

advice concerning their condition.

2. The University will not discriminate against any member of the University community on the grounds of HIV infection. The identity of any person in the University community with HIV infection will be held in strict confidence.
3. The University will provide education and appropriate information on AIDS and related diseases to students and others in the University community. The University has an advisory committee on AIDS policy.

E. Student Accessibility Services Policy

From our Mission...

We are united in the belief that women and men of divergent backgrounds and abilities should have an opportunity to learn and practice critical thought and to realize their intellectual potential in an academic setting that is both responsive and stimulating. We believe that learning engages the whole person; we seek to provide an environment conducive to enriching student life.

...To Our Commitment

St. Thomas University is committed to creating an equitable environment by ensuring that all members of our community have access to the full range of university life. This means supporting students with disabilities in their full participation in the educational, social and cultural life of our university. Sharing responsibility with each student for their success, our accessibility program is consistent with our academic standards as we strive to make reasonable and appropriate accommodations to allow students to enjoy the benefits of higher education.

'Disabilities' shall be defined as those conditions so designated under the New Brunswick Human Rights act and will include physical, medical, learning, and psychiatric disabilities.

1) Mission Statement of Student Accessibility Services (SAS)

St. Thomas University is mandated by law and the aspirations of our community to provide an educational environment that:

- demonstrates professionalism and academic integrity
- values diversity
- respects learning

2) Introduction and Guiding Policies

This policy has been written in accordance with the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982) and the *New Brunswick Human Rights Code* (1992)

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982), Section 15 (1)

Section 15 (1) Guarantee of Rights and Freedoms

Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

15(2) Subsection (1) does not preclude any law, program or activity that has as its object the amelioration of conditions of disadvantaged individuals or groups including those that are

disadvantaged because of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

New Brunswick Human Rights Code (1992), Section 5 (1)

5(1) No person, directly or indirectly, alone or with another, by himself or by the interposition of another, shall

- (a) deny to any person or class of persons any accommodation, services or facilities available to the public, or
- (b) discriminate against any person or class of persons with respect to any accommodation, services or facilities available to the public, because of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, place of origin, age, physical disability, mental disability, marital status, sexual orientation, sex, social condition, political belief or activity.

3) Accessing Accommodations through Disability Services

Students with documented disabilities that interfere with their ability to participate in and benefit from the University's educational services may obtain assistance from Student Accessibility Services.

3.1) Documented Disabilities

Disabilities must be supported by documentation no older than 5 years, from a licensed health or mental health professional that is deemed qualified to diagnose the disability.

Prior to receiving assistance, students must provide documentation that:

- validates a disability
- outlines the student's cognitive and/or physical restrictions
- recommendations for appropriate accommodations

Documentation and identification may come from a variety of licensed health professionals including:

- Physicians
- Medical specialists
- Psychologists
- Psychiatrists
- Speech/language pathologists
- Audiologists

3.2) i-Reasonable and Appropriate Accommodations

The purpose of academic accommodations is to reduce the barriers to education.

Accommodations do not modify the University's academic standards, nor do they alter the core requirements of the program.

The accommodation process is a shared responsibility that requires the student and the Coordinator of Accessibility Services to work together to reach appropriate and reasonable accommodations. When determining the suitability of an accommodation, the following factors are taken into account:

- is the accommodation related to the disability?
- does the student require the accommodation to participate in education at the university?
- can the accommodation be provided without undue hardship?

Accessibility Services cannot guarantee accommodations to students who make requests after the deadlines stated in the procedural manual for Student Accessibility Services.¹

3.2) *ii-Temporary Accommodations*

Students may register with Student Accessibility Services to receive accommodations for a temporary disability. Documentation supporting the need for temporary accommodations must come from a licensed health or mental health professional and include information pertaining to the duration of the disability. Students requiring temporary accommodations will be required to return to the SAS each semester to provide updated documentation and to have their accommodations reviewed and reinstated.

3.3) *Accommodations Agreements*

3.3)i Students and professors shall wherever possible agree to the appropriate accommodations.

3.3)ii In cases where the instructor and the student cannot agree about the provision of accommodations, the instructor shall meet and discuss the recommended accommodations with an advisor from Student Accessibility Services. If they are unable to reach an agreement, the Dean of the Faculty shall be consulted.

3.3)iii Students receiving academic accommodations are required to follow all procedures as contained in the SAS procedural manual.¹

3.4) *Disclosure/Non-Disclosure of Disability*

The University has no responsibility to provide accommodations for students who do not disclose their disabilities to Student Accessibility Services. Students who disclose their disability after the stated deadlines of University Policy may not claim retroactive accommodations.

3.5) *Confidentiality*

All agents involved at St. Thomas University (i.e. faculty, staff, students as well as students employed as tutors and/or note takers) must treat all information pertaining to a student as confidential. The exceptions to this policy are:

- when an individual becomes aware of current children at risk of abuse
- when an individual clearly presents danger to self or others
- when we are subpoenaed for records or testimony by the courts

If a breach of confidentiality occurs then the individual is subject to disciplinary action.

Consent Forms

Consent forms must be signed by the students to disclose any information to any University staff and/or outside parties (such as family members or other individuals). Consent forms are available at Student Accessibility Services.

¹Please contact Student Accessibility Services regarding the manual.

F. Policy on Release of Information About Students

The University has adopted a detailed policy on the collection, maintenance, and security of the information contained in the individual student's records. The general principle underlying the policy is that the student has a right to privacy and the release of information about the student is guided by the University's respect for the welfare and privacy of the student.