

Tips for talking to your professors

If you choose to talk to your professors about your disability, follow these tips.

1. Set up a meeting with your professor to talk about your accommodation letter. Doing it in this way helps to remind the professor that this information is confidential and not to be shared with others.
 - a. Visit the professor during office hours (hours are usually posted in the syllabus).
 - b. E-mail your professor to set up an appointment.
 - c. Ask your professor after class to arrange a meeting time.
2. At the meeting, give your professor your accommodation letter. Your letter will not identify your specific disability.
 - a. You do not have to share specific disability information. You may just want to share that you are a student with a disability and what your accommodation needs are. [Use assertive communication skills](#) to discuss your needs with your professor. Here are some tips to help you communicate assertively.
 - Use “I” statements and consider the feelings of others.
 - Be conscious of your tone of voice. Be firm and calm but nice.
 - Stick to the facts.
 - Be respectful of others’ opinions and feelings.
 - Use appropriate body language such as make eye contact, face the individual you are talking with and have a pleasant but serious facial expression.
 - Listen to the individual you are talking with about their opinions or feelings.
3. If you decide to share specific disability information, be sure to use brief, positive everyday language that focuses on your strengths and abilities and effective accommodations.
 - a. Be prepared when you talk with your professors; have an idea of what you want to talk about with them. With busy schedules, professors appreciate forethought and succinct explanations.
 - b. It is your choice as to how much information you wish to share concerning your disability.
4. Discuss the information on the letter by approaching it as you are a student registered at the disability support services office and these are the accommodations that you are to receive. Be prepared to answer any questions.
 - a. If you do not feel comfortable answering the professor’s questions, you can refer him or her to the disability support services coordinator.

For more information visit:

<http://www.going-to-college.org/campuslife/index.html>