

# How to Effectively Communicate with Professors About Your ADS Accommodations

College LIFE



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# Steps on How to Communicate with Professors

# 1. Share your accommodation letter with your Professor(s)

- Following the ADS registration process, you should first share your accommodation letter with your professor using the [ADS online portal](#)
  - See our guide, An Overview of ADS Services, for an overview of the whole registration process
- After sending this letter, you will set up a meeting with your professor one-on-one to discuss your accommodations for the semester

## 2. Reach out to them in a professional email

- It is important to create a respectful relationship with your professor, and emailing is usually the first way you communicate with them
  - You want to give a good first impression!
  - Follow our [Email template for contacting professors about accommodations](#)
- Explain that you have ADS accommodations and that you would like to meet to discuss how you will use them in their course
  - *College LIFE Tip:* suggest a time to meet over Zoom that fits into their office hours (typically found in the class syllabus) – if you schedule a meeting during office hours, you know they will be free at that time!
  - *If you do not have their office hours, suggest a specific day and time for your meeting and ask if they are available then*

## 2. Reach out to them in a professional email

- Here is an email template for contacting your professor after sharing your Accommodation Letter via the ADS online portal:

*"Dear Professor [type their last name here],*

*I hope you are doing well. I am a new student in your class this term, and I have an accommodation letter from ADS which I shared with you through the ADS Online Portal. This means that I require these specific accommodations for the class this term: [list the accommodations that are in your accommodation letter].*

*Please let me know if you are available on [insert a day and time you are available to meet here] to meet to discuss how to implement these accommodations. Additionally, I have attached the Acknowledgement of Student Request Form for you to sign after we meet. [also attach the Detailed Implementation Plan if needed for your accommodations]*

*Sincerely,*

*[type your name here]*

*UID: [type your UID here]"*

## 2. Reach out to them in a professional email

- If you want a trusted advocate with you during this meeting, make sure to CC your trusted advocate on this email and tell the professor they will be in the Zoom meeting with you
  - *Examples of a trusted advocate that can help you communicate and support you during your meeting include: an adult family member, a counselor, another professor, etc.*
- **Remember:** Make sure to attach the completed document(s) they will need to sign at your meeting in your email
  - [Acknowledgement of Student Request Form](#)
  - If applicable, the [Detailed Implementation Plan](#)
    - Only students with accommodations under “Accommodations Requiring Detailed Implementation Plan” are required to submit this Plan – see your letter

### 3. Prepare for the meeting



- Go over which accommodations you are eligible for
- Review the course syllabus and prepare any questions
- Make a list of which accommodations are necessary for the specific course you are meeting about, and how you will benefit from them
- Reflect on your strengths and weaknesses as a student
- Think about what your goals are for this course
- Prepare to advocate for yourself – a professor does not have the right to refuse any accommodations that you are eligible for!



## 4. Meet with your professor (online)

- Have all your documents and notes ready for your Zoom/Webex
  - *College LIFE Tip:* Take additional notes, if necessary, during the meeting in a [Google Document](#)
- Calmly and politely explain your accommodations to your professor, and confirm that they are aware of each
- Explain your goals and discuss a plan with your professor
- Any additional/specific details about how you will use accommodations must be documented and added to the Detailed Implementation Plan (if applicable)
- *Remember:* you are not obligated to disclose your specific disability! You only need to discuss what your accommodations are

## 4. Meet with your professor (online)

- Important Questions to Ask Your Professor:
  - Ask how they would like you to tell them if you are struggling in the course, decide on how you will communicate with them if you fall behind on assignments, feel overwhelmed, etc.
  - Ask about exam formatting and how your accommodations will apply to not only exams but smaller quizzes or other in-class assessments
  - Ask if they offer one-on-one office hours for going over material
- Discuss setting up a regular meeting schedule to check on your progress and goals throughout the semester

## 4. Meet with your professor (online)

- Make sure your professor signs the necessary document(s)
  - Acknowledgement of Student Request Form
  - If applicable, Detailed Implementation Plan Form
- Once you have met with all your professors, upload the signed document(s) to ADS digitally



# Frequently Asked Questions

# How can I maintain an understanding with my professor throughout the semester?

- Keep in regular contact with your professor as the semester continues
- Email about assignments and/or exams
- Reach out about setting up more meetings to go over your progress in the course
- Stay engaged with their online office hours and in-class Q&A
- Be honest about your struggles with the course, and how they can help you when you are facing an obstacle in your learning

# What if my professor refuses an accommodation?

- In this situation, first politely ask your professor to explain why they would refuse the accommodation
- Then calmly explain that you have the right to use any and all accommodations made available to you through your ADS registration
  - *College LIFE Tip:* Having a trusted advocate to support you during this meeting will be helpful when explaining your right to use accommodations as a student
- If your professor still refuses, reach out to ADS immediately and explain the situation
  - call (301) 314-7682
  - email [adsfrontdesk@umd.edu](mailto:adsfrontdesk@umd.edu)

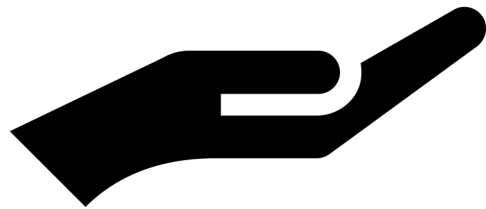
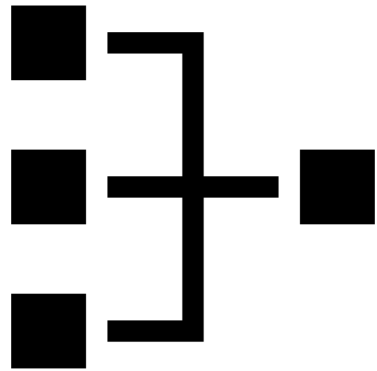
# Things to Remember

# Remember Your Rights!

- You have a right to use your [reasonable accommodations](#) in any course
- Stand your ground and make decisions that will be best for your success as a student
- Do not let your professor or peers pressure you into not using an accommodation you are eligible for and will need!







# Build a Support System

- Make sure you have a trusted support system of adults who can advocate for your accommodations and struggles as a student
  - Examples of trusted advocates: parents, other family members, counselors, professors, doctors, therapists, and more