I. POLICY

Des Moines University (DMU) is committed to an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Consistent with the DMU’s broader non-discrimination policy, DMU does not discriminate on the basis of disability. DMU is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities as recognized under the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA). An individualized assessment is made of requests for accommodation. DMU prohibits discrimination based on disability in admission and in access to programs and activities.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all students and accepted candidates planning to matriculate in educational programs at DMU. Failure to follow the procedures set forth in this policy may result in the denial or delay of requested accommodations.

For information relating to Service Animals, please see the Service Animals on Campus policy.

III. BACKGROUND

A person with a disability is someone who has a physical or mental impairment that limits substantially one or more major life activities, such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, learning, walking, seeing, hearing, breathing, and working; has a record of such an impairment; or is regarded as having such an impairment.

Although students with temporary illness or injury may not be disabled, DMU will exercise reasonable efforts to accommodate their needs during the period of temporary illness or injury.

Substantial information is necessary to allow University officials to understand the nature, extent and limitations of an impairment which affects a student's participation in educational programming and to develop reasonable accommodations for such a disability. If, through an interactive process in which DMU and the student fully participate, the student fails to provide sufficient information demonstrating a disability, no accommodation will be provided. The mere
assertion of a disability by a student or a family member is insufficient to establish the existence of a disability. Similarly, a prior accommodation does not demonstrate a current need for a reasonable accommodation. Current evidence of limitation(s) caused by a physical or mental impairment must be established before reasonable accommodation can be determined.

All requests for accommodation are evaluated through an individualized assessment and decisions are made pursuant to an interactive process between the student and appropriate DMU personnel. This interactive process includes the review of clinical documentation, an assessment of the student’s abilities, and a determination of possible reasonable accommodations.

The University will not grant a requested accommodation when documentation requirements have not been met and/or the University considers the request to be unreasonable. The University will not fundamentally alter its programs in order to accommodate a student. However, alternative accommodations may be offered by the University when it has denied a particular accommodation request. Granted accommodations are not effective retroactively; students will not be allowed to re-do assignments or re-take exams with accommodations that they originally took prior to requesting and receiving accommodations.

IV. RETENTION OF STUDENT DOCUMENTS

Clinical documentation or other diagnostic information held by the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) (see Procedure for Requesting Accommodations, below) is kept confidential. It may be released to a third party with the student's written permission or as required by law. General information about a student's disability and accommodation request(s) may be shared with other DMU personnel or, in limited circumstances, with third parties who have a legitimate need to know. The file regarding a student’s request for accommodation is maintained by the CTL and is held separately from the student's official academic record.

Student requests for accommodation and supporting information are kept in hard copy while students are actively enrolled at DMU. Student records are considered inactive following graduation, departure from DMU, failure to communicate with CTL on an incomplete request, or failure to perform, at a minimum, a yearly follow up with CTL about the granted accommodations. Students are encouraged to communicate with CTL at any time they have questions or concerns regarding their accommodations. Students remain eligible to apply for accommodations even if their file has become inactive. An electronic record of documents related to a request for accommodation is generated upon application for accommodations and retained for a period of five (5) years after the last date of active enrollment. After this time, electronic records are archived and hard copies are destroyed. In the event of a return to active enrollment, archived documents from a previous request for accommodations would not need to be resubmitted. However, additional information may be required.

V. PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

DMU students are expected to be actively responsible for all aspects of their enrollment. It is the expectation that students will initiate the interactive process by contacting the CTL, comply with deadlines and agreements, and follow the procedures outlined below.
A. **Contact the Center for Teaching and Learning**

DMU students requesting accommodations should contact an Educational Specialist in the CTL in person, by phone (515.271.1516) or by e-mailing: accommodations@dmu.edu. To allow for adequate processing time, requests for accommodations should be submitted at least three weeks before the start date for the academic year or term or immediately following an injury, illness, or onset of a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. Although requests will be accepted after that timeframe, the interactive process may not be completed in advance of the academic year or term start date. New students who indicate on their Technical Standards form that they will need accommodations to meet their program’s technical standards will be contacted by the CTL before the start of the semester to initiate the interactive process. Students are to make all requests for accommodations to the CTL and should not request accommodations directly from a faculty member. Notification by the student of an impairment to a faculty member and not to CTL may significantly slow the interactive process and accommodations determinations. All accommodations requests should be made through CTL.

B. **Complete an Accommodations Request Form**

To initiate a new request for an accommodation, the student should complete a Student Request for Accommodations form. Students applying for temporary medical accommodations should complete the Student Request for Temporary Medical Accommodations form. Students who already receive accommodations in their educational programming, but seek additional accommodations should complete the Student Additional Accommodation Request form. All three forms are available online or in hard copy from CTL.

C. **Provide Clinical Documentation**

As part of the interactive process, the student must submit current clinical documentation that demonstrates a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity of the student. With the student's written permission, the CTL may consult with the student’s health care provider (as defined in the ADA - 29 CFR 825.125) for additional information. Please see the guidelines for documentation at the end of this document for more information regarding clinical documentation.

1. Learning or Attentional Disabilities: Informative clinical documentation for learning disabilities (LD) and attentional disabilities (e.g., attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder [ADHD]) includes a comprehensive diagnostic interview/consultation and neuropsychological or psycho-educational evaluation plan, which typically should have been completed no more than three years prior to admission to DMU. Please review the Guidelines for Documentation of Learning or Attentional Disabilities below.

2. A student’s receipt of particular accommodations in a previous setting does not mean that the same accommodations will be granted or are reasonable for the student’s current situation at DMU.

3. Students may be asked to provide updated information as needed to properly determine reasonable accommodation. Untimely submission of information may result in delays in consideration of requested accommodations. Because medical school training may include a variety of settings (classroom to clinical), accommodations granted on admission may
not be reasonable for all settings to avoid compromising or fundamentally altering the essential components of a particular course or program.

D. **Provisional Accommodations for Students with a Previous History of Accommodations with Documentation**

In the event that reevaluation of an existing accommodation is necessary, a student may be provided provisional accommodations based on the previous documentation provided. Students receiving provisional accommodations must acknowledge that these accommodations will be revised as necessary and that the student bears the responsibility to provide information supporting the provisional accommodation in as timely a manner as possible. Provisional accommodations will be limited to a period of one semester, if not shorter, pending the review of the new information. Provisional accommodations may be re-affirmed, ended, or modified, as appropriate for the DMU curriculum.

E. **Implementation of Accommodations in Courses and Student’s Responsibilities**

The CTL will communicate by letter the accommodation(s) determined by the interactive process to the student and e-mail appropriate course instructors or coordinators and deans when the reasonable accommodation has been determined. The student has the responsibility to anticipate the need for such letters in his/her various courses/clerkships and to plan with CTL the sequence of the communications that will be needed for the courses planned for the year. Students will receive a copy of the accommodations notification sent to course coordinators. If any problem arises in the receipt of such communication by the course coordinators, the student must promptly notify CTL to ensure that the necessary steps are taken to assure that proper notification has been given.

At times, students may decide they do not wish to use their accommodations for specific academic activities. Examples may include not utilizing extended time for an exam in preparation for a Board exam if a student either did not apply for accommodations or was not granted accommodations on the Boards. Students must waive their accommodation(s) by filling out a One-Time Change of Accommodations Use form available at CTL no later than one business day prior to the event for which the student has been provided a previous accommodation each time they elect to not use their accommodations. For a Monday exam, notification would usually be necessary by the end of the previous Friday. The CTL typically closes at 5 PM daily. Without this waiver, it is assumed students will be using their accommodations.

F. **Yearly Review of Accommodations**

In the interest of ensuring accommodations are appropriate and effective, there will be a yearly review of accommodations. The student will be contacted each year by the CTL to check for possible adjustments of accommodations. Certain impairments may require additional documentation. Students may discuss modification to their already-granted accommodations at any time with an Educational Specialist. Additional information may be required at any time from the student.
G. **Inactive Requests for Accommodation**

The interactive process cannot be appropriately conducted without the submission of relevant information. If all information requested by CTL is not submitted within thirty (30) calendar days of the initial request for accommodation, the request will be considered inactive. Inactive requests may be reopened by written notice to CTL and with submission of additional relevant information.

VI. **RECONSIDERATION REQUESTS**

A student may make a reconsideration request for accommodation following a decision by CTL. To request a reconsideration, the student must submit a written request to CTL asking for further consideration detailing the reasons the student believes the prior decision by CTL was not reasonable. Additional information may be provided by the student.

1. The student must write a rebuttal of the decision that appropriately takes into account the reasons for denial of accommodations. If requested documents were not provided, the student should indicate why these documents are not required within the reconsideration request.

2. The student must submit an official [Reconsideration of Accommodations Decision Request form](#) to CTL within thirty (30) calendar days of the denial decision with the written rebuttal attached. The form is available online or in hard copy from CTL.

3. In most cases, the reconsideration decision will be made within ten (10) business days of the reconsideration request.

VII. **GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORTING A REQUEST FOR ACCOMMODATION**

As part of the interactive process, students must submit information and meet (in person, phone, Skype, etc.) with an Educational Specialist in CTL. In instances of multiple diagnoses, students and their health care providers should provide adequate information for the accommodations requested as per the linked guidelines below. The University may request additional information.

1. Temporary Medical Impairments: Students requesting accommodation for a temporary medical condition should submit the [Clinical Checklist for Temporary Medical Accommodations](#) completed by a representative of their health care provider (e.g. a nurse) and be accompanied by a confirmation that clearly describes the impairment and treatment which is signed and dated by the health care provider on their official letterhead. The health care provider’s name, specialty, address, and phone number must be included. Typical health care provider notes do not include sufficient information for the interactive process.

   Physical Impairment Guidelines

2. Physical Impairments: Informative documentation for physical impairments includes a report from a health care professional describing the nature of the impairment, the expected duration of the impairment, and how the impairment limits the student’s major life activities. In all cases, DMU reserves the right to request additional information.
Physical Impairment Guidelines

3. Learning or Attentional Disabilities: Informative clinical documentation for learning disabilities (LD) and attentional disabilities (e.g., attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder [ADHD]) includes a comprehensive diagnostic interview/consultation and neuropsychological or psycho-educational evaluation plan, which typically should have been completed no more than three years prior to admission to DMU.

Learning Disability Guidelines

Attentional Disability Guidelines

4. Psychological Impairments: Informative documentation for mental impairments includes a report from a health care professional describing the nature of the impairment, the expected duration of the impairment, and how the impairment limits the student’s major life activities. In all cases, DMU reserves the right to request additional information.

Psychological Impairments Guidelines

VIII. PREVIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS IMPACT ON FUTURE ACCOMMODATIONS NEEDS

1. An accommodation granted at DMU does not guarantee an accommodation will be granted by Board or certifying examinations, nor do previously received accommodations guarantee accommodations at DMU.

2. Accommodations granted at DMU apply solely to coursework completed at DMU. Such accommodations may help the student be successful while at DMU but may not be granted by other academic or professional institutions (e.g. clinical rotation/education sites, residency placements, etc.) which may affect the students’ ability to be successful in their chosen profession.

3. Should the student’s needs for accommodations change while at DMU, the student should provide information demonstrating the need to CTL.