

Part 5 – Academic Parent Policy
Parent Policy Academic Accommodations for Students Experiencing Disabilities
POL 517
Academic Accommodations for Student with Disabilities Guidelines

Office of Accountability:	Provost and Vice-President Academic and Vice-President Student Affairs & Campus Life	Effective:	December 11, 2006
Office of Administrative Responsibility:	Vice-President Student Affairs & Campus Life	Last Reviewed:	April 7, 2014
Approver:	President’s Executive Committee	Revised:	March 25, 2014

A. GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS REQUIRING ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

- (1) **Registration with Accessibility Services:** Students are advised to register with Accessibility Services as early as possible to avoid a delay in service. New students should contact Accessibility Services upon admission. Students should contact Accessibility Services each semester to review their needs and their current personal information.

- (2) **Requesting Academic Accommodation:** Students requesting academic accommodation(s) will meet with an Access Advisor to identify their specific needs. This includes providing relevant, and if requested, corroborated, current medical, psycho-educational or psychological documentation to Accessibility Services. Documentation of the disability(ies) must be:
 - (a) from a physician, psychologist, audiologist, ophthalmologist or other licensed specialist;
 - (b) submitted on letterhead and include the clinician's name, title, phone number, address, date(s) of assessment; and
 - (c) dated.

In addition, the documentation must indicate the impact the disability(ies)/condition(s) has on the student in an academic setting. It may identify or recommend specific accommodations and supports that would reduce the barriers encountered in an educational setting.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that sufficient notice, as defined by Accessibility Services' procedures, is given to enable Mount Royal to make the necessary accommodation(s).

In situations where the requested academic accommodation is beyond the authority of Accessibility Services (e.g. University-level modification such as priority registration access), Accessibility Services will provide appropriate and relevant recommendations, information and/or facilitation related to the accommodation process to students and University personnel.

- (3) Work with Accessibility Services to develop an accommodation plan (the Accommodation Agreement).
- (4) If applicable, students should apply for funding for academic accommodation as identified by the Access Advisor.
- (5) Provide the Professor Acknowledgement form and Academic Accommodation Memo to relevant faculty/instructional staff. Faculty/instructional staff should provide an opportunity outside of the classroom environment to discuss academic accommodation requirements in a private and confidential setting.
- (6) Students should notify Career Services or the relevant department personnel in advance of a work term placement, clinical, internship or practicum if a specific accommodation is required for the work placement, as these accommodations may require additional time to coordinate. Career Services or the relevant department personnel will work in consultation with the employer, the Faculty/School and Accessibility Services, where appropriate, to support suitable accommodations.

B. GUIDELINES FOR FACULTY/INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

- (1) Communicate to students at the beginning of the semester their willingness to meet with students experiencing disabilities who require accommodation to discuss their accommodation requirements. Instructors shall include a statement in their syllabus indicating their willingness to assist in the provision of Academic Accommodations, informing students of the role of Accessibility Services and the University's responsibility to provide necessary academic accommodation. (See Appendix 5)
- (2) Receive the Professor Acknowledgement form and Academic Accommodation Memo from the student. Students shall be provided with an opportunity to discuss their accommodation(s) with faculty/instructional staff in a private and confidential setting.
- (3) Understand that Accessibility Services can not disclose medical information to faculty/instructional staff, including the details of an individual student's diagnosis. These restrictions are imposed by legislation. Only information relevant and essential to the academic accommodation process, such as the impact or functional limitations of a disability or condition, can be disclosed to relevant personnel on a need-to-know basis.
- (4) Concerns or disagreements related to recommended or directed accommodations should be discussed with the relevant Access Advisor.
- (5) Where an accommodation decision has been made by the appropriate delegated authority, that decision shall be upheld until the appeal process has been exhausted. The student's accommodation shall not be disrupted during an appeal process. If an appeal is upheld, the appropriate authority (Manager, Accessibility Services or Dean/Director) shall determine the most appropriate way to remedy

the situation, in consultation with the relevant faculty/instructional staff, Access Advisor and any other appropriate individual(s).

- (6) Faculty/instructional staff are not delegated authority to deny an academic accommodation unless it is a course-level substitution or waiver (see below: AUTHORITY FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION DECISIONS).
- (7) Where faculty/instructional staff are delegated authority for academic accommodation decisions (course-level substitutions and waivers—see below), they must make their decision based on the criteria set out below. A request for an academic accommodation shall not be denied without first consulting the appropriate University personnel, including the Diversity & Human Rights Advisor and/or University Legal Counsel to ensure Mount Royal is upholding its statutory obligations.

C. GUIDELINES FOR PROGRAM/DEPARTMENT CHAIRS, DEANS/DIRECTORS AND OTHER UNIVERSITY PERSONNEL WITH ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION AUTHORITY

- (1) Receive recommendations or referrals from Accessibility Services.
- (2) Understand that Accessibility Services can not disclose medical information to University personnel, including the details of an individual student's diagnosis. These restrictions are imposed by legislation. Only information relevant and essential to the academic accommodation process and decision, such as the impact or functional limitations of a disability or condition, can be disclosed to relevant personnel on a need-to-know basis.
- (3) Concerns or disagreements related to recommended accommodations should be discussed with Accessibility Services.
- (4) Academic accommodation decisions shall be based on the criteria set out below. A request for an academic accommodation shall not be denied without first consulting the appropriate University personnel, including the Diversity & Human Rights Advisor and/or University Legal Services to ensure Mount Royal is upholding its statutory obligations.

D. AUTHORITY FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION DECISIONS

Authority for academic accommodation decisions is determined based on both the type (modification, substitution, waiver, degree notwithstanding a deficiency) and level (course, program or university) of accommodation being sought and is vested in the individual(s) with the most appropriate expertise for the situation.

In all cases, academic accommodation decisions will be made in a timely fashion, in consultation with Accessibility Services and based on documented BFERs. Those with decision-making authority will fully apprise themselves of the relevant information, involving individuals who are knowledgeable about accessibility, academic accommodation and human rights issues. A request for academic accommodation shall not be denied without first consulting with the appropriate University personnel, including the Diversity & Human Rights Advisor and/or University Legal Services to ensure Mount Royal is up-

holding its statutory obligations. Reasonable accommodation can only be denied by the University for reasons of undue hardship.

All decision-makers will uphold the University's responsibility to maintain confidentiality and privacy.

(1) Modifications

- (a) The authority to grant a modification at the course- and program-level is delegated to Accessibility Services after reasonable consultation with appropriate academic authorities, taking into account both academic concerns and legal obligations.
- (b) The authority to grant a modification at the university-level is delegated to the Associate Vice President, Enrolment Services, based on recommendations from Accessibility Services.

(2) Substitutions

- (a) The authority to grant substitutions at the course-level is delegated to the course instructor.
- (b) The authority to grant substitutions at the program-level is delegated to the program or department Chair.
- (c) The authority to grant substitutions at the university-level rests with General Faculties Council.

(3) Waivers

- (a) The authority to grant waivers is delegated in the same manner as substitutions, recognizing that waivers cannot be made of BFERs.

(4) Degree Notwithstanding a Deficiency

- (a) The authority to grant a degree notwithstanding a deficiency rests with General Faculties Council. Normally General Faculties Council would exercise this authority upon a recommendation from a Faculty/School.

(5) Appeals of Academic Accommodation Decisions

- (a) All parties to an appeal of an academic accommodation decision shall have access to support, including from their respective associations (i.e. SAMRU, MRSA, MRFA).
- (b) Academic accommodation decisions shall be upheld until the appeal process has been exhausted. The student's accommodation shall not be disrupted during the appeal process. If an appeal is upheld, the appropriate authority (Manager, Accessibility Services or Dean/Director) shall determine the most appropriate way to remedy the situation, in consultation with the

relevant faculty/instructional staff, Access Advisor and any other appropriate individual(s).

- (c) Only those individuals with a real and substantial connection to the academic accommodation decision have grounds to appeal that decision.
- (d) While students are encouraged to be active participants in the accommodation process, there are circumstances that may limit a student's ability to self-advocate. Factors such as the inherent power differential in the instructor-student relationship, the pervasive stigma involved with requiring academic accommodation, as well as the very nature of some disabilities, can all play a role in a student's ability to play an active role in the accommodation process.
- (e) Failure to provide reasonable accommodation where required by law amounts to discrimination. Students who believe they have not been reasonably accommodated and have exhausted the appeal process may bring their concerns to Diversity & Human Rights Services.
- (f) Individuals requesting accommodation retain their right to consult, or file a complaint with, the Alberta Human Rights Commission at any time. A complaint must be made to the Commission within one year after the alleged incident of discrimination.

Appeal Process Step 1:

- (a) Informal discussion with the initial decision-maker. Depending on the type and level of accommodation sought, this may be an Access Advisor, Course Instructor, Program/Department Chair or AVP Enrolment Services.
- (b) Decisions made by the AVP Enrolment Services or General Faculties Council are final and there is no further appeal process under the Procedure.

Appeal Process Step 2:

- (a) In the case of Accessibility Services as initial decision-maker (course and program-level):
 - (i) Students may appeal the decision of the Access Advisor in writing to the Manager of Accessibility Services within 5 business days.
 1. The Manager of Accessibility Services will fully inform themselves of the circumstances and conduct a timely review, involving individuals who are knowledgeable about accessibility, academic accommodation, human rights issues and the particular issues being adjudicated, including the Faculty/School Accessibility Advisory Committee.
 2. The Manager of Accessibility Services shall not refuse an accommodation until after consulting with the Vice President, Student Affairs and Campus Life (or designate) and University Legal Services. Under human rights legislation, reasonable accommodation can only be denied by the University for reasons of undue hardship.

3. The Manager of Accessibility Services' decision will be rendered in a timely fashion, normally within 10 business days.
 4. The decision of the Manager of Accessibility Services is final.
- (ii) Other individuals directly and substantially connected to the academic accommodation decision (e.g. course instructor) may appeal the decision of the Access Advisor in writing to the appropriate Dean/Director within 5 business days of the initial decision.
1. The Dean/Director may sub-delegate their decision-making authority to the Associate Dean level.
 2. Deans/Director will fully inform themselves of the circumstances and conduct a timely review, involving individuals who are knowledgeable about accessibility, academic accommodation, human rights issues and the particular issues being adjudicated, including the Faculty/School Accessibility Advisory Committee.
 3. The Dean/Director shall not refuse an accommodation until after consulting with the Provost & Vice President Academic or designate and University Legal Services. Under human rights legislation, reasonable accommodation can only be denied by the University for reasons of undue hardship.
 4. The Dean/Director's decision will be rendered in a timely fashion, normally within 20 business days.
 5. The decision of the Dean/Director is final.
- (b) In the case of Course Instructor (course-level substitutions or waivers) or Program/Department Chair (program-level substitutions or waivers) as initial decision-maker
- (i) Individuals directly and substantially connected to the academic accommodation decision (e.g. student requesting accommodation; course instructor) may appeal the decision of the Course Instructor or Program/Department Chair in writing to the appropriate Dean/Director (or the Provost & Vice President Academic in cases where the Dean/Director is the deciding Course Instructor) within 5 business days of the initial decision.
1. The Dean/Director may sub-delegate their decision-making authority to the Associate Dean level.
 2. The Dean/Director will fully inform themselves of the circumstances and conduct a timely review, involving individuals who are knowledgeable about accessibility, academic accommodation, human rights issues and the particular issues being adjudicated, including the Faculty/School Accessibility Advisory Committee.

3. The Dean/Director shall not refuse an accommodation until after consulting with the Provost & Vice President Academic (or designate) and University Legal Services. Under human rights legislation, reasonable accommodation can only be denied by the University for reasons of undue hardship.
4. The decision of the Dean/Director is final.

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**Appendix 1
Authority for Academic Accommodation Decisions**

	COURSE-LEVEL		PROGRAM-LEVEL		UNIVERSITY-LEVEL
MODIFICATION					
AUTHORITY	Accessibility Services in consultation with Faculty		Accessibility Services in consultation with department/program chair		AVP Enrolment Services, upon recommendation of Accessibility Services
APPEAL	Student	Other	Student	Other	Discuss with AVP Enrolment Services. Decision is final.
*Only those with a real & substantial connection to the decision have grounds to appeal	<u>Step 1:</u> Access Advisor (Informal) <u>Step 2:</u> Manager, Accessibility Services (Formal)	<u>Step 1:</u> Access Advisor (Informal) <u>Step 2:</u> Dean/Director (Formal)	<u>Step 1:</u> Access Advisor (Informal) <u>Step 2:</u> Manager, Accessibility Services (Formal)	<u>Step 1:</u> Access Advisor (Informal) <u>Step 2:</u> Dean/Director (Formal)	
SUBSTITUTION					
AUTHORITY	Course Instructor		Program/Department Chair		General Faculties Council
APPEAL	<u>Step 1:</u> Discussion w/decision-maker (Informal) <u>Step 2:</u> Dean/Director (Formal)		<u>Step 1:</u> Discussion w/decision-maker (Informal) <u>Step 2:</u> Dean/Director (Formal)		The decision of GFC is final
WAIVER					
AUTHORITY	Course Instructor		Program/Department Chair		General Faculties Council
APPEAL	<u>Step 1:</u> Discussion w/decision-maker (Informal) <u>Step 2:</u> Dean/Director (Formal)		<u>Step 1:</u> Discussion w/decision-maker (Informal) <u>Step 2:</u> Dean/Director (Formal)		The decision of GFC is final
DEGREE NOTWITHSTANDING A DEFICIENCY					
AUTHORITY	N/A		N/A		General Faculties Council
APPEAL	N/A		N/A		General Faculties Council

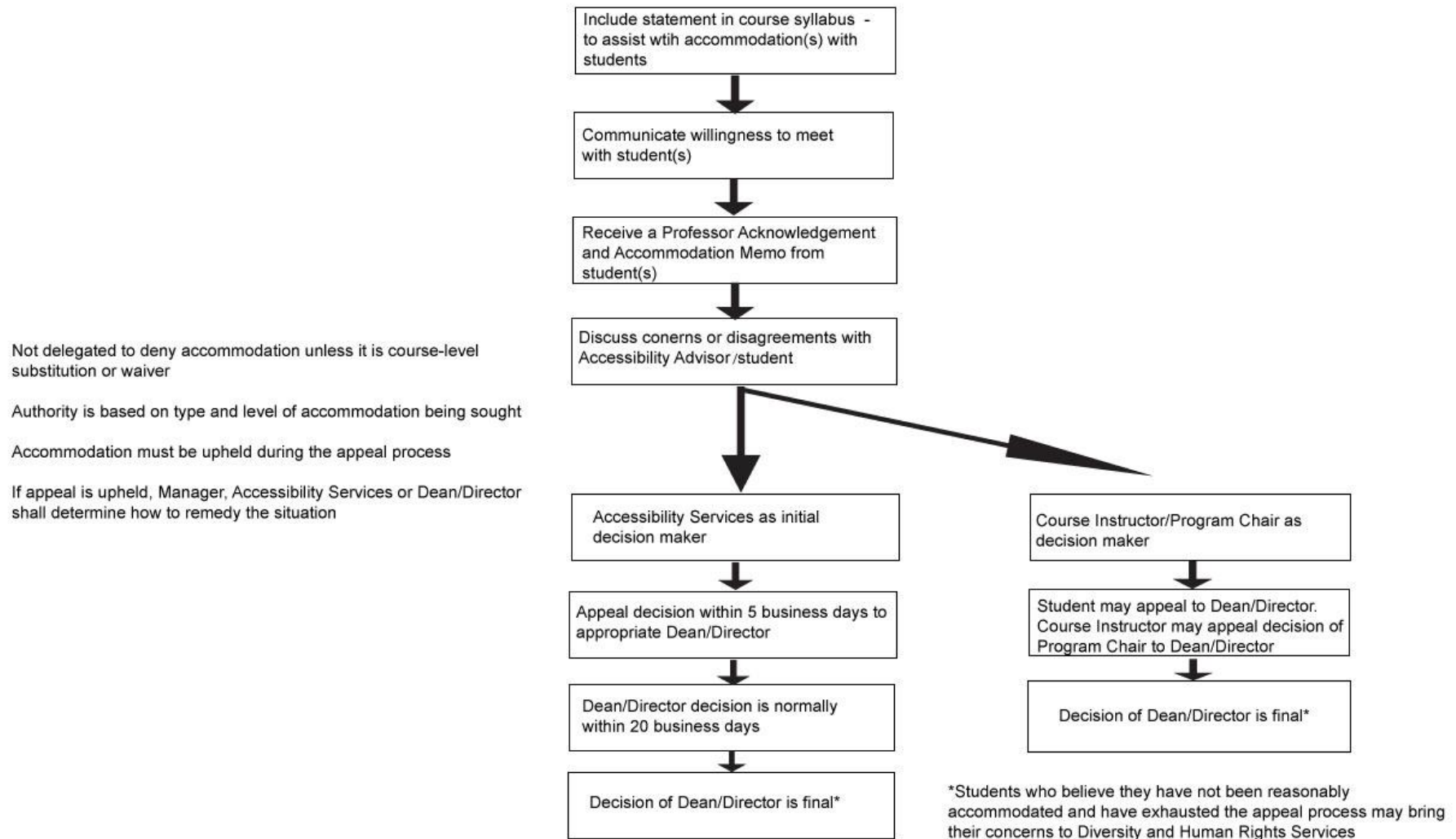
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**Appendix 2
Examples of Academic Accommodations by Type & Level**

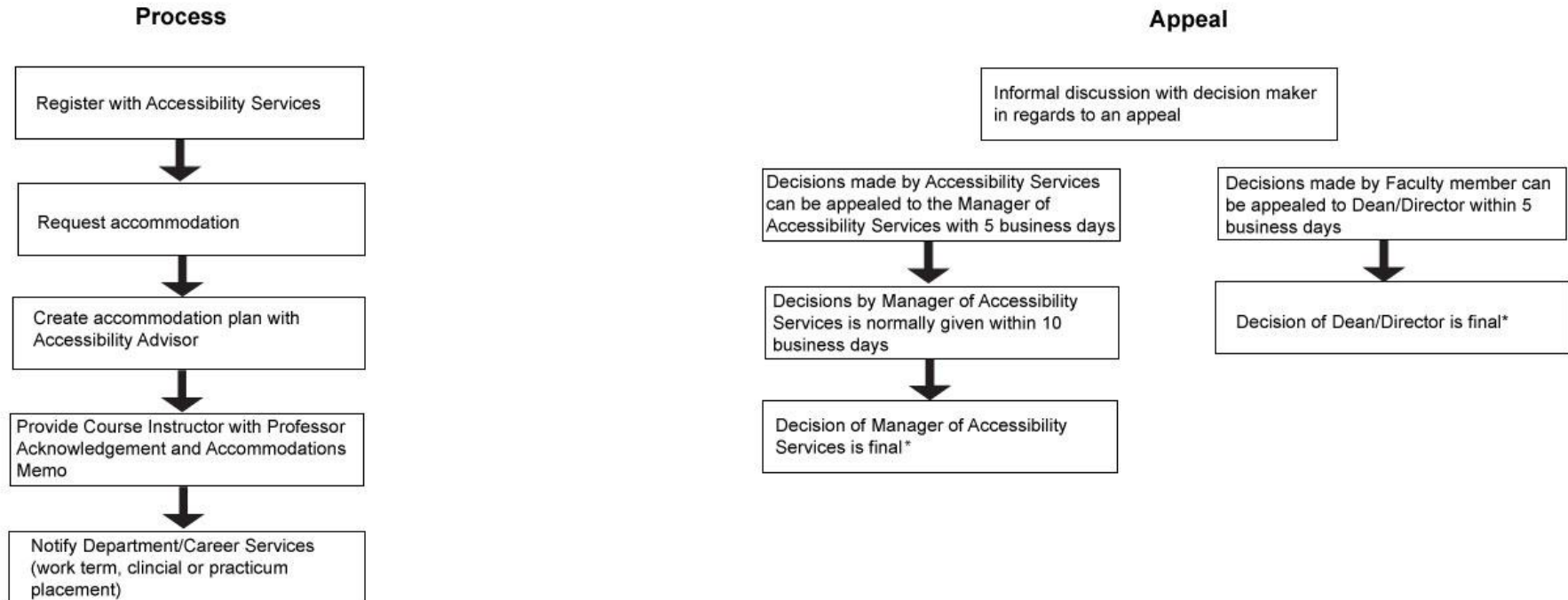
	COURSE-LEVEL	PROGRAM-LEVEL	UNIVERSITY-LEVEL
<p>MODIFICATION</p> <p>A relatively minor change to academic req't; usually revision to way student demonstrates req'd skill/knowledge or additional assistance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional time for exams • Alternate exam format • Provision of note taker or interpreter • Alternate modes of course delivery or evaluation • Use of adaptive technology or special equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of adaptive technology or special equipment • Modifications to clinical/practical req'ts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority registration access • Full-time equivalency status
<p>SUBSTITUTION</p> <p>Replacement of academic req't by another deemed comparable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace course prereq with similar course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace clinical/ practical req't with written assignment • Substitute clinical/practical req't with previous work/volunteer experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace GenEd req't or elective with similar course
<p>WAIVER</p> <p>Removal of academic req't; should never be offered in regard to BFER</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exempt student from completing an assignment or exam • Waive course prereq 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waive program admission criteria without equivalent replacement • Waive credit req'd to graduate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waive req't Gr. 12 course • Waive GenEd or elective req't • Waive req't for at least 60% in req'd Gr. 12 courses
<p>DEGREE NOTWITHSTANDING A DEFICIENCY</p> <p>Credential conferred upon student who hasn't met all req'ts for program; only way to effectively obtain waiver of BFER</p>	N/A	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waive a BFER • Normally granted on compassionate grounds, such as a degree granted posthumously or the correction of a historical wrong beyond the control of the student

Appendix 3

Flowchart – Faculty/Instructional Staff Receiving Accommodation Request



Appendix 4
Flowchart – Student Requesting Accommodation



Decisions are final by Associate Vice President of Enrollment Services and General Faculties Council

*Students who believe they have not been reasonably accommodated and have exhausted the appeal process may bring their concerns to Diversity and Human Rights Services

Appendix 5
Sample of a Course Syllabus Statement

Sample

If you are a student with an Academic Accommodation Memo and Professor Acknowledgement form from Accessibility Services, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations in a private and confidential setting. Requests to review and sign academic accommodation documents should not be made during or between classes.

If you are a student experiencing a disability who may require academic accommodation and have not yet registered with Accessibility Services, please contact their office at 403.440.6868. You must be registered with Accessibility Services to access academic accommodations.

If you require academic accommodations for a reason other than disability, please make an appointment with me to discuss or contact Diversity & Human Rights Services at 403.440.5956.