



AccessAbility Services Program Practicums, Internships and/or Field Placements Accommodation Request Guideline & Procedure

General Guideline:

Western Connecticut State University (WCSU) supports students with disabilities and encourages their full participation in all academic programs, including field placement of all kinds. “Field placements” for the purpose of this document includes practicums, field experiences, internships, student teaching, clinic or other work experiences (or similar) required as part of the student’s academic program. Students with disabilities who are assigned to field placements must be able to perform the “essential functions” or meet the essential eligibility requirements of the experiences with or without reasonable accommodations. Should a student require accommodations during their field placement, it is the student’s responsibility to request accommodations through AccessAbility Services (AAS) as soon as possible as accommodations within field placements may require special consideration and coordination with community entities. Request for accommodations will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and include various academic departments and community entities as part of the coordination process. Since field placement accommodations are made on a case-by-case basis, advanced notice is recommended so AAS can work with the instructor, field placement coordinator, and field site personnel to develop an appropriate accommodation plan. It is recommended that the student make their requests for field placement accommodations no later than three (3) weeks before starting at the site. It is important to remember students are not required to use accommodations during their field placement. However, there are no retroactive accommodations for grades and/or performance.

Procedure:

Requests for field placement accommodations are reviewed on an individual, case-by-case basis. Students must initiate the process for field placement accommodations through AAS as early as possible.

Student Responsibilities:

- ❖ Consult your instructor and/or coordinator of the field placement program/site as early as possible to obtain more information about the expectations for the specific field placement site and determine if accommodations are needed. You may ask a representative from AAS to join this meeting.
- ❖ Register with AAS by completing an online [Accommodation Intake Form](#).
- ❖ Provide appropriate comprehensive disability documentation to AAS. [Documentation guidelines](#) are available on the AAS website.
- ❖ Complete an External Release Authorization for field placement disclosure.
- ❖ Schedule an appointment with the AAS Director by calling 203-837-8225 (203-837-3235 TTY) to discuss your individual academic situation and to determine the need for additional required documentation.

Things to Consider:

Site Selection – The selection of an internship site may be a key factor in providing an optimal environment for academic and professional development. Students and Field Placement

Coordinators should review potential sites based on the nature of the work environment and the responsibilities agreed upon between each site and the academic supervisor. Students must identify the most critical factor or factors in determining their ideal placement. Disability accommodations should be one of the considerations.

Application/Interview Process (if Applicable) – If an application or interview is required prior to acceptance into a field placement, and the student needs an accommodation to participate, the student is responsible for making the accommodation request to AAS and the Field Placement Coordinator as soon as possible.

AccessAbility Services Responsibilities:

- ❖ Meet with the student to discuss accommodation request and determine eligibility as a student with a disability and need for accommodations.
- ❖ Manage the interactive process between the student and university, including those instructors from WCSU who are directly involved in facilitating the field placement. It is primarily the WCSU field placement coordinator's responsibility to meet with the field site personnel to discuss accommodations. AAS can be involved if requested by WCSU field placement coordinator.
- ❖ Work with student and WCSU field placement coordinator to define field components and accommodation needs.
- ❖ Provide consultation services to WCSU field placement coordinator prior to placement, and if needed and requested, accompany the WCSU field placement coordinator and the student to visit the assigned site.
- ❖ Provide consultation services to the student, instructor and WCSU on-site personnel during the field placement. Consultation can also be provided directly to the field site personnel in partnership with WCSU field placement Coordinator.
- ❖ Provide consultation services when adjustments to the accommodation plan may be required or when questions arise concerning what are reasonable accommodations.

WCSU Field Placement Staff and Instructor Responsibilities:

- ❖ Work with AAS in considering the specific needs of the student, and help identify what reasonable accommodations can be made while meeting the essential components and/or essential eligibility requirements of the placement. Assist with developing an accommodation plan in consultation with the student and AAS.
- ❖ Respect the confidentiality rights of the student with a disability. Provide details of reasonable accommodations only to those who need to know, including those at the field site, in order to provide requested accommodations. This does not necessarily mean providing information about the student's specific disability.
- ❖ Discuss accommodations with the field site supervisor. In addition, provide notification to the course instructor, hiring manager and any other relevant placement individual. If a supervisor seems unwilling or unable to respond to the university's accommodation requirements, then WCSU has the responsibility to find an alternative placement for the student. Accommodations that fundamentally alter a field placement will not be approved.

Any questions regarding the Program Practicums, Internships and/or Field Placements request guideline and procedure should be directed to Elisabeth Morel, Director, at 203-837-8225 (voice), 203-837-3235 (TTY), or via e-mail at morele@wcsu.edu.

Adapted from: Oregon State University Disability Access Services, The University of Texas at San Antonio Student Disability Services, The University of Nebraska at Omaha Accessibility Services Center,

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