To: Entering Law Students
From: Markeisha J. Miner, Dean of Students
Re: Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Congratulations on your admission to Cornell Law School. I look forward to meeting you. This memorandum is directed to students who may wish to seek accommodations from the law school on account of a qualifying disability.

It is our intention to provide reasonable accommodations for students with qualifying disabilities. The procedures for applying for an accommodation(s) due to such a disability apply to classroom accommodations, exam accommodations, and accommodations relating to our building.

1. Students who believe they are entitled to an accommodation should communicate with me as soon as possible. In order to make decisions based upon an individual’s specific situation, it may take some time for the Law School’s Administrative Committee to determine what is appropriate and fair. If at all possible, you should initiate the process in the spring or early summer before your matriculation, or, if later, as soon as the disability arises.

2. Upon arrival in Ithaca, you should arrange for an appointment with Katherine Fahey, Director of Student Disability Services at Cornell University. Ms. Fahey can offer you advice and guidance on the services available to students at the University. In the alternative, you may wish to schedule a phone appointment before your arrival. To schedule an appointment with Ms. Fahey, call 607-254-4545 or write to sds_cu@cornell.edu.

Students requesting disability accommodations must submit disability documentation and a Request for Disability Services and Accommodations Form to initiate the accommodation process. The form and guidelines for disability documentation are available at the Student Disability Services website, http://sds.cornell.edu. All documentation must be current and comprehensive in order to determine eligibility for accommodations in a law school environment. This documentation should be in writing and should be from a physician who is familiar with your diagnosis and treatment. In cases of learning disabilities, a full psycho-educational report including aptitude and achievement tests reflecting all the test and subtest scores and a description of test procedures is required. (Ms. Fahey may give you additional instructions.) The report should be prepared by a professional qualified to diagnose a learning disability. The report should make written recommendations based upon your needs for accommodation in a law school environment.

3. Once Ms. Fahey is satisfied that your documentation is sufficient, a written recommendation regarding possible accommodations for your disability will be sent to the Law School’s Administrative Committee. Due to the academic calendar, the Committee must have the written recommendation by the beginning of the fourth week of the Fall semester or, if later, as soon as the disability arises. Therefore, it is important that you contact Ms. Fahey as soon as possible. This recommendation is a precondition to action by the Law School’s Administrative Committee on any request for an accommodation.

4. In addition to a written recommendation, the Law School’s Administrative Committee will also need to receive a copy of the medical documentation. The Administrative Committee may request additional documentation or may request that your physician speak directly with the Law School Dean of Students. The Administrative Committee may also ask that you be evaluated by another medical professional.
5. We also ask you to make a written request regarding any specific type of exam accommodation or other academic accommodation which you believe to be appropriate. In this regard, please tell us the accommodations which you have been granted in college and graduate school, and on standardized tests including the LSAT and the SAT.

6. While your prior testing history and other accommodation history is relevant to our determination of reasonable accommodations in Law School, it is important that you realize that we will not necessarily agree to grant the particular accommodations which you have been given in the past. Only after the Administrative Committee has thoroughly considered your request for an accommodation will we be able to arrange for what we believe to be a reasonable and appropriate accommodation, given your disability and the essential components of our academic program. It is important for you to realize that an important feature of that program is the comparative grading of students based on examinations that are time-pressured, competitive, and occasionally stressful.

7. Once we have received: (a) written recommendations from Ms. Fahey, the Director of Student Disability Services, regarding any suggested accommodations, (b) copies of your disability documentation, (c) a written request from you which includes your accommodation history, and (d) any additional information requested by the Administrative Committee, the Committee will consider the request and respond. In almost all cases, we have been able to give a student written notice of exam accommodations within two to three weeks of receiving all of the appropriate material. However, this is not always possible and the committee will respond as soon as it is able to complete its comprehensive review of the request as well as the supporting documentation.

8. If the specific accommodations that you requested are denied, you may appeal that decision to the Dean of the Law School. The Dean will review each appeal to determine whether in his or her judgment the Committee’s determination is clearly erroneous, and, if it is, then the Dean may make a judgment on what accommodations are reasonable or whether further information is needed.

9. If you wish to request an accommodation on bar examinations, you must direct your request to the state or states to which you are applying for admission. Each state has its own procedures for bar admission.

cc: Katherine Fahey, Director of Student Disability Services

Cornell University has an enduring commitment to support equality of education and employment opportunity by affirming the value of diversity and by promoting an environment free from discrimination. Cornell Law School is committed to Cornell University’s policy affirming equality of opportunity:

No person shall be denied admission to any educational program or activity or be denied employment on the basis of any legally prohibited discrimination involving, but not limited to, such factors as race, color, creed, religion, national or ethnic origin, marital status, citizenship, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, or protected veteran status.

If you feel that you have been discriminated against or harassed by a member of the university community, you have the right to file a discrimination complaint under Cornell Policy 6.4, which is available at [https://www.dfa.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/vol6_4.pdf](https://www.dfa.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/vol6_4.pdf). You may also contact the Dean of Students Markeisha J. Miner (mminer@cornell.edu; 255-5839); Assistant Dean for Graduate Legal Studies, Aimee Houghton (ah895@cornell.edu; 255-2362); or the Law School Director of Human Resources who is the designated harassment advisor for Cornell Law School, Liz Flint (es232@cornell.edu; 255-2101).