

## **Modified Deadlines Policy**

Purdue University Fort Wayne Disability Access Center asserts that, in most cases, assignment deadlines are critical to a student's mastery of the knowledge and skills that are taught in a specific course. However, some students with disabilities may be approved for an accommodation of modified deadlines due to a disability. Generally, these students have disabilities which are chronic or episodic in nature which may cause difficulties with meeting assignment deadlines. This accommodation will require the student to work with their instructors to complete the Modified Deadlines Agreement for each course the student is enrolled in during the specified semester. If the student or instructor needs assistance with implementing this accommodation, please contact the Disability Access Center at [dac@pfw.edu](mailto:dac@pfw.edu).

### **Determining Reasonable Disability-Related Deadlines**

When determining if a Modified Deadline Agreement is appropriate, please consider the following:

- Statements in the syllabus and course description regarding assignment grading methods.
- Whether assignment deadlines are an essential method for learning.
- The impact, if any, which a modified deadline will have on the educational experience of other students.

The accommodation should be provided unless the accommodation poses a fundamental alteration of the course as offered. It is important that the student and course instructor discuss the issue so that the student can then make an informed decision regarding options. Requests for accommodations for assignment deadlines due to a disability should be considered on an individual and case-by-case basis. This should not be a "blanket" accommodation, rather it should be determined for each assignment prior to the deadline.

### **Accommodating Course Assignments**

When an assignment deadline has to be modified due to a disability related reason, a general rule for determining a reasonable timeframe for a makeup or postponement of an assignment (such as a paper or homework) should be within 24-72 hours of the original assignment deadline. In certain courses, it may be appropriate to consider an alternative assignment, reading, or project to make up for missed assignments. Other examples of how assignment deadlines may be accommodated could include the ability to submit or make up missed assignments that have been impacted by the disability-related episode without grade penalty. To help facilitate the discussion and set parameters between an instructor and a student, a Modified Deadline Agreement should be completed by the student and instructor for each course to clarify expectations and set guidelines.

- The Modified Deadline Agreement should be completed at the beginning of the semester or as soon as the student presents the Course Accessibility Letter to the instructor.

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- This agreement should be established before an assignment deadline has become an issue. Instructors are only required to provide approved disability-related accommodations after receiving a Course Accessibility Letter.
- The method and timing of notification of a modified deadline and making up any materials, assignments, etc. due to a disability-related reason should be mutually agreed upon and detailed in the Modified Deadline Agreement.
- Modification of the assignment deadline policy does not mean that unlimited requests will be permitted.
- When a student requests to use a modified deadline accommodation due to their disability, they are responsible for any assignments missed and will need to arrange how they will complete these course elements.
- The student is not required to present the instructor with medical documentation verifying their disability-related condition, but may be required to document other non-disability related deadline requests as per the syllabus requirements. Assignments for non-disability related reasons will not be excused by the Modified Deadline Agreement.
- In most instances, communication with the Disability Access Center and the provision of additional documentation is not needed to verify the student's request(s). However, if modified deadline requests meet or exceed the number of modified deadline requests agreed upon in the Modified Deadline Agreement, the Disability Access Center should be informed. This will allow the Disability Access Center to be of assistance in answering questions about the accommodations from both the student and the instructor.
- If the student requests a change to the number of modified deadline requests initially agreed upon due to a change in their disability, the student should be referred to the Disability Access Center to discuss such request. Additional documentation or an update from the student's treating physician may be needed by the Disability Access Center to determine if a modification to the agreement or other accommodation may be appropriate.
- If a student finds that they are not doing well in the course due to extended deadlines, the student is urged to consider alternative options (e.g. withdraw, incomplete). It is important for the student not to abuse the Modified Deadline Agreement.

(Adapted from Purdue University, Texas A&M University and Northern Arizona University, Disability Related Absences Agreement and similar agreements from other colleges and universities)