

Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS)

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OSAS Highlights

- March 2020 – August 2021:
 - OSAS fully functioned remotely during pandemic
- July 2021:
 - Name change, formerly Disability Services & Programs (OSAS)
 - New Senior Director of OSAS
- Fall 2021/Spring 2022:
 - Transition to in-person OSAS services
 - Daily virtual drop-ins offered to student
 - Experienced extraordinarily high volume of accommodation requests
 - Surge in Remote Attendance accommodation requests



OSAS in a Nutshell



What are we and Why?

- ❖ *Equal access*
- ❖ *Civil Rights Federal Laws (Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act)*

Where are we?

- ❖ *GFS 120 and SSL 301*
- ❖ *Classrooms, Housing, Dining, Physical Campus, Activities, On-line, Clinical*

Who are we?

- ❖ 23 Professional Staff ([“Meet the Staff”](#) on our website)
 - ❖ Specialists over each accommodation area (ie: AT, Notetaking, Testing, DHH, BLV)
 - ❖ Proctors, Volunteer Note-takers

Disability Law: *Who is accountable, and why?*

While classified as a private educational institution, USC receives federal funding related to financial aid, scholarships, and grants for research, as well as other federally funded initiatives. Because of this, **USC and all of its members (i.e. faculty and staff)** are accountable for complying with federal disability laws, including the following:

- **Americans with Disability Act Amended (ADAA, 2008), titles II and III**, particularly addressing disability from a civil rights perspective, by defining disability as a protected class and establishing prevention of discrimination against this population.
- **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act**, particularly relating to providing equal access to the learning, physical and programmatic settings for students with disabilities.
- **Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act**, which outlines online accessibility standards that federal agencies, contractors and employers must meet.

OSAS At a Glance: Total Active OSAS Students 3829

Gender	N	%
Male	1488	49%
Female	2210	58%

*Database generates SIS data feed rather than student self report.

*OSAS Student Application selection includes:

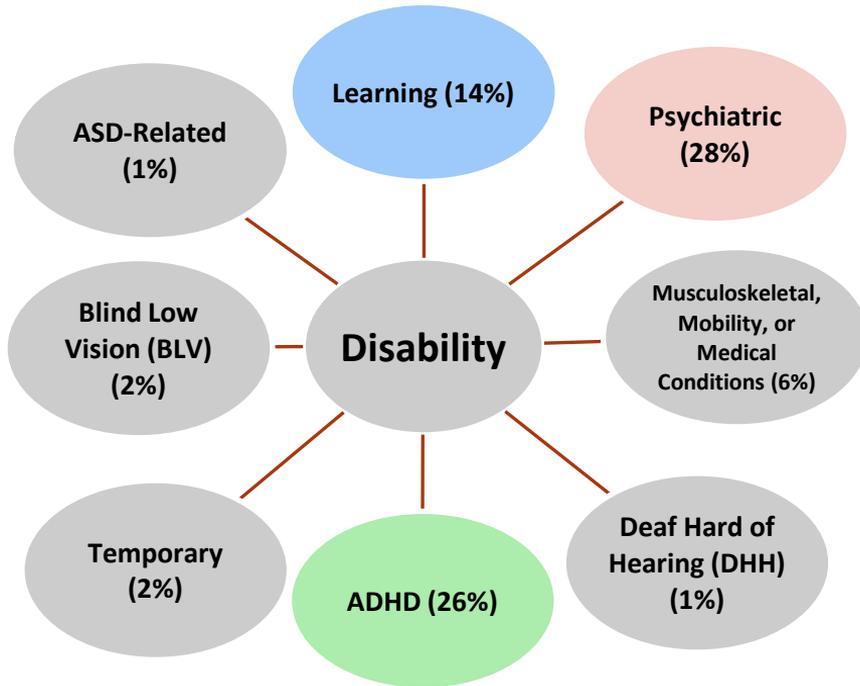
- Agender
- Male
- Female
- Transgender
- Non-binary
- Gender Non-conforming
- Not Specified

Class Standing	N	%
Freshman	283	7%
Sophomore	518	14%
Junior	680	18%
Senior	1038	27%
Total Undergraduate (OSAS)	2519	66%
Total Undergraduate (USC: 21,000)		12%
Masters	769	20%
Doctoral	421	11%
Total Graduate (OSAS)	1190	31%
Total Graduate (USC: 28,500)		4%

Top Schools/Programs	N	%
Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences	1278	34%
Marshall School of Business	628	17%
Viterbi School of Engineering	371	10%
School of Social Work	219	6%
Price School of Public Policy	155	4%



OSAS At a Glance: Disability and Accommodation Type



Accommodation Group & Type	N	%
Accommodated Testing	2929	77%
<i>Extended Time 1.5x</i>	2464	65%
<i>Reduced distraction test setting</i>	1306	34%
<i>Extended Time 1.5x ONLY</i>	850	22%
Classroom Access	2085	58%
<i>Notetake Technology</i>	1106	31%
Alternative Formats	1074	30%
<i>Alternative format textbooks</i>	1072	30%



OSAS At a Glance: Language Classes

Common Classes with OSAS Students/Accommodations:

- SPAN (71)
- FREN (23)
- ITAL (17)
- HEBR (2)



OSAS At a Glance: Testing Center

The OSAS Testing Center is part of the Office of Accessibility Services Department. However, it is housed in a satellite location just a few minutes away from the OSAS office in the Science and Engineering Library (SSL). The Testing Center is located on the 3rd floor, Room 301. (It is accessible by elevator or stairs, and a power assist door can be found at the buildings south entrance.)

The OSAS Testing Center offers dedicated testing space and services for OSAS students who are approved for certain test-related accommodations which have typically been proctored by the OSAS office.

Please visit our webpage for more information about [Spring 2022 Accommodated Testing Process](#)

OSAS Testing Center

Location: Science & Engineering Library (SSL), 3rd Floor, Suite 301

General Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:30 am – 5:00 pm (exams begin at 9:00 am)



OSAS Accommodation Process

- On-going registration and accommodation process (new, temporary disabilities)
- Student register by submitting [Student Application](#)
- Assigned to Primary OSAS Specialist for review
- Rigorous accommodation review process
- Interactive process
 - Intake with student
 - Obtain documentation that meets OSAS documentation standards
 - Consult with treatment providers
 - Consult with campus partners, schools/programs
 - OSAS committee review, secondary reviewer
 - Notification of determination
- Upon approval, student must provide formal OSAS Letter of Accommodation to faculty



Accommodation: Extension on Assignment Deadlines

We recommend instructors and students with this accommodation talk through the following points, in order to establish a course-level agreement for implementing this accommodation.

- Are extensions on deadlines ever allowed for students without disabilities; for example, if a student has an emergency medical condition, an interview, or a trip on university business?
- What does the syllabus say about deadlines and extensions?
- Is it necessary to have finished the assignment in order to participate in subsequent classes?
- Will the assignment be discussed in subsequent classes, such that it is unfair to allow the student to have access to those conversations before the assignment is completed?
- Would allowing the deadline extension negatively impact the educational experience of other students?
- Is the material being learned in the class sequential? Does each week's material build on the material learned in the previous week(s)?
- Are there other lab or class sections the student could attend to catch up on missed material?

OSAS staff are glad to help address questions or concerns about this accommodation, or to assist with mediating the process to reach an agreement between students and their instructors.



Accommodation: Remote Attendance

- Students may request an accommodation for Remote Attendance from OSAS. This has been a growing area for the past five years
- Roughly 100 approvals for Fall 2021/Spring 2022
- OSAS reviews to determine if medical documentation supports an actual disability-related need, rather than a preference
- OSAS partners with USC Student Health physicians to review documentation
- While we consider professional input, final decision is determined by OSAS



Accommodation: Remote Attendance

- OSAS determines whether the accommodation is reasonable for specific students. Depending on the accommodation requested, the next question may involve an academic determination.
- Would allowing a student to attend this class virtually “fundamentally alter the nature of the course?”
- Historically, OSAS has worked with each individual faculty member. This Fall, we shifted to consultation with higher level administrators to affirm the decision from an institutional level
- Technology/logistics support offered through Dornsife Technology Services (DTS) and ITS
- OSAS has created a [Faculty Guide for Remote Attendance](#)



Considerations:

Attendance/Remote Attendance Accommodations

1. Is there classroom interaction between the instructor and students, and among students?
2. Do student contributions constitute a significant component of the learning process?
3. Does the fundamental nature of the course rely upon student participation as an essential method for learning?
4. To what degree does a student's failure to attend constitute a significant loss to the educational experience of other students in the class?
5. What does the course description and syllabus say?
6. What is the method by which the final course grade is calculated?
7. What are classroom practices and policies regarding attendance?
8. How is attendance related to the learning outcomes of the course?
9. Are there any alternative methods that the student can acquire/demonstrate mastery of the skill that would meet the same learning outcomes of the course when not considering attendance as a factor?
10. Are there other faculty teaching the same course/content? If yes, is the attendance policy the same in all sections of the course?



Common Q&A

- **What if a student requests an accommodation without a letter from OSAS?**
 - If a student requests an accommodation directly from you, please let the student know that you cannot provide any accommodations without a current LOA. Some students are just new to the system and might not yet understand the process. Once referred to OSAS we can evaluate the documentation and assess if accommodations are warranted.
- **Would accommodations fundamentally alter the nature of the course?**
 - Excused spelling
- **Does the “extended time” accommodation apply to homework and other out of class assignments?**
 - Extended Time (1.5x/2x/3x) only extends to timed assessments in the classroom
- **Who should faculty contact if they are unsure of how to provide an accommodation?**
 - Please feel free to contact OSAS osasfrontdesk@usc.edu/(213)740-0776
 - All students have a primary OSAS Specialist
- **I have a student with a disability who is not able to keep up with the class, what should I do?**
 - All students regardless of disability status must conform to and meet the same academic standards. Treat them exactly the same as you would any other students in your class who might be struggling. If the student has a known disability you might additionally encourage them to check in with OSAS for support.



Contact Us

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