

# SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

## Philosophy

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the ADA Reauthorization Act of 2008 defines a person with a disability as “someone with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.”

The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (OSSD) offers services for students with physical and learning disabilities. The OSSD is designed to assist students make a successful transition to the University. We take a proactive stance that encourages students to understand their needs and strengths in order to best advocate for themselves.

At West Chester University we recognize that some students with disabilities want minimal assistance while others require the full range of support and services. To facilitate a successful transition, we recommend a comprehensive assessment of needs through our office. We also provide advocacy with faculty for classroom accommodations.

## Functions of OSSD

The OSSD is located within the Undergraduate Studies and Student Support Services Division. Our main purpose is to arrange for accommodations for students and create a level playing field within the classroom. In addition, we provide academic services through a federal TRIO SSS grant-funded program. We coordinate services with other units within the division, such as the Learning Assistance and Resource Center and the Pre-Major Advising Center, as well as other University offices, including the Writing Center and Residence Life.

Students needing financial support for personal services or interpreters should register with the appropriate agency at least six months in advance of matriculation. It is the student’s responsibility, however, to provide services of a personal nature (e.g., attendants).

## Eligibility Process

An interview or discussion with the OSSD staff is recommended once the student receives an acceptance letter. Students are requested to disclose their disabilities directly to the OSSD, not to the Office of Admissions. To ensure confidentiality, a response card from OSSD is enclosed with the application packet.

Documentation of the disability must be received before accommodations can be considered. We recommend updating diagnostic reports for students with learning disabilities and attention deficit disorder to within five years and three years of application, respectively. Reports should include information concerning cognitive, academic, and perceptual processing, and recommendations for classroom accommodations. (Suggested tests include the WAIS-R, Woodcock-Johnson-R, Nelson-Denny Reading Test, and/or Wrat-R.) For complete documentation requirements, see the OSSD web page.

We recommend that this documentation be sent or brought to the OSSD in a timely manner so that appropriate accommodations can be arranged when the student needs them. Documentation of disability should be sent to

Office of Services for Students with Disabilities  
223 Lawrence Center  
West Chester University  
West Chester, PA 19383  
610-436-2564  
E-mail: [ossd@wcupa.edu](mailto:ossd@wcupa.edu)  
Web: [www.wcupa.edu/ussss/ossd/](http://www.wcupa.edu/ussss/ossd/)

## Services

- Special summer orientation
- Central documentation file
- Advocacy with faculty
- Alternative test-taking arrangements
- Academic coaching

# UNDERGRADUATE FACT SHEET

- Priority registration
- Note-taking support
- Content tutors
- Study skills tutoring
- Adaptive technology
- Readers for visually impaired students
- Interpreters for deaf and hard-of-hearing students
- Peer support
- Referrals for LD testing

## About West Chester University

A comprehensive, public institution, West Chester University of Pennsylvania offers high-quality undergraduate and graduate degree programs in more than 100 subject areas, as well as certification and certificate programs. As the largest member of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE), West Chester offers a full and rewarding educational experience as well as reasonable tuition.

With a rich heritage dating back to the 19th century, West Chester University was founded in 1871 as West Chester Normal School for the purpose of training teachers for the

Commonwealth's newly established public schools. In 1960, West Chester State Teachers College expanded its programs to include liberal arts and graduate degrees and, as a result, dropped "Teachers" from its name. In 1983, West Chester State College became one of the 14 institutions in PASSHE. Along with its university status, the school acquired a new system of governance and the opportunity to expand its degree programs.

Today, more than 15,800 graduate and undergraduate students, along with 1,600 faculty and staff, study and work on the 406-acre campus. Situated in the Borough of West Chester, the campus is a picturesque mix of Gothic, Victorian, and modern architecture with pleasant, tree-shaded walks.

Strategically located at the center of the mid-Atlantic corridor between New York City and Washington, D.C., West Chester is convenient to major cultural and commercial institutions and recreational activities. West Chester is located just 25 miles west of Philadelphia and 17 miles north of Wilmington. New York City and Washington, D.C. are accessible by car or train in less than three hours, and Philadelphia International Airport is less than an hour's drive from the campus.

## Information on Admission

### Office of Admissions

Emil H. Messikomer Hall

100 West Rosedale Ave., West Chester University, West Chester, PA 19383

610-436-3411 Toll-free: 1-877-315-2165

E-mail: [ugadmiss@wcupa.edu](mailto:ugadmiss@wcupa.edu) WCU home page: [www.wcupa.edu](http://www.wcupa.edu)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/wcupa](http://www.facebook.com/wcupa)

