What is the difference between accommodation and modification for a student with a disability?

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The term "accommodation" may be used to describe an alteration of environment, curriculum format, or equipment that allows an individual with a disability to gain access to content and/or complete assigned tasks. They allow students with disabilities to pursue a regular course of study. Since accommodations do not alter what is being taught, instructors should be able to implement the same grading scale for students with disabilities as they do for students without disabilities. Examples of accommodations include:

- sign language interpreters for students who are deaf;

- computer text-to-speech computer-based systems for students with visual impairments or Dyslexia;

- extended time for students with fine motor limitations, visual impairments, or learning disabilities;

- large-print books and worksheets for students with visual impairments; and

- trackballs and alternative keyboards for students who operate standard mice and keyboards.

The term "modification" may be used to describe a change in the curriculum. Modifications are made for students with disabilities who are unable to comprehend all of the content an instructor is teaching. For example, assignments might be reduced in number and modified significantly for an elementary school student with cognitive impairments that limit his/her ability to understand the content in general education class in which they are included.

For more examples of academic accommodations, consult Working Together: K-12 Teachers and Students with Disabilities [1] or Working Together: Faculty and Students with Disabilities [2] or view the video Building the Team: Faculty, Staff, and Students Working Together [3].

- [1] https://www.washington.edu/doit/working-together-k12-teachers-and-students-disabilities
- [2] https://www.washington.edu/doit/working-together-faculty-and-students-disabilities
- [3] https://www.washington.edu/doit/videos/index.php?vid=3
- [4] http://www.washington.edu
- [5] http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/
- [6] http://www.washington.edu/online/privacy/
- [7] http://www.washington.edu/online/terms