

## **Resolution 012**

### **A Resolution to Improve Accommodations Within the Office of Disability Support Services**

**Sponsored by: Senator Fahey**

**Co-Sponsored by: Senator Besendorfer, Senator Birth, Senator Cunningham, Senator Holcomb, Senator Martin, Senator Schlee**

***Whereas,***

The mission of The Catholic University of America's office of Disability Support Services (DSS) is to "provide programs and services designed to support and encourage the integration of students with disabilities into the mainstream of the university community."<sup>1</sup>

***Whereas,***

Students utilize Disability Support Services for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to: ADHD, mental health and psychological conditions, learning disabilities, physical and mobility impairments, Autism Spectrum Disorders, chronic health impairments, head injuries, blindness or visual impairments, and deafness or hardness of hearing.<sup>2</sup>

***Whereas,***

The Office of Disability Support Services provides a variety of accommodations which includes extended time for tests and exams, note taking, recording classes, extended absences, and more.

***Whereas,***

The Office of Disability Support Services currently utilizes nine physical test seats for 90-120 tests administered each week by one staff test proctor.

***Whereas,***

This has led to a limited availability surrounding when students can sign up to take tests with extended time, as well as a lack of guidance in doing so.

***Whereas,***

Students who receive extended test time must submit a request at least seven days prior to said test, and failure to meet this deadline results in students having to forfeit their accommodations.

***Whereas,***

Students who utilise note taking services may receive their notes up to four days after the class where the notes were taken, which can prevent students from utilizing notes in a timely manner.

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<sup>1</sup>"Disability Support Services." *The Catholic University of America*. <https://dss.catholic.edu>

<sup>2</sup>"Who We Serve." *The Catholic University of America*. <https://dss.catholic.edu/prospective-students/who-we-serve.html>

**Whereas,**

Students who serve as note takers may receive little guidance from the Office of Disability Support Services which can impact the quality of notes given to students with accommodations.

**Whereas,**

The Disability Support Services Office pledges to “disclose student disability information only to those University personnel who have a need to know that information or with a student's consent, and in accordance with the foregoing policies.”<sup>3</sup>

**Whereas,**

There have been many reported incidents of lack of confidentiality where professors have revealed identities of students who have accommodations to other students in an effort to circumvent the inefficiencies of DSS.

**Be it enacted that,**

The Student Government Association Senate, acting in its official capacity as the representative of the undergraduate student body of The Catholic University of America, hereby requests that

1. The University ensures that more testing spaces are readily available for testing accommodations through the Office of Disability Support Services.
2. Testing spaces be reserved for the Office of Disability Support Services in the Pryzbyla Center following the opening of the new campus dining hall.
3. The university considers bringing on an additional staff member in the 2022-2023 academic year within the Office of Disability Support Services to assist in testing accommodations.
4. The Office of Disability Support Services enhances communication to both students and professors about confidentiality guidelines, expectations for note takers, and how students can pursue accommodations from the Office of Disability Support Services for short-term and long-term support.

Agreed to by a vote of \_\_\_\_\_ yeas to \_\_\_\_\_ nays on this date: \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_ abstaining and \_\_\_\_\_ not present.

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Abigail Anger  
*President of the Student Government Association*

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Monica Wallace  
*Vice President of the Student Government Association*

<sup>3</sup> “About Us.” *The Catholic University of America*. <https://dss.catholic.edu/about-us/index.html>