

[Disability Services Resource Guide: Extensions on Assignments](#)

This guide provides an overview of Frequently Asked Questions, guiding principles, templates, and examples for students and faculty regarding accommodations for extensions on assignments. Please reach out to The Chicago School Office of Disability Services at accommodations@thechicagoschool.edu if you have any questions or need any additional support.

FAQs for STUDENTS:

- **When do I need to tell professors that I have accommodations?**
 - You must give your professors reasonable notice that you have accommodations so they have time to plan. We recommend that you send your accommodations letter to each of your professors at the start of each class. If you do not send your professor your accommodation letter in advance, then you technically don't have accommodations set up for the course. Once you provide the letter to your instructors, the accommodations must be honored from that point onward. Even if you've had that professor for a previous class, each class is different and it's important that you communicate to them that you have accommodations so that you can both plan for implementing the accommodations when needed.

- **Sample first contact email template:**

Dear Professor [NAME],

My name is [NAME] and I am a student in [COURSE]. I am writing to provide you with my confirmation of accommodations letter that outlines my approved accommodations for your course. I am hoping to speak with you to discuss implementing my accommodations this semester. Per the attached letter, I have accommodations for [LIST ACCOMMODATIONS].

Could we please meet to discuss a plan for the semester? I cannot always predict the need for accommodations for extensions on assignments in advance and would appreciate the opportunity to meet and discuss an agreed-upon protocol for communicating when I need to use my approved accommodations. [ASK FOR ANY ADDITIONAL SPECIFIC INFORMATION NEEDED TO ACCESS YOUR ACCOMMODATIONS]

Please let me know when you're available to meet. I look forward to working together to facilitate these accommodations. If you have any questions, you can contact the Office of Disability Services at accommodations@thechicagoschool.edu.

Best,
[SIGNATURE]

- **Do I automatically get an extension for every assignment?**
 - No – accommodations for extensions on assignments do not mean that you automatically receive an extension for every assignment in the course. The expectation is that you reach out to your professors to request an extension when you need one and confirm a new due date for the assignment. Communicate with your instructors early and follow up if you do not hear back. We encourage you to use your extensions when needed, but be mindful that taking extensions on every assignment can have a cascade effect that can negatively impact participation in your courses. If you're concerned about falling behind, be proactive in talking with your instructors to plan.
- **How far in advance do I have to request an extension?**
 - Please communicate with your professors as soon as you're aware that you need an extension, or as soon after a medical incident as possible. We don't specify a period in which to request an extension since the reasons for needing one can vary and we understand that you may not be able to make the request in advance depending on the situation. However, extensions are not automatic, and you must communicate with your instructors about when you will be submitting your work. Accommodations are not retroactive, so don't forget to tell your professors that you have accommodations at the start of the semester before you need to use them.
- **Do I have to tell my instructors about the medical circumstances surrounding my request for an extension?**
 - No, you do not have to provide details of your medical condition when using your accommodations. In fact, providing too much detail can sometimes make an email unclear and detract from your request to use your accommodations. When requesting an extension, clearly state that you're requesting an extension and for how much time.
 - **Sample extension request email template:**

Dear Professor [NAME],

I'm reaching out to inform you that I am experiencing an exacerbation of my disability and to request an extension on [ASSIGNMENT DETAILS]. Would it work for me to submit the assignment on [DATE] instead? Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Best,

[SIGNATURE]
- **Can I request extensions for more than 48 hours?**
 - You can request additional time, but beyond the 48-hour minimum specified in the accommodation it is up to each professor's discretion whether they can grant additional time. When requesting an extension, we recommend that you clearly communicate your plan for completing the assignment and when you will submit it.
- **Do my accommodations apply to requests for extensions unrelated to my disability/medical needs?**
 - No. ADA accommodations for extensions on assignments only apply to extension requests due to disability/medical needs.

- **What do I do if a professor denies an extension request?**
 - Certain assignments cannot accommodate extensions, as in cases when the extension prevents other students from completing their work or makes it so that you can't complete a following assignment. If you believe that you've been unfairly denied an extension, start by asking the instructor directly why the request was denied. If you are unable to resolve the situation by communicating directly with your professor, reach out to the Disability Services Office at accommodations@thechicagoschool.edu and we can help follow up.
- **How can I make the most of my accommodation for extensions on assignments?**
 - **Communication is essential!** Request extensions in a timely manner, clearly ask for the extension and how much time you're requesting, and confirm the instructor's expectations if anything is unclear.
 - **Plan ahead** by meeting with your instructors at the start of each semester to discuss how to use your extensions in their course. Every course and every instructor is different and discussing it in advance can really help clarify expectations and anticipate needs. Last-minute extension requests may be harder to accommodate; when possible, review your schedule and request extensions in advance.
 - **Guiding principles when requesting an extension:**
 - **Be clear and concise, and avoid emotionally loaded communication.** You do not have to apologize for a disability or the need for accommodations, nor do you have to justify your request beyond confirming that it's related to your medical accommodations.
 - **Do not provide unnecessary medical details.** You do not have to disclose personal health information to your instructors to access your accommodations and this information can detract from your request for an extension.
 - **Respond in a timely manner and follow up as needed.** Set reminders on your calendar or schedule periodic check-ins with your instructors as needed to make sure you're an active participant in the accommodations process.

FAQs for FACULTY:

- **Are students with accommodations for extensions on assignments automatically granted an extension on every assignment?**
 - No. The expectation is that students request extensions when they need them for medical reasons and discuss a new deadline with their instructors so that students and faculty agree about when each assignment will be due.
- **Are students required to ask for an extension for every assignment?**
 - Yes. Students must communicate with their professors about needing extensions and work with their professors to establish new deadlines. It's not unusual for students to reach out to instructors at the last minute if a sudden flare up/medical emergency happens to request an extension, and in that case we recommend allowing them extra time unless there's a valid reason why it's not feasible. In some cases, students may propose a new deadline, but in cases when the student doesn't say when they plan to submit or if the deadline they propose is unrealistic, we recommend that professors state a deadline so that it's clear when they expect to receive the assignment.
- **How far in advance should students inform professors that they have accommodations?**
 - Students are expected to inform professors that they have accommodations at the start of the semester. If the student doesn't send their professor their accommodation letter in advance, then they technically have not set up accommodations in that course. Once the student has sent the professor the letter, the accommodations must be honored from that point onward. Because accommodations for extensions on assignments are designed for times when a student's disability-related needs require additional time to complete an assignment, they may not always be able to request an extension in advance. The expectation is that students communicate with their professors as soon as they're aware that they need an extension, or as soon after a medical incident as possible.
- **Does the late work grading policy still apply for students with accommodations for extensions on assignments?**
 - Yes. The late policy does still apply when a student doesn't communicate about an extension or when they plan to submit late work. The accommodation does not grant indefinite extensions or automatic extensions, so past the point that the deadline can feasibly be extended, the assignment should be graded the same as for any other student. We advocate for providing as much flexibility as possible, since medical needs can be disruptive and unpredictable at times, but the intention of accommodations is to promote access, not to decrease the expectations or standards of assessment.
- **Are professors required to grant extensions on all assignments?**
 - The accommodation states that a 48-hour minimum extension be granted for assignments that can feasibly be extended. Certain assignments cannot accommodate extensions, as in cases when the extension prevents other students from completing their work or makes it so that the student cannot complete a following assignment. If a professor must decline a request for an extension, we recommend providing a clear and specific rationale for why the assignment cannot accommodate an extension.

- **Can professors offer more than 48-hour extensions?**
 - Yes. The 48-hour timeframe specified in the accommodations letter is a minimum and faculty are encouraged to consider extension timeframes based on the nature of the assignment in question. Beyond 48 hours (about 2 days), it is up to the professor's discretion whether to provide additional time.
- **Are professors required to grant extensions for requests unrelated to medical needs/disability?**
 - No. Accommodations for extensions on assignments are intended to be used in cases of medical need and do not guarantee a student extensions for circumstances unrelated to their disability. However, we advocate for offering students compassion and flexibility whenever possible.
- **What should professors do if students do not communicate about needing an extension on an assignment?**
 - It's not unusual for students to reach out to instructors at the last minute if a sudden flare up/medical emergency happens to request an extension, and in that case we recommend allowing them extra time unless there is a valid reason it is not feasible. If a student does not request an extension in a timely manner, it is up to your discretion to determine whether the assignment can be accepted late. If it cannot be accepted late, clearly explain why and what the impact will be on the student's grade.
- **What if a student requests an extension at the end of the semester?**
 - For term-based courses, instructors are required to grant a minimum 48-hour extension even if it extends past the grades-due date. Notify your Department Chair if you will be submitting grades late for this reason. For semester-based courses, a 48-hour extension should not conflict with the grades-due date. If the student experiences a medical need at the end of the semester, they may be eligible for [incomplete grades](#) and we encourage you to support them through that process.
- **How can professors support students with accommodations for extensions on assignments?**
 - **Be compassionate and patient.** It can be difficult for students to ask for accommodation, and many have encountered disability stigma and ableism in previous educational experiences that may make them anxious to ask for what they need.
 - **Set clear deadlines** when communicating with students about extensions. Explain why you approved or denied the request. If you don't explain why, it can feel arbitrary to the student.
 - In advance of the semester, **go through the course syllabus and identify how much of an extension would be feasible for each assignment.** You do not need to provide this review of the full syllabus to students, but planning ahead will help you be prepared to respond to inquiries before they arise. See below for an example of one way to outline accommodations per assignment.
 - When students provide their accommodations letters, **meet with them to discuss any assignments that cannot accommodate extensions and your expectations for communication** regarding using their accommodations. This can be a good opportunity

to remind students that extensions are not granted automatically and must be requested when needed.

- Work with students to request [incomplete grades](#) when they experience medical emergencies or request disability-related extensions at the end of the semester.
- **Guiding questions to ask before denying an accommodation:**
 - What is the rationale for denying the request? Don't forget to share this with the student.
 - Is there a reasonable compromise between what the student proposed and denying the request completely?
 - Is there an alternative accommodation that could help promote access for the student?

Examples:

Here is an example of **outlining accommodations per assignment** that includes rationale:¹

AB545

- Online Instruction/ASRs: will extend to Saturdays at 11:59 pm to keep you prepared for class
- SCC Check-Ins: As this is just a picture/scan of your datasheet & SCC, current due dates will be kept
- Research Proposal Assignments: 48-hour extension will be given
- Article Guide Assignments: 48-hour extension will be given, but it is suggested that you complete these prior to class if possible, as they will help you in class discussion
- Visual Display Assignments: 48-hour extension will be given
- Tests and final exam—time and a half will be given
- SAFMEDS—time and a half will be given and 48-hour extension will be given for video submission
- If in-class activities are assigned out of class, 48-hour extension will be given

AB590

- Weekly assignments: this may vary by assignment based on the effect it will have in class. I will provide more information as we go, but for now, here is what will be given for the next few weeks:
 - Week 2: 48-hour extension will be given
 - Week 3: 48-hour extension will be given
 - Week 4: This is a schedule for the following week. Extending will alter the purpose of this assignment. Schedule should be submitted on time, but accompanying questions can be answered with 48-hour extension
 - Week 5: 48-hour extension will be given
- Following Email Directions: no extension will be given as this changes the purpose of this activity
- Progress Report: 48-hour extension will be given

¹ Our thanks to Jennifer Beers, PhD, BCBA-D, Associate Department Chair, Anaheim Applied Behavior Analysis Department for sharing this example.

- Graphing Assignment: 48-hour extension will be given
- APA Mastery Test: taken in class so no extension; no set time, can allow up to ~4 hours; taken in class, so a room without distractions can be arranged as needed

Example email exchange between student and instructor when there's a disagreement about a proposed deadline:

The situation: Charlie Washington is a student in Professor Smith's class. Assignment 4 was originally due on 4/4. Dr. Smith was planning to grade the assignments for all 25 students before a group activity on Monday 4/10. The group activity is going to be structured based on students' assignments and they need Dr. Smith's feedback to participate.

Student's Initial Request for Accommodation:

Dear Dr. Smith,

I'm reaching out to inform you that I am experiencing an exacerbation of my disability and to request an extension on Assignment 4. I know the original due date was tomorrow (4/4), but would it be possible to submit it on Friday, April 7th by 5:00pm PST instead?

Best,

Charlie Washington

This is a good example of what we expect from students requesting extensions. The student reached out as soon as they knew that they would need an extension, explicitly stated it was disability related (without providing additional medical information), and they asked specifically for an extension on their assignment with a proposed due date that seems feasible to them.

The Instructor's Reply to The Student:

Hi Charlie,

Thank you for following up about Assignment 4. On Monday 4/10, we are going to be going over the assignment as a group and there will be an activity that I'm creating based on the submissions of Assignment 4. You will need my feedback to participate in the assignment, so I really need time to look over everyone's assignments before Monday. If you turned the paper in on Friday at 5:00pm, I would not have time to review it by Monday. I can only give you a 48-hour extension on the assignment.

Please submit Assignment 4 by 5:00pm Central Time on 4/6. I'm sorry I can't give you more time than that, but the next assignment is dependent on your submission.

Sincerely,

Dr. Smith

This is a good example of how to let a student know if their proposed deadline is not feasible. If an instructor cannot offer an extension for as long as the student is requesting, it is helpful to explain why. That will give the student more clarity as to why their extension cannot be provided, and the student is aware of the final deadline that can be offered.