning disability based upon DSM-IV criteria
6. Defined levels of functioning and any limitations, supported by evaluation data
7. Current report (within three years of enrollment date), dated and signed by specialist

Note: High School IEP, 504 Plan, and/or a letter from a physician or other professional may not be sufficient to document a learning disability.

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
A comprehensive evaluation report from a physician, psychiatrist, clinical psychologist, neurologist, or neuropsychologist, including,
1. Clear statement of presenting problem; diagnostic interview
2. Evidence of early and current impairment in at least two different environments (comprehensive history)
3. Alternative explanations and diagnoses are ruled out
4. Relevant test data with standard scores are provided to support conclusions, including at least: (a)WAIS-R; (b) Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-educational Battery-Revised including Written Language; (c) Behavioral Assessment Instruments for ADD/ADHD normed on adults
5. Clearly stated diagnosis of ADD or ADHD based on DSM-IV criteria
6. Defined levels of functioning and any limitations, supported by evaluation data
7. Current report (within three years of enrollment data), dated and signed by specialist

Note: High School IEP, 504 Plan, and/or a letter from a physician or other professional may not be sufficient to document ADD or ADHD. Medication cannot be used to imply a diagnosis.

Providing Services for Students with Disabilities
Services and reasonable accommodations are provided pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment Act. The Alabama College System is committed to working with individuals with disabilities. It is a goal of the Alabama College System to ensure that students with disabilities have the programmatic and architectural accesses needed for integration into campus life.

All applicants must meet the academic and technical standards requisite to admission or participation in programs and/or activities at Alabama College System institutions. Alabama College System institutions will not reduce standards in the grading and/or evaluation of students. Academic requirements that are determined by Shelton State to be essential or fundamental will not be modified.

Alabama College System institutions strive to eliminate barriers to learning or participation in other
institutional activities, and provide the following services for students and faculty:

- Screening of disability documentation
- Determination of appropriate accommodations
- Communication with faculty and/or staff regarding student needs
- Referral to other available campus and/or community resources

Providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities requires an individual assessment of need and is a problem solving process. Specific accommodations depend upon the nature and requirements of a particular course or activity and the skills and functional abilities of a particular student. Appropriate accommodations may include:

- Extended time on exams
- Change in test format
- Enlarged print/graphics
- Handouts of instructors materials
- Assistance locating a peer note taker
- Extra time for assignments
- Permission to record lectures
- Priority registration
- Textbooks in alternate format
- Removal of structural barriers
- Use of spell check
- Alternative evaluation methods

Students with disabilities are responsible for informing Shelton State about the disability and the need for reasonable accommodation. This should be done prior to or upon enrollment at the College. Students must furnish adequate documentation of their disabilities from medical or other appropriate professionals in order to substantiate the need for services.

**RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT**

Receiving academic accommodations at Shelton State is a four step procedure:

1) The student is to provide a copy of the class schedule at the beginning of each semester. Accommodation letters will be written.
2) Students are to hand-deliver accommodation letters to each instructor.
3) Students remind each instructor several days before accommodations such as extended test time and reduced distraction testing are needed.
4) Students report any concerns about accommodations to the ODS as soon as possible.

Students with disabilities must maintain the same responsibility for their education as students without a disability. This includes maintaining the same academic levels, maintaining appropriate behavior, and giving timely notification of any special needs.

It is the official policy of the Alabama Department of Postsecondary Education, including all postsecondary institutions under the control of the Alabama State Board of Education, that no person in Alabama shall, on the grounds of race, color, disability, sex, religion, creed, national origin, or age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program, activity, or employment. Shelton State Community College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award the Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, and the Associate in Applied Science degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097, or call 404.679.4500 for questions about the accreditation of Shelton State Community College.

Please send documentation to the following address:

Office of Disability Services
Shelton State Community College
9500 Old Greensboro Road
Box 280
Tuscaloosa, AL 35405
Office phone and fax: 205.391.3958