Disability Resources
Assignment Extension Recommendation Guidance

Recommended faculty notification:
“Assignment Extensions may need to be considered due to the nature of this student’s disability. Instructor and student must meet in advance to discuss the impact on course design, and pre-determine reasonable time extensions using the Assignment Extension Accommodation Guidance documents.”

An assignment extension recommendation may be necessary in the event the impact of a students’ disability or episodic health condition cannot be predicted and thus, student requires additional time beyond the predetermined due date listed in the course syllabus. It must be clear to all parties that extended assignment deadlines are not generally considered an accommodation, per se. Rather, students are expected to manage their academic schedule to the best of their ability and work within the parameters of the course syllabus to keep pace with instruction. When an assignment extension is necessary, the student is wholly responsible for informing the instructor as soon in advance as is possible. At this point a revised due date is mutually agreed upon by the student and instructor. Requesting an assignment extension in this situation means that the student will not be penalized for turning in late work at the onset. However, late work turned in beyond the revised due date may be penalized in keeping with the standard for classmates with comparable situations (i.e., student athletes participating in championships).

While assignment extension is recommended on a case-by-case basis by the assigned access coordinator and depends on each students individual circumstances, the timeliness of due dates is decided upon by the instructor in consultation with an access coordinator, on a course-by-course basis. The nature of the course determines the extent of flexibility with due dates (i.e., extensions do not apply to group work as this would be considered essential to the elements of the course, as opposed to work done independently).

Because instructors are the content experts, they are best situated to assess their courses to determine the extent to which assignment extensions can be granted. We encourage instructors to keep a written record of any negotiation and agreements via email, and routinely cc in the students’ access coordinator.
Limits on Assignment Extensions
While instructors are encouraged to be flexible in the implementation of assignment extensions, reasonable limits are recommended. Please see the guidance below:

- Determining the new due date: While it may be reasonable to agree upon a new due date based upon certain circumstances, instructors are not expected to modify course pace for a student who has not completed the homework in a previous course segment.
- Remodeling: Professors are not expected to alter the assignment or lower expectations. However, you are free to consider whether universal design for instruction principles can be useful. For example, can the objectives of your assessment be satisfied with an alternate assignment.
- Course Rigor: Professors should not lower course standards or make courses easier for students.

Other Factors to Consider

- The pace of instruction in some courses involves both lecture-style delivery and in-class activities that require the entire class to participate on the same timeline. You might consider if the absent student could participate in an alternate activity that would meet the same learning objectives. If you plan alternative activities for the student in advance, then you will be prepared in the event the student needs that option.
- Any course description that students consult prior to registration should convey the nature of the course so that students have a clear understanding of expectations when choosing courses each semester.
- Information in the course syllabus should convey the nature of the course so that students have a clear understanding of course expectations, learning objectives and how those learning objectives will be achieved and should include classroom practices and policies regarding attendance and how attendance factors into the final grade.

Recommended Communications & Documentation
It is often difficult to give students an exact number of how many days are reasonable for assignment extensions, and how turning in late work will impact their educational experience up front. Therefore, regular communication with the student to check on progress, or breaking up assignment milestones, is recommended. At the very least, we recommend an initial face-to-face meeting to discuss how late assignments will be considered. Students may request that their access coordinator be in attendance at these meetings.

Documentation
After each of the above meetings with the student, email the student a brief summary of what was discussed. This will serve as documentation for both you and the student and can help to ensure all parties are clear as to what was agreed upon.