

*Not Approved This Time* *Jan K. Bluh* *12/20/2018*

**Overview:** This process is envisioned to address the permanent allocation of space for both Academic, Student support, research, administrative, and institutional support. It is not necessary that first there must be vacant space, though if requested space is not already vacant, significant priority will be assigned to the continuing tenant if the proposal involves in-voluntary relocation. One-time space use allocation decisions will continue to be made on a first-come-first served, space available basis.

**Title of Request:** Disability Services space request

**Date of Request:** 11/27/18      **Division/Department making Request:** Disability Services

• **General Description of space request:**

(Briefly identify the nature of the space request proposal, what space is being requested, and the operational requirement of the request)

Ideally, Disability Services (DS) would like to consolidate all of the functions of the office into one physical space to streamline office effectiveness, and staff interaction and supervision. Within the last 5 years, the number of students who are served and the number of professional staff in the office have both doubled. While the number of students requesting services and the services they have requested has significantly increased, the amount of space DS utilizes has actually decreased. DS currently shares a suite with Health Services. Some of this space had to be repurposed as a waiting room for Health Services to comply with HIPAA regulations. In addition to this, the Accessibility Support Team (AST) was moved as well. The AST was originally located in the Hawk Help Desk (B1632). It was moved to B2504 once the Office of Online Programs was discontinued. However, this space was repurposed in Summer 2018. On June 7, 2018, the AST moved back to B1632.

Testing space is our primary concern. The number of tests the office proctors to assist faculty have tripled in four years. DS proctored 252 tests in AY2015, and 789 tests in AY18 (academic year for DS = summer, fall, spring). DS has already proctored more exams this semester than we this past spring. These numbers do not include the total data for finals. Along this trajectory, it is very possible that DS may proctor more than 1000 tests for this academic year (which would be a 400% increase from 4 years ago). Table 1 shows testing data from the past 7 semesters (including the current Fall 2018 semester) as of Monday, December 3, 2018.

**Table 1: Tests proctored by Disability Services by semester**

Description	2016 Fall	2017 Spring	2017 Summer	2017 Fall	2018 Spring	2018 Summer	2018 Fall
Total Exam Requests	292	298	39	374	440	78	451
Number of Students Requesting Exams	54	63	14	73	89	25	97
Number of Final Exams	75	95	11	103	120	27	82
Number of Midterm Exams	74	67	12	83	99	18	95
Number of Quizzes	8	6	11	31	15	0	36
Number of Standard Tests	135	130	5	157	206	33	238

- Current space use:

(Briefly outline current space allocated to the program, function, etc. If the Program is new, attach program approval supporting documents)

DS is currently split between two different buildings. The main DS office is located in SSCB 1.302. Within this suite, we have 3 staff offices, 6 testing rooms, a front desk/waiting area. We also share space with Health Services within this suite. The shared space is for the records room, storage room, and copy room/DS student worker space. In addition to the SSCB space, we also have space in B1632 for the Accessibility Support Team which we share with the DOS office and the Student Conference. The AST space consists of one office for the full-time staff and one workstation which is shared between the 2 student workers.

- Challenges from current space use:

(Briefly identify why/how the current space allocation inhibits the success of the program)

The current space presents three major challenges. First, we do not have enough space to address the increasing number of tests which we are being asked to proctor. The ADA and Section 504 require that universities and colleges ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to all of the programs and services offered by the institution. Many students with disabilities need alternative testing accommodations for their tests due to their conditions' functional limitations that can impact processing speed, concentration, physical tasks (e.g., writing, bubbling in a Scantron), or how they access information (e.g., a blind student who needs special software to have a test read aloud).

As indicated in the space proposal DS submitted to Dr. Biggers on May 21, 2018 (appendix A), the number of tests we have proctored has more than tripled in the past four years (AY 2015 = 252 tests; AY 2018 = 789 tests). When the AST was located in B2604, we were able to use the 3 offices and the conference table to proctor tests for 6 additional students. Last spring semester, DS simultaneously used all of the DS testing rooms, the AST space, the DS staff offices, the Writing Center's conference room, and an overflow classroom to meet the needs of all of the students requesting testing accommodations during finals week.

The second challenge that our current space presents is that the staff is already split between two different locations. The three staff members of the AST are located in the Bayou Building. DS conducted an external program review last year in which the office invited three Disability Services professionals from UHCL peer institutions to provide feedback on various aspects of the office. When the committee conducted the external review, the AST was located in B2504. While the external committee felt that the physical space itself was sufficient for the AST to function effectively, they also felt that a combined space would "increase opportunities for cross training, improve supervision, and create more opportunity for staff collaboration."

Third, the current space does not allow the staff to perform other functions associated with its mission. The primary purpose of DS is to provide institution-wide consultation, advisement, and training on disability-related topics. Some of the training is directed specifically towards students, some specifically for employees, and others that are open to the public. Due to the fact that we must remain open from 8 am to 5 pm, and do not have any space within our current facilities to meet, it is challenging for the office at times to engage in professional development or conduct necessary meetings with various constituents when the staff have to be away from where students are receiving proctored tests. DS also requested an Assistive Technology lab where we could provide students with disabilities with more access to the technologies they may need while being in close proximity to staff who could answer questions as they arise. In addition to providing greater access to the technology, it would also allow the office to provide more hands-on training of the assistive technology, which aligns with an office goal of promoting technological competency within the students.

- Alternate solutions not requested:

(Briefly identify alternative solutions to the challenges identified above and why those solutions are not being sought)

For the Fall 2018 semester, DS and the Testing Center are collaborating with each other during finals week to address our need for testing space. The Testing Center has agreed to let DS use their space and staffing during this week. While we are extremely appreciative of their support this semester, this solution is only temporary.

DS recognized that the Testing Center plans to expand the number of tests, exams, and certifications it offers. As a result of this, the Testing Center may not be able to offer this space to us in the future.

- **Proposal Metrics if applicable:**

(Identify what metrics can be used to measure success of the program if this space request is approved, compare to current metrics)

More students with disabilities are aware of the DS office and are utilizing accommodations. As previously stated, the number of students who are registered with the office have doubled, and the number of tests DS proctors has tripled.

For the past two years, DS had conducted a student survey each semester. One of the areas examined is the students' perceptions of their accommodations' impact on their academics. Table 2 shows the percentages of students who have strongly agreed or agreed with the following statements for each semester.

**Table 2: Impact of Accommodations on Student Academics**

	Fall 2016 (n=28)	Spring 2017 (n=26)	Fall 2017 (n=26)	Spring 2018 (n=17)
The accommodations I used made me more confident in the class.	26 (93%)	23 (88%)	25 (96%)	15 (88%)
The accommodations I used directly resulted in me achieving a higher grade in the class.	21 (75%)	21 (80%)	20 (77%)	11 (65%)
The accommodations I used increases the likelihood I will stay in school and graduate.	24 (86%)	22 (84%)	23 (92%)	14 (82%)

It is important to remember when reviewing the data below that the role of the DS office is to ensure equal access to the educational environment for students with disabilities. While the office hopes that the accommodations will help the students academically, they are not intended to guarantee academic success. In addition, there may be other factors that positively or negatively contribute to the academic success of students with disabilities for which DS is not able to account (e.g., academic competency of course material, financial issues, personal issues).

Students with disabilities who did not use their accommodations had higher rates of current GPAs between 0-0.999 (Fall = 9.6%; Spring = 12.9%) than those who did use their accommodations (Fall = 8.0%, Spring = 9.2%). Students with disabilities who did not use their accommodations also had a higher rates of current GPAs of 4.0 (Fall = 15.1%, Spring = 18.6%) than those who did use their accommodations (Fall = 11.6%, Spring = 14.4%). However, students who used their accommodations had higher rates of cumulative GPAs of 3.0 or higher (Fall = 65.2%, Spring = 60.1%) than those who did not use their accommodations (Fall = 54.8%, Spring = 50.0%). Students with disabilities who used their accommodations also had higher rates of cumulative GPAs of 4.0 (Fall = 5.8%, Spring = 7.8%) than those who did not use their accommodations (Fall = 2.7%, Spring = 2.9%).

There was a slightly higher percentage of students who used their accommodations in "Good" academic standing each semester (Fall = 92.0%, Spring = 88.9%), and a lower percentage of those on probation (Fall = 6.5%, Spring = 7.8%). However, there was a higher percentage of students with disabilities who used their accommodations that were on suspension in Spring 2018 than those who did not use their accommodations. These differences are not statistically significant. The 2018 academic year was the first time we requested this data from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness; therefore, we do not have any longitudinal data to which we can compare these findings.

**Table 3: GPA and Academic Standing of Students with Disabilities who Requested Accommodations versus Those who did not Request Accommodations**

		TOTAL Fall 2017				TOTAL Spring 2018			
		NOT Requested		Requested *		NOT Requested		Requested *	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Current GPA	0 - .999	7	9.6%	11	8.0%	9	12.9%	14	9.2%
	1 - 1.999	3	4.1%	11	8.0%	5	7.1%	11	7.2%
	2 - 2.999	16	21.9%	28	20.3%	17	24.3%	36	23.5%
	3 - 3.999	36	49.3%	72	52.2%	26	37.1%	70	45.8%
	4.0	11	15.1%	16	11.6%	13	18.6%	22	14.4%
Cumulative GPA	0 - .999	2	2.7%	2	1.4%	2	2.9%	6	3.9%
	1 - 1.999	5	6.8%	10	7.2%	5	7.1%	10	6.5%
	2 - 2.999	26	35.6%	36	26.1%	28	40.0%	45	29.4%
	3 - 3.999	38	52.1%	82	59.4%	33	47.1%	80	52.3%
	4.0	2	2.7%	8	5.8%	2	2.9%	12	7.8%
Academic Standing	Good	67	91.8%	127	92.0%	61	87.1%	136	88.9%
	Probation	5	6.8%	9	6.5%	7	10.0%	12	7.8%
	Suspension	1	1.4%	2	1.4%	2	2.9%	5	3.3%

• **Alignment with Strategic Plan:**

(Briefly identify how this proposal aligns with the strategic plan for the University, Division, or Department)

DS recently moved from the Division of Student Affairs to the Division of Student Success and Initiatives. The DS office was in the process of creating a 5 year strategic plan. However, this initiative was delayed to the updates to the UHCL mission, vision, and strategic plan, in addition with the office's move to a new division which is itself in the process of branding its identity. Therefore, DS is unable to concretely state how the proposal will align with the strategic plan of the University or Division.

However, using the previous UHCL strategic plan, the proposal aligns with Goal #2, which states that "University of Houston-Clear Lake will provide a supportive student-centered campus environment focused on student access and success." Additional space would allow us to provide students with disabilities an environment in which the DS office could ensure they have access to their testing accommodations. In addition to this, one of the objectives for Goal #2 is to "provide academic and support services to increase student enrollment and retention." If UHCL does not have the appropriate infrastructure to meet the needs of students with disabilities (an underrepresented population), then these students may not choose to come to or stay at UHCL.

Lastly, one of core pillars of the DS mission statement is that DS "provides individual services and facilitates accommodations to students with disabilities." Without sufficient space, DS may not be able to assist the faculty in providing these services to a significantly growing population.

**Appendix A:** DS Space Proposal submitted to Dr. Darlene Biggers on 5/21/18

**Endorsement:**

**Requestor:**

**Name:** Gavin Steiger

**Email:** steiger@uhcl.edu

**Date:** 11/27/18

**Division/Department:** Disability Services

**Vice President:** Steven J Berberich

**Signature:** 

Approve this request  Y /  N (circle one)

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**Shared Governance Space Utilization and Allocation Committee Comments:**

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SUAC Co-Chair: Rebecca Huss-Keeler

Signature: 

SUAC Co-Chair: Mark Denney

Signature: 

Chris Wood, Chair  
FSSC

