

## **ANA G. MÉNDEZ UNIVERSITY STUDENT CONSUMER INFORMATION STUDENT DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY**

### **Introduction/Purpose**

Ana G. Méndez University (AGMU) is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities, to ensure that such individuals have the opportunity to participate in educational programs and services on an equal basis. To that end, AGMU strives to create an inclusive educational environment for all members of the University community in accordance with provisions of applicable laws including, but not limited to, the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended (ADA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504).

The purpose of this policy is to establish a uniform process in the provision of services and to enable AGMU to comply with applicable state and federal laws. This policy also includes the procedure for requesting reasonable accommodations.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all qualified admitted and enrolled AGMU students. Applicants are also covered by this policy for accommodation needed in the admissions process.

### **Definitions**

The following terms are applied by AGMU in accordance with applicable federal law and regulations and are summarized below.

An individual with a **Disability** is one who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, who has a record of such impairment, or who is regarded as having such an impairment.

A **Qualified Individual with a Disability** is an individual with a disability who meets the academic and technical standards requisite for admission or participation in the educational program or activity, with or without reasonable accommodation.

A **Reasonable Accommodation** is any modification or adjustment that enables a qualified student or applicant with a disability to enjoy equal educational or employment opportunities and participate fully in all programs and activities. Reasonable accommodation must address the particular disability and shall not impose an undue burden on the University or produce a fundamental alteration of the University's programs or services.

## **Procedure**

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### ***REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS***

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The University prohibits discrimination based on disability. The University also prohibits retaliation against individuals in connection with the assertion of rights under this policy.

In accordance with applicable law and University policies, AGMU will provide Reasonable Accommodations to Qualified Individuals with Disabilities on an individualized, case-by-case basis and in a timely manner.

To support students requesting Reasonable Accommodations, AGMU has empowered the Directors of Retention and the Academic Advisors (Ground campuses & Main campus- Online Spanish & Online English) with the authority to review and make decisions about whether an individual is a Qualified Individual with a Disability and what constitutes a Reasonable Accommodation. The Directors of Retention and Academic Advisors will make determinations regarding both academic accommodations as well as accommodations for other AGMU programs or activities and will coordinate with the Academic Affairs leadership as appropriate. All information pertaining to a Disability and potential accommodation will be stored securely and will only be shared with other University personnel on a need-to-know basis in compliance with applicable University policies and law.

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### ***PROCESS TO REQUEST REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS***

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A student may generally request a Reasonable Accommodation in accordance with the following procedures:

- Contact the Director of Retention or Academic Advisor to receive guidance on the services, procedures, and documents needed to request a Reasonable Accommodation. Documentation requirements vary according to each individual's disability and situation. If documentation is

required, the student will provide written and current documentation of their Disability from a qualified professional with relevant experience and no personal relationship with the individual being evaluated. Appropriate documentation should provide information to establish the existence of the Disability, describe the nature of the Disability, explain the limitations of the student, and offer accommodation recommendations. Documentation must be on a professional letterhead, signed, dated, and include a licensure number.

- Complete the Reasonable Accommodation Request form and provide the required documents.
- The Director of Retention or Academic Advisor will interview the student and engage in the interactive process.
- Once all the required documentation and information has been provided and the request for Reasonable Accommodation has been completed, it will be evaluated.
- The student will be notified of the outcome of the evaluation and the accommodation to be provided.
- The Director of Retention or Academic Advisor will draft the letter of Reasonable Accommodation.
- The Director of Retention or Academic Advisor will deliver the letter to all relevant faculty. The accommodation will be effective once the faculty member receives the letter of Reasonable Accommodation. The student will also be notified. The student should discuss the letter of Reasonable Accommodation with their professors and the best ways to implement the accommodation.
- The student will be responsible for returning the letter of reasonable accommodation signed by their faculty members.
- No accommodation will be provided retroactively. AGMU also reserves the right to modify accommodations. The student has the responsibility each semester to decide whether they want to continue to receive accommodations or services. If the student decides they need accommodation or services for a particular term, the student must renew the request for a reasonable accommodation for that term in accordance with this policy.

A student can request a Reasonable Accommodation at any time, but students are encouraged to submit a request for Reasonable Accommodations at least two weeks before the start of any academic term. Once a student has established their eligibility for Reasonable Accommodations, AGMU will provide the appropriate accommodation as expeditiously as possible; however, some accommodations can require a longer period of time to arrange.

The Director of Retention or the Academic Advisor will offer and coordinate student support resources of the institution and can guide the student in referrals to services with community agencies, which can provide additional support. For additional information about a reasonable accommodation, please contact your Director of Retention or your Campus Academic Advisor.

AGMU is not required to provide services of a personal nature such as personal attendants, individually prescribed devices, transportation, or readers/tutors for personal use or study.

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### ***PROHIBITED RETALIATION***

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AGMU is committed to providing prompt and effective resolution of alleged incidents of discrimination and harassment. Any type of retaliation against an individual for requesting an accommodation, using an accommodation, or for filing a complaint or appeal with the University or an external governmental agency is prohibited.

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### ***GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES***

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Any student who believes that they have not received fair treatment regarding the Reasonable Accommodation process is encouraged to first meet with their campus Director of Retention or Academic Advisor. An earnest attempt will be made to find a valid solution, within the limits of the law.

If a student is experiencing problems receiving their assigned accommodation(s), they are encouraged to contact their professor(s) first to attempt to resolve the issue. If the student does not find a resolution after communicating with their professor, they should contact their campus Director of Retention or Academic Advisor.

A student may file a complaint with the University in accordance with the campus-based grievance process outlined in the AGMU Academic Catalog.

Complaints may also be filed with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights at any time at 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington DC 20202 or (800) 421-3481, <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html>.