

## **3.11 Disabilities**

### **3.11.1 Disability Accommodation Requests**

Any student who feels they may need a learning accommodation based on the effect of a disability should contact Academic Dean Cheryl Peterson at [cmpeterson@wartburgseminary.edu](mailto:cmpeterson@wartburgseminary.edu) or (563)589-0311) to coordinate reasonable accommodations for documented disabilities. Wartburg encourages you to self-identify after admission to Wartburg Theological Seminary, and prior to the start of the term. Please give us the necessary lead time to meet with you, discuss your accommodation needs, and complete Wartburg's Seminary Accommodations Request Form.

### **3.11.2 Accommodation Policy for Individuals with Disabilities**

Wartburg Theological Seminary is committed to the inclusion of all individuals and to the principle of individual rights and responsibilities. To this end, policies and procedures aim to ensure all reasonable accommodations so that persons with documented disabilities will not, on the basis of that disability, be denied equal access to programs (academic, co-curricular, or employment), activities, benefits, or services, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under programs or activities offered by Wartburg Theological Seminary.

This policy was developed to ensure access at Wartburg Theological Seminary for individuals with disabilities and to ensure full compliance with all pertinent Federal, State, and local legislation.

### **3.11.3 Rights and Responsibilities**

To ensure the full translation of the Accommodation Policy for Individuals with Disabilities into policies and procedures, two important areas of rights and responsibilities have to be considered: (a) The right of the individual to be included on the basis of criteria that does not unfairly discriminate because of the disability and (b) the right of the seminary to set and maintain standards for admitting and evaluating the progress of students.

To assure full consideration of both areas, this document outlines the rights and responsibilities of Wartburg Theological Seminary and the rights and responsibilities of students who have disabilities.

Note: The following policy addresses the rights and responsibilities of students with learning disabilities and AD/HD (the phrase AD/HD refers to all forms of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorders). However, any student with a documented disability can request accommodations and the ADA Compliance Officer for the Seminary can request that the seminary assist in the provision of these services. Therefore, many of the policies in this document are applicable to all students with qualified disabilities who apply to or are admitted to the seminary.

### **3.11.4 Philosophy of the Program**

We believe that qualified students with learning disabilities at Wartburg Theological Seminary have the right to a quality graduate education. The federal laws that pertain to

post- secondary education are Subpart E, 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (See Appendix). Facing the same demands as other students at the seminary, students with documented disabilities are provided accommodations and support services appropriate to their needs.

Wartburg Theological Seminary recognizes the dignity of students with disabilities and challenges them to grow in the supportive environment offered by the seminary, developing the skills associated with active learners, reflective thinkers, ethical decision-makers and responsible contributors to Christian community.

### **3.11.5 Staffing**

The staff consists of the ADA Compliance Officer, Dean Cheryl Peterson, working in conjunction with the Wartburg Seminary faculty and the administration, to carry out support services for students with disabilities. Within this document, the above- named staff members are referred to as “designated seminary staff.”

### **3.11.6 Services**

Mandated Services are those accommodations required by law and available at no additional charge to students who submit the appropriate documentation. Examples of these accommodations include audio books, text-to-speech programs and/or readers, a distraction-free test environment, extended time for taking tests, and access to available class material notes.

Beyond Mandated Services, other enhanced supports may be available at cost (e.g., peer tutors).

### **3.11.7 Scanning Guidelines for students with Documented Learning Disabilities**

Wartburg Theological Seminary (WTS) is ready and willing to help students with documented learning disabilities to succeed in their studies by helping to provide the necessary reading materials in a form they can access and use. Many resources are readily available to supply resources in an accessible format for students with learning disabilities (for example, Bookshare or Readings for those with blindness or dyslexia). Insofar as students need to have reading materials scanned, Wartburg will assist in the following ways:

1. Students are expected to purchase copies of textbooks to be scanned. This is a matter of compliance with copyright regulations.
2. WTS will scan required material from the books provided by the student. WTS will scan from books in the library collection only as necessary.
3. Students should limit the amount of reading material from recommended sources to the actual amount they intend to read in the semester.
4. Students should submit requests for scanned material at least two weeks in advance and should prioritize the scanning according to what is needed most immediately.
5. WTS encourages students who need larger print or oral reading of a text to procure an Electronic Reader (for example, Kindle Reader) to address their learning needs. Electronic readers can provide both for larger print and oral reading.

- a. Students with an Electronic Reader are encouraged to purchase books and other required materials for the Electronic Reader, whenever available.

### ***3.12 Documentation of Other Disabilities***

Students with disabilities other than AD/HD or learning disabilities need to submit the appropriate documentation to receive services. Appropriate documentation would be statements from qualified professionals about the disability, including evidence of the impact of the disability upon current functioning, and ideally a list of past accommodations and auxiliary aids that have been helpful.