

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

To: MSU Faculty and Academic Staff

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Subject: MSU Testing Accommodation Procedure & Update to Alternative
Testing Accommodations

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MSU Testing Accommodation Procedure & Update to Alternative Testing Accommodations



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Policy: *Course instructors, in collaboration with the appropriate administrative unit (College/Department/Program), are responsible for providing testing accommodations in accordance with the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD) Accommodation Letter, and in consultation with students and RCPD specialists. In best case scenarios, accommodations are provided in or nearby the classroom where the class examination is being administered.*

Background

Nearly 10.5% of the MSU body registers with the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD) after documenting a disability that affects major life activities (5,256 in 2025). Approximately 85% of the students registered with the RCPD experience some requirement for modification to the typical testing experience. On average, therefore, instructors can expect that approximately 8% of the students in a class may require some type of testing accommodation. A majority need a testing time extension to enable them to self-compensate for the disability challenge at hand. Others with more involved needs rely on solutions ranging from a reduced distraction setting in the classroom, separate testing space, or specialized equipment.

The administration of course based evaluations/testing is in the purview of the instructors and therefore remains their responsibility. The need for testing accommodation is communicated in the form of an [Accommodation Letter](#), which is

created when a student is approved for Accommodations through RCPD. The Accommodation Letter serves as the basis for a conversation with the student about how the faculty and student will work together to establish as inclusive an environment as possible.

To support, RCPD continues to be a partner in helping reach reasonable plans for testing needs of students, and an RCPD specialist of record is indicated on each Accommodation Letter should the instructor and student need help implementing reasonable classroom accommodations.

Students are informed that they should provide instructors with their Accommodation Letter at the beginning of the semester or at least seven (7) days prior to the need for accommodation. Under most circumstances, this will allow sufficient time to make arrangements. In some cases, significant extenuating circumstances may dictate that a student be accommodated on shorter notice. However, this is the exception – and in these cases, instructors are encouraged to work with a representative of RCPD in determining the appropriate accommodation.

Based on the Accommodation Letter, the following are a few commonly used testing accommodations and how instructors can enact them:

1. **Percent (%) Extended Time** – Work with the student to formulate a plan to allow them to start a test early or finish late. When classrooms are too closely scheduled to allow enough time before or after class, work with departmental or college facilities to locate a suitable testing location available for the time needed, which might include a unit conference room space. For large classes, work with the Office of the Registrar at the beginning of the semester to schedule a classroom which can be done either through the [25Live Academic Room Scheduling system](#) or by contacting Classroom Scheduling in the Office of the Registrar (avoid hallways and other public spaces that are distraction producing). [See additional information about extended time accommodations here.](#)
2. **Reduced Distraction Environment** – Facilitate testing in the classroom by allowing students to choose an ideal spot in the classroom for testing. This could be a table/seat in the front or back of the classroom, away from the door/windows, at the end of an aisle, etc. Students and instructors should work together to plan how this seat will be discreetly reserved. [See additional information about reduced distraction accommodations here.](#)
3. **Separate Room** – Denotes a need to find a more extensive separation for a student. This may be due to specific disability challenges or when a reader or scribe will be involved as interactions would be [distracting to others in the classroom](#). Students granted this accommodation are eligible to request a space separate from the classroom for assessments. This does not automatically mean an individual space and most often means “small group” testing in a low distraction environment. [See additional information about separate room accommodations here.](#)

[Visit the Reduced Distraction Seating Guide](#) for more information including a visual layout in a classroom and conference room settings.

In every case, faculty are responsible for actively managing their testing needs, and faculty and units are encouraged to collaborate with RCPD as they seek solutions. In almost all cases, faculty should administer tests in a manner arranged locally and done directly under their control.

Update to Alternative Testing Accommodations

Faculty and units may need assistance in supporting students with more intensive testing accommodations – e.g., extra time allocations **exceeding** 50%, when assistive technology is necessary and/or where reduced distraction/private testing rooms are stipulated.

As of fall 2025, the [MSU Testing Center](#) is the only option available to assist faculty and units in administering course examinations requiring alternative testing accommodations outside of their capabilities. RCPD continues to consult with students and faculty and units on determining appropriate accommodations, as well as provide support to the MSU Testing Center in the administration of scheduled examinations with specialized equipment and additional private spaces for testing.

The MSU Testing Center is a fee-based service, so colleges, departments, and programs will be responsible for [paying the examination proctoring fees](#).

Testing requests for the MSU Testing Center should be made at least seven (7) days (14 days for finals) prior to the need for the accommodation. Students with approved accommodations can submit alternative testing requests through [MyProfile](#) or can call 517-355-8385 to reserve a testing time. However, faculty/instructors must provide final approval on all requests due to the financial obligation incurred by the college, department, or program. Faculty/instructor requests can be made by emailing testingcenter@msu.edu or calling 517-355-8385. Final authorization will require completion of the [Alternative Testing Site Authorization Form](#).

Questions about different types of student accommodations should be directed to RCPD by visiting rcpd.msu.edu/about-rcpd, emailing rcpd@msu.edu, or calling 517-884-7273.

Questions about alternative testing at the MSU Testing Center can be emailed to testingcenter@msu.edu or by calling 517-355-8385.