

Re: Reduced Distraction Environment for exams and quizzes

Generally, students with a “reduced distraction test environment” as part of their accommodations are allowed to take their tests with the Adaptive Test Center in Student Disability Services. However, there are instances in which this cannot occur (e.g. test cannot leave department for security reasons, student chooses to test with instructor, limited space/time availability in the Adaptive Test Center, test content and/or vocabulary exceed capabilities of the Adaptive Test Center staff, etc.). As a result, you as an instructor, may have to provide an appropriate reduced distraction environment as part of this student’s approved accommodations.

Student Disability Services (SDS) recommends the following guidelines/steps for the implementation of the academic accommodation of a **“student is allowed to take exams, quizzes, and pop quizzes in a quiet, reduced-distraction environment other than the standardized classroom setting”**:

- 1) Once the official letter of accommodation from Student Disability Services is received, dialogue with the student about those procedures and expectations you have for setting up an exam, quiz, essay, or use of Blackboard with a reduced distraction environment. (Note: An example of one expectation would be how far in advance the student has to communicate with you that they want to utilize their accommodation for the upcoming exam.)
- 2) In determining a site for the exam that would fulfill the accommodation of a **reduced distraction environment**, you might want to consider the following:
 - a. What resources are available in the department (i.e. conference room, offices, etc.)
 - b. Make sure you choose an environment which has less activity than what is normally seen in the associated classroom where the test/quiz usually takes place and that is not overly stimulating (e.g. noise from other areas, activity in the room, etc.)
 - c. Make sure that you not place the student in an area or hallway where your there is a lot of noise or activity, as you must simulate a reduction in noise as compared to the same “test atmosphere” as other students in your classroom.
- 3) Once the parameters and expectations regarding the implementation of extended time have been established, SDS **strongly** recommends that you document the details of your discussion. This can be done through an email which then acknowledges an agreement between you and the student. Make sure you retain a copy for your records and share this information with SDS.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter and feel free to call our office at 210-458-4157 should you have further questions.