



*DSS Faculty Reference  
Manual:*

Working with Students with Disabilities

2015-2016

# CONTENTS

## INTRO to DSS

### SECTION 1

#### Disability Laws & Definitions

ADA, 504, & 508

Students Rights & Responsibilities

### SECTION 2

#### Accommodations

Accommodation Process

Accommodation Requirements

Student Eligibility & Process

Faculty Notification & Role

### SECTION 3

#### Resources

Teaching Students with Disabilities

- Various disabilities, difficulties students have, accommodations, and faculty tips.

Communication Hints

Frequently Asked Questions

## **Disability Support Services (DSS)**

Lower Columbia College is committed to providing an environment where all students, including students with disabilities, have the opportunity to equally participate in the academic experience. Students with disabilities have rights as determined by federal and state laws. Those laws require colleges to provide reasonable accommodations for the student's disability in order to afford an equal opportunity to participate in the college's programs, courses, and activities.

Faculty members, who play an integral role in the educational process, should work closely with the DSS Office when dealing with a student who is receiving accommodations. If a student makes a reference to having a disability, please refer them to the DSS OFFICE.

The information in this guide has been presented as a resource to help faculty members understand their vital role in accommodating students with disabilities and to address common questions about working with these students.

### **The Disability Support Services OFFICE: ADMISSIONS 143**

Disability Support Services Director: Mary Kate Morgan  
Phone: 360-442-2341  
Fax: 360-442-2919  
E-mail: [mmorgan@lowercolumbia.edu](mailto:mmorgan@lowercolumbia.edu)

Disability Support Services Program Coordinator: Shannon Vantrease  
Phone: 360-442-2340  
E-mail: [svantrease@lowercolumbia.edu](mailto:svantrease@lowercolumbia.edu)

# SECTION 1

## Disability Laws & Definitions

ADA, 504, & 508

Students Rights & Responsibilities

## **Disability and the Law**

Higher education is governed by two laws which guide accommodation issues. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (as amended through the Rehabilitation Amendments of 1992) establish criteria and offer guidance regarding the provision of services to students with disabilities in post-secondary education. While the scope and specific language of each of these laws differ, their goal in the higher education setting is the same: to provide meaningful access to the educational services offered by colleges and universities so that students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate.

### **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

- Section 504 stipulates that no otherwise qualified person due to a disability may be denied the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal funds (applies to public & private recipients of federal aid). Public Law, this was the first law addressing accommodation and access in higher education and public agencies.
- The office of Civil Rights (OCR) is responsible for most of the enforcement of Section 504.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990**

The ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, State and local government, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation, and telecommunications. It also applies to the United States Congress. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 used Section 504 as a model on which to base accommodation and access, no longer exempting private entities from compliance with the law. The ADA expanded 504 to include employment, transportation, and telecommunication sections of compliance.

To be protected by the ADA, one must have a disability or have a relationship or association with an individual with a disability. An individual with a disability is defined by the ADA as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment. The ADA **does not** specifically name all of the impairments that are covered.

- Title II of the ADA prohibits public entities from denying qualified persons with disabilities the right to participate in or benefit from the services, programs, or activities that they provide and from subjecting such individuals to discrimination if the exclusion or discrimination is due to a disability. (e.g. public education, employment, transportation, recreation, health care, social services, courts, voting, and town meetings). “They are required to make reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures where necessary to avoid discrimination, unless they can demonstrate that doing so would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity being provided.” (<http://www.ada.gov/cguide.htm>) Complaints of violations can be filed with the Department of Justice or through private lawsuits in Federal Court.

•Title III of the ADA further prohibits entities that operate places of public accommodation from discriminating by denying them full and equal enjoyment of goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages or accommodations they provide. *Private colleges also operate places of public accommodation and must also comply.* Complaints of violations can be filed with the Department of Justice or through private lawsuits in Federal Court.

**“Otherwise Qualified”** means a qualified student with a disability is one who is able to meet a program’s admission, academic, & technical standards either with or without an accommodation.

### **Qualified Person with a Disability**

Section 504 and the ADA protects qualified individuals with disabilities. An individual with a disability is a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; has a record of such an impairment; or is regarded as having such an impairment.

**“Major life activities”** means functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working.

**“Substantially limits”** means unable to perform a major life activity or significantly restricted as to the condition, manner or duration under which a major life activity can be performed when compared to a normal person.

Four important points when determining “substantial”

- 1) In comparison to most people in the general population.
- 2) Comparison to the average person having comparable training, skills, abilities.
- 3) In comparison to the average unimpaired student.
- 4) Disparity between inherent capacity & performance.

## **Section 508**

Section 508 is an amendment that passed in 2008 to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which requires that electronic and information technology developed, procured, maintained, or used by the Federal government be accessible to people with disabilities.

Colleges need to make sure their websites are accessible, including access to online courses. It also states that, “Inaccessible technology interferes with an ability to obtain and use information quickly and easily. Section 508 was enacted to eliminate barriers in information technology, open new opportunities for people with disabilities, and encourage development of technologies that will help achieve these goals. Under Section 508 (29 U.S.C. ‘794 d), agencies must give disabled employees and members of the public access to information that is comparable to access available to others.”

-Section 508 Laws: (29 U.S.C. ‘794 d); <http://www.section508.gov/section508-laws>

## ADA & ACCESS

Awareness of the need for physical access to buildings and classrooms has increased since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990. Public colleges and universities receiving federal funds have been mandated under the 1973 Vocational Rehabilitation Act, specifically section 504, which states:

“No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States...shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

### Reasonable Accommodation

In 1985 the courts provided additional guidance—a reasonable accommodation would allow qualified persons to have meaningful access to a program or activity but would not require substantial changes, adjustments, or modifications to an existing program or fundamental alterations in the nature of a program. It would not create an unfair advantage, result in the lowering of academic or technical standards or cause the college to incur undue financial hardship. The following terms and definitions cover the most obvious parts of the law:

### ADA Amendments of 2008

- Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (Amendments Act), effective January 1, 2009, which amended the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and included a conforming amendment to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that affects the meaning of disability in Section 504. The Amendments Act broadens the interpretation of disability.

- In the Amendments Act, Congress added other activities that are major life activities: eating, sleeping, standing, lifting, bending, reading, thinking, concentrating, and communicating.

- They added bodily functions: functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.

### Amendments in 2010

Service Animals. The rule defines "service animal" as a dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. The rule states that other animals, whether wild or domestic, do not qualify as service animals. Dogs that are not trained to perform tasks to mitigate the effects of a disability, including dogs that are used purely for emotional support, are not service animals. The final rule also clarifies that individuals with mental disabilities who use service animals that are trained to perform a specific task are protected by the ADA. The rule permits the use of trained miniature horses as alternatives to dogs, subject to certain limitations.

To allow flexibility in situations where using a horse would not be appropriate, the final rule does not include miniature horses in the definition of "service animal."

**Faculty Tips:**

1. If a student attends your class with an animal and claims it's a Service Animal please let them know Service Animals are allowed on campus but you have to notify the DSS Director and refer them to our office. *"Notification: Students planning to attend classes with a service animal must notify the Disability Support Services Office three days prior to attending classes."* (See Appendix # 20, LCC DSS Service Animal Procedure)
2. If a student brings or asks to bring an animal to class as a comfort animal please inform them the College has a no pet policy but this can be a DSS accommodation. Refer them to our office. If a student is denied their accommodation request and keeps bringing their animal, campus security is allowed to ask them to leave campus. We want to emphasize they are welcome but their animal is not allowed on campus.

## **Discrimination Defined in the ADA**

**"discrimination"** includes

(i) the imposition or application of eligibility criteria that screen out or tend to screen out an individual with a disability or any class of individuals with disabilities from fully and equally enjoying any goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations, unless such criteria can be shown to be necessary for the provision of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations being offered;

(ii) a failure to make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures, when such modifications are necessary to afford such goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations to individuals with disabilities, unless the entity can demonstrate that making such modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of such goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations;

(iii) a failure to take such steps as may be necessary to ensure that no individual with a disability is excluded, denied services, segregated or otherwise treated differently than other individuals because of the absence of auxiliary aids and services, unless the entity can demonstrate that taking such steps would fundamentally alter the nature of the good, service, facility, privilege, advantage, or accommodation being offered or would result in an undue burden;

(iv) a failure to remove architectural barriers, and communication barriers that are structural in nature, in existing facilities... (v) where an entity can demonstrate that the removal of a barrier under clause (iv) is not readily achievable....

--Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990 (Sec. 12182. Prohibition of discrimination by public accommodations)

## Proposed Rule Making in 2010

Movie Captioning and Video Description: “Summary: The Department is providing advance notice that it is considering whether to propose revising the Title III regulations to require movie theater owners and operators to show movies with closed captions and video description in their theaters at least fifty percent of the time.”

[http://www.ada.gov/anprm2010/factshtcrt\\_movie\\_captions\\_anprm\\_2010.htm](http://www.ada.gov/anprm2010/factshtcrt_movie_captions_anprm_2010.htm)

Note: There is discussion about proposing this be a requirement for all public agencies under Title III to make sure closed captioning is also an available option for each movie being shown.

Accessibility of Web Information and Services: “Summary: The Department is providing advance notice that is considering revising the regulations implementing Titles II and III of the ADA to establish specific requirements for State and local governments and public accommodations to make their websites accessible to individuals with disabilities.”

[http://www.ada.gov/anprm2010/factsht\\_web\\_anrpm\\_2010.htm](http://www.ada.gov/anprm2010/factsht_web_anrpm_2010.htm)

Accessibility of Next Generation 9-1-1: “Summary: The Department of Justice is providing advance notice that it is considering revising the Title II requirements for direct, equal access to 9-1-1 centers for individuals with disabilities to reflect changes in telecommunication technology that have occurred since the publication of the Department’s 1991 regulation.”

[http://www.ada.gov/anprm2010/factsht\\_nextgen\\_9-1-1\\_anprm\\_2010.htm](http://www.ada.gov/anprm2010/factsht_nextgen_9-1-1_anprm_2010.htm)

Equipment and Furniture: “Summary: The Department is notifying the public that it is considering revising the Title II and Title III regulatory requirements to ensure that equipment and furniture in programs and services provided by public entities and public accommodations are accessible to individuals with disabilities and is seeking public input....”

[http://www.ada.gov/anprm2010/factsht\\_equipment\\_anprm\\_2010.htm](http://www.ada.gov/anprm2010/factsht_equipment_anprm_2010.htm)

### COMPLIANCE

These statutes mean students who have qualifying disabilities must receive accommodations which will equalize their ability to compete with other students in academic classes, as well as be able to access student activities or events. If colleges don’t comply they can be liable by the Department of Justice (DOJ) and subject to investigation if claims are made by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR).

## **STUDENT RIGHTS**

Students with disabilities may expect their college and individuals associated with it to comply as follows:

- Students cannot be denied nor can caps be applied on admissions on the basis of the disability.
- All space, rented or leased, including workshops, classes, and programs provided through any “off-campus” site, must be accessible.
- Also, prohibitions of discriminatory treatment of students apply to all agencies or programs which are part of the college’s curriculum.
- Students may participate in the most integrated setting.
- Criteria for eligibility to participate must be “necessary to the provision of the activities or services.” Examples include safety risk for the students or others which are based on actual risk, not “assumed” (as through stereotypes.)
- Reasonable modifications by the college are needed in policies, practices, and procedures to avoid discrimination. An example would be that the public lectures or events would consistently be held in accessible areas.
- Students may use service animals (e.g. registered seeing-eye dog, hearing-ear dog, or other assistance animal) in campus buildings.
- Students cannot be discriminated against through association with a person who has a disability. An example would be refusing to hire a student to do food service work because his/her partner is HIV+.
- By law, there shall be no harassment or retaliation of anyone who has filed a complaint.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 is a law which requires responsibility from all parties. The Act not only requires compliance from entities regarding access and accommodation, it requires that you, the faculty, and the student, have a part in the processes of accommodation.

In higher education, the Americans with Disabilities Act requires the student to self-identify if they require academic accommodation. Colleges are not required to provide accommodations until a student notifies officials of his/her disability and provides the necessary documentation. (This does not mean they have to tell faculty what their disability is, but they must identify themselves to the DSS to qualify by providing substantiated documentation.)

### **Identifying Students with Disabilities**

A student may have multiple disabilities caused by conditions like diabetes, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, or a head injury. Depending on the nature of the disability, and

the length of time or intensity of the condition, the student may have more than one type of impairment which impacts their academic performance.

The student who has an invisible or hidden disability may have substantial difficulties in class and need accommodation. Disabilities such as hearing impairments, heart conditions, epilepsy, asthma, attention deficit disorder, cancer, or learning disabilities may not be obvious but impair the student's ability to learn or perform in class. Because the student with an invisible disability does not look different or appear to have significant disabilities, other students and faculty may doubt their claims.

The student with an invisible disability may hesitate to identify himself/herself early in the term for fear of being challenged about his/her disability needs. The student may start to fall behind in assignments or panic just before a test and request accommodation. Students have the right to request accommodations anytime throughout the quarter however we do not backdate accommodations. If approved, it's approved from that point forward with instructor e-mail notification before implemented.

# SECTION 2

## Accommodations

Accommodation Process

Accommodation Requirements

Student Eligibility & Process

Faculty Notification & Role

## **Reasonable Accommodation and Good Faith Effort**

Institutions of higher education are held to the standard of “reasonable accommodation or reasonable modification” as it applies to access, curriculum, policies and procedures. It also requires “good faith effort” on the part of the representatives of the institution.

Announcing in class and on your syllabus the information about accommodations and by referring students to the DSS, will be seen as protecting the students’ right to privacy and affording “reasonable accommodation” to the students with a disability, thereby displaying “good faith effort.”

## **Syllabus Statement**

Faculty are strongly encouraged to include on their syllabus a statement directing the student to the DSS/Special Services Office in order to make it clear to the student that it is his or her responsibility to request accommodations. Example of DSS statement we recommend:

*“Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Disabilities Support Services Office at 442-2340 as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely manner.”*

**The understanding and support an informed faculty can give is critical to the whole process of inclusion of students with disabilities as full participants in their educational experience.**

## **WHAT IS AN ACCOMODATION?**

Accommodations are alterations or services which allow the student to compete on an equal basis with peers in class. Accommodations are not intended to require you to compromise academic standards when evaluating academic performance. They assist the student to be able to compete on an equal basis in the classroom.

Accommodations, as an example, allow the student to be tested on what he/she knows about the subject matter, not how well he/she writes if writing is physically difficult.

Accommodations can allow you to re-examine the essential components of your course, especially those items which you want all students to master.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The students’ right to privacy is protected by law. Students do not have to disclose the nature of their disability to you—just that they need an accommodation.

## **Students Can Refuse Accommodations**

“Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to require an individual with a disability to accept an accommodation, aid, service, opportunity, or benefit which such individual chooses not to accept.” --*Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990 (d-accommodations & services)*

## **ACCOMMODATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

LCC has designated the DSS as the resource for faculty needing information about disabilities, and for students needing academic accommodation. The DSS provides and pays for accommodations for students in the academic setting (classroom). The college and/or the departments are responsible for providing and paying for accommodations for any event that is open to the general public.

You are not required to give accommodation to any student without verification from the DSS. Refer any student who self-identifies as having a disability to the DSS. The law states that students must self-identify and do so in a timely manner.

If any academic accommodations are needed in the classroom, students will bring an Accommodations E-mail from the DSS which serves as verification of their disability and lists the recommended accommodations.

## **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS**

If a student with a disability cannot perform a particular assignment or procedure in class and asks that a class requirement be modified, you may be asked to evaluate the measureable outcomes you require for your class.

- a) the “essential functions” all students need to learn by the end of the class.
- b) that these essential functions relate to skills necessary for the profession or to professional goals related to the field.

This is similar to what employers are required to do with their job descriptions.

If you have any questions about a particular accommodation that was determined appropriate for a student, contact DSS. All efforts will be made to resolve the issue. Our goal is to protect academic integrity as well as provide accommodations for students which are designed to allow the opportunity to compete equally.

## **STUDENT CONDUCT**

All students at the college are responsible for their behavior regardless of whether or not they are diagnosed with a disability. Any student who displays threatening or intimidating behavior needs to be reported via the mechanism of the Student Conduct Code.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

No student has the right to intimidate or harass you into changing a grade. You have a right to protect the integrity of the course. You have the right not to change the grades if the student's performance was not up to class standards when given the appropriate accommodations.

The law was designed to create the opportunity for students with disabilities to compete with other students in the classroom, not separate them out because they have a disability.

## ACCOMMODATIONS PROCESS

### *Student Process:*

- Initial appointment with DSS Director: Meet with student, explain documentation requirements, give them handout explaining documentation requirements, do initial paperwork for file (blue sheet, release of information and case notes), discuss accommodations and what may help student with their disability and learning style.  
(See Appendix # 1, DSS Procedures for Required Documentation)
- When students bring in documentation, DSS makes a follow up appointment for approximately one or two weeks later.
- DSS Director reviews documentation, makes notes for suggested accommodations. Prepares denial letter if not approving accommodations.
- Meet with student, discuss if request denied or approved.

**\*If denied**, hand and mail them a letter explaining why. For example, insufficient documentation in a certain area or request is unreasonable and why. Explain the DSS Appeals process and give APPEALS handout and business card for Dr. Lisa Matye Edwards, Vice President for Student Success. (See Student Appeal handout)

**\*If approved**, add or remove accommodations as warranted by discussion with student. Student fills out QUARTERLY REQUEST FOR ACCOMMODATIONS and provide a copy of their Quarter Schedule.

- Student picks up Academic Accommodation Form first week of the quarter. DSS office explains any procedures he/she may need to know (testing, equipment check out, etc). Student gets handouts on testing, equipment, etc., if applicable.
- Implement accommodations: Send instructor e-mails, note taker packets, etc. to instructors. Order alternate books, Braille books, e-copies, etc. Prepare equipment and place specific equipment in classrooms and computer labs. Prepare testing rooms.

*Faculty Role:*

- **Faculty Notification:** As a faculty member, you will be notified via e-mail from Mary Kate Morgan about students with accommodations in your classes. Instructors will be notified before the start of each quarter **if** the student has submitted their request. However, students can request accommodations anytime in the quarter.
- **Testing Procedure:** The student is responsible for scheduling the tests in the DSS lab and preferably three days in advance. Faculty are notified in the Accommodations e-mail and are asked if utilize the Proctoring Center in class tests, so the DSS can arrange to pick them up and return them. Specific questions about test duration, and any special instructions, we ask the faculty to reply to via e-mail. For online classes we explain that the instructor needs to extend the test time and to notify Sarah Griffith at the e-learning office with questions. (*Also see Testing Guidelines handout*)

*\*\*Some students get accommodations for tests and quizzes which include in class pop quizzes, etc. The DSS needs to be notified 3 business days in advance to arrange for a reader or scribe, etc. This would be proctored at one of the DSS testing rooms. (Blind student or other students with LDs)*

- **Note Taker Packets** will be available in the instructors mailboxes the week before the start of the quarter or as soon as the accommodation is approved. Faculty will be asked to make the following announcement to their class:  
“A student in this class has a documented disability that impacts his or her ability to take comprehensive lecture notes. The Disability Support Services office is requesting that someone, preferably two of you, volunteer to share your notes.”  
(*Also see Note Taker Faculty Letter sample*)
- **Tape Recorders:** this is an accommodation we provide students. We do have students sign a form to promise not to duplicate recorded lectures and we erase all tapes at the end of the quarter when turned in.
- **Enlarged Materials:** the DSS can assist faculty in providing the enlarged materials accommodation for course content. The DSS office is responsible for book material accommodations as long as instructor provides book information to the bookstore. The DSS office needs instructors to send other course items needed to enlarge preferably at the start of the quarter and minimum week’s notice. Students with this accommodation can utilize the DSS computer magnifier when needed and often is helpful when doing research, etc.
- **Ergonomic Chair Students:** These chairs are reserved for DSS students and identified in your classroom by stickers on the back of the chair. Please do not allow other students to sit in those chairs. Students with the accommodations

know to inform me or the instructor if this is happening, which tends to happen on the first day of the class.

- Another form that you might see is the ***Flexible Attendance Agreement***. This form notifies you that flexible attendance is an appropriate academic adjustment for a student, and informs you of the procedure for determining the terms of the agreement. Once the terms have been agreed upon by the student and the instructor, make copies for yourself and the student and return the original to the DSS OFFICE. The DSS office has the final say but if they are unaware of the attendance requirement and class structure will often consult with faculty to obtain that information before making a reasonable accommodation to allow additional missed classes.
- **CLOSED CAPTIONING:** The DSS will notify you about Closed Captioned accommodations. Here's the notification that comes in the Accommodation e-mail; "Faculty are to only use closed captioned videos when there is a hard of hearing or deaf student in the class, so the student does not miss information. It is difficult for sign language interpreters to interpret videos. The Angel office is able to assist faculty to converting videos/dvds to closed captioned with advanced noticed.

*(See the Closed Captioning Procedure for Faculty, CC Tracking Sheet, and Appendix 23- DSS Closed Captioning Procedure)*

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any question about these forms or other DSS procedures. We tried to include ones that pertain most to faculty in this manual. The DSS currently has 25 DSS Procedures regarding different accommodations. If staff or faculty have questions about when to refer students they can also contact the DSS Director.

**If students come to you with any problems regarding their accommodations, please refer them to our office or notify us.** Contact DSS Director Mary Kate Morgan, [mmorgan@lowercolumbia.edu](mailto:mmorgan@lowercolumbia.edu). Also note the Appeals process mentioned above if they are not satisfied with an accommodation and please refer to the VP of Student Services.

## Examples of Accommodations

- Alternate media (books on tape, e-text, etc)
- Assistive software and technology such as Kurzweil screen reader, voice recognition software, text magnifier, computers, scanners, assistive listening equipment, etc.
- Sign language interpreters
- Note takers
- Scribes
- Readers
- Alternate testing format
- Extended testing time
- Distraction free testing room
- Ergonomic furniture (includes chairs and keyboards)
- Preferential seating
- Captioned videos (e-learning office)
- Real Time Captioning
- Priority Registration

# SECTION 3

## Resources

### Teaching Students with Disabilities

- Various disabilities, difficulties students have, accommodations, and faculty tips.

### Communication Hints

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### **Teaching Students with Disabilities**

The following sections discuss disabilities most often seen in the college population and the difficulties students with different disabilities experience, as well as the accommodations which may assist the students.

Specific disabilities vary in range of severity. The accommodations given to assist the student vary accordingly. This manual discusses the effects on learning from the most severe to the least severe impact, and discusses accommodations appropriate to each.

#### **Students with Hearing Disabilities**

Two different categories of hearing disabilities, deafness and hearing impairments require accommodations specific to the effect of that disability.

Hearing loss is the most common disability in the United States. Hearing loss ranges from a slight loss to complete deafness. Some hearing losses may be corrected through amplification (i.e., a hearing aid), although for a number of individuals, the sound quality is distorted, making speech unintelligible.

Hearing impaired students communicate in a number of different ways:

1. **Speech reading** combined with residual hearing.

This involves use of facial expressions, the speaker's mouth movements (commonly called lip reading), and remaining hearing to understand the message. Only about 30% of words in English are clearly identifiable by lip reading.

2. **Signed Essential English (SEE)**

This communication system involves both manual signs and finger spelling to reproduce the speaker's exact words with English syntax. It is common in K-12 education settings.

3. **American Sign Language (ASL)**

This is a visual language with grammar and vocabulary different from spoken English. Translation from English to Sign is not word for word.

**Difficulties for deaf students**

The most difficult complication of being deaf from a young age is communication. Deaf individuals will have been isolated from the usual means of acquiring and learning language. This may be apparent in their written assignments, which is often similar to communication written by students who are non-native speakers. The isolation of the Deaf from the spoken word has been relieved some by closed-captioning on films and TV, but it is still a barrier in spoken media (radio).

## **Classroom Accommodations**

The student may need to:

- Sit at the front of the classroom, to see the interpreter and/or read lips.
- Use a personal sound system (FM Loop).
- Use a note-taker.
- Use real-time captioning. (*Like a Court Reporter*)

Faculty may be asked to:

- Use the sound system in the room (will assist all students).
- Use a personal sound system (FM Loop).
- Be aware that the lighting behind you is important. If it is too bright, seeing your lips/face will be difficult, if not impossible.
- Use closed captioning for all videos or films shown in class.
- Not cover your mouth or chew gum.
- Not talk with your back to the class as you write.
- Repeat all questions students ask from other parts of the room or periodically ask if need questions repeated.

**FACULTY TIP: Visual aids** assist both hearing and non-hearing students. Use of the chalkboard, overheads, outlines, and projected computer presentations is recommended as these are valuable assets to any classroom.

## **Testing Accommodations**

If the student's first language is ASL, he/she may need the test translated into ASL so as not to miss subtle nuances of the English language. The DSS can arrange for the interpreter and place for testing. This allows the student to have the directions of the test translated clearly.

**FACULTY TIP:** Make sure you have the student's attention before giving testing directions. The student will not get information if he/she is not looking at you. If you speak with the student individually after announcing the instructions to the other class members, please remember to add that time back to the students testing time.

## **Working with an Interpreter**

While an interpreter may initially be distracting for both you and the other students in the classroom, curiosity wanes quickly and everyone will become accustomed to the interpreter's presence. The following is information which will speed the assimilation of the interpreter into the classroom setting. If the DSS knows that a student will be using an interpreter, you will be sent an Accommodations e-mail prior to the first class.

**Interpreters are professionals.** They are hired to facilitate communication between student and faculty. They adhere to a code of ethics which includes interpreting everything being said in the classroom (lecture, questions, answers, discussions).

**Interpreters are not participants in the class** nor should they be included in class activities other than to facilitate communication. The interpreter's role **does not include** tutoring, advising, counseling or keeping track of student progress. *If you see this please contact the DSS office.*

**The interpreter will normally position** him/herself near you in the front of the classroom to enable the student to have both instructor and interpreter in his/her visual field. IF the front of the room is too bright or has an uncovered window, the interpreter may ask you to stand to one side so the student can see the signing clearly.

**\*\* Because the Interpreter is translating,** there is a time lag between what is said and what is signed. If the class uses a discussion format, ask each speaker to allow time for the interpreter to sign the response. Please establish classroom guidelines to ensure that only one person speaks at a time. This makes it easier for all students to participate without content being missed.

**When you speak to a deaf student** (through an interpreter), get the student's attention before starting to speak. Speak directly to the student. The interpreter will sign your message to the student and will translate the student's response from sign to speech.

**If a class lecture lasts longer** than 90 minutes there will usually be two interpreters. This is called "team interpreting." The interpreters take turns to prevent hand fatigue. Most interpreters have worked together before and are comfortable switching without causing a disturbance.

### **Difficulties for hearing impaired students**

A conductive hearing loss involves difficulties with the eardrum or the small bones inside the middle ear. If the hearing loss is sensory-neural, meaning involving the nerves in the inner ear or eighth cranial nerve, sound is often distorted. No hearing aid or amplifying device will help this type of loss.

Hearing aids often amplify all sounds in the classroom, not just the speaker. Newer hearing aid models more closely resemble normal hearing, but still often transmit inaccurate sound to the eardrum. Students may also experience hearing difficulties due to tinnitus (ringing in the ears.) *Not all hearing aids correct for tinnitus, and the hearing aids that do are the most expensive.*

Unless completely corrected by a hearing aid, students with a hearing impairment may experience stress in the classroom setting from trying to hear and understand what you are saying.

Students with a hearing impairment may ask you to repeat words or sentences they miss. They may get frustrated in the classroom and leave, or display other behaviors that you may interpret as being rude. Remember all students are expected to follow the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Contact with hearing impaired and deaf students**

Occasionally it is necessary for the student to meet with you outside of class. Students who are deaf will need access to you through e-mail, TDD/TTY, or to meet with you at an agreed upon time with an interpreter present. Students with hearing impairments need to meet with you in a quiet setting with little background noise. E-mail is usually the best way for faculty to contact a student a hearing impaired or deaf student. Faculty can include the DSS office in e-mails to students to ensure the communication gets to the student.

Appointments with Interpreters need to go through the DSS office. We can guarantee an interpreter with three day written notice and can try and find an interpreter with shorter notice.

### **Students Who Have Visual Impairments**

Two different categories of visual disabilities, total blindness and limited vision, require accommodations specific to the effect of that disability.

#### **Difficulties for students who are totally blind:**

Students who are totally blind cannot see printed materials. They may use canes or service animals to assist with mobility. The largest obstacle for totally blind students is the amount of printed material which they are required to read in the academic setting.

**Faculty instructors have more power to assist visually impaired student than anyone else on campus! Here's why:** Textbook publishers are required to provide students, instructors, or disability offices an alternative format of the book or e-copy extra copy of the book to Disability Support Services at no additional charge. (508) The DSS requests that Faculty choose books AT LEAST six weeks prior to the start of classes because it can take that long for the publishers to provide the e-copy. Either the students or the DSS will contact you for information about the book(s) required for your class if the bookstore does not have the info. Choosing your books early allows the DSS to start the process of converting texts to e-texts before the term begins. Any delay in starting the scanning of the textbook, whether by late selection or no listing of chapters to be read on the syllabus, puts students with a disability at a disadvantage in relation to the rest of the students.

**Online students** using Angel who receive e-copy accommodations often have accommodations for audible software for online coursework. This software could be Jaws, Kruzweil, or PT Reader. These programs are available in the DSS adaptive technology lab. PT Reader was designed by Central Washington University and is available to students free of charge to access via the internet. The DSS office can refer students to the PT Reader website to utilize off campus. (*This is often for students with visual impairments or learning disabilities, i.e. dyslexia*).

Mobility may also be an issue for students who are blind. Usually the students are provided with orientation and mobility training prior to each terms classes through the Department for Services to the Blind (DSB). However, access to classes can be difficult at the start of a new quarter.

## **Customary accommodations**

### **Student needs prior to the term:**

- A syllabus that can be converted to alternative format
- Book information for all required texts
- Specific dates for reading assignments
- Dates for all special projects, research papers, and tests

### **Classroom Accommodations:**

- Braille- a portable computerized note-taking system used in class
- Talking calculator for math
- Tape recorder in class
- Scribe to write for student
- Note taker

### **FACULTY TIP: Classroom presentation:**

- Verbalize all parts of what you are explaining. For example: If you say "This plus this equals this," the blind student will not be getting the same information as the sighted student- just say " $x^2+9=25$ ."
- Announce any changes in assignments, your syllabus, or room
- Speak clearly. If possible, use amplification devices in the classroom.
- Explain diagrams or visual aids verbally.

## **Testing Accommodations**

Students with visual impairments may need to have **readers/scribes** for their tests. The DSS hires readers to read/write the test for the student. This is also true for quizzes. You may make arrangements for the student to take all quizzes at a prearranged time through the DSS. Other accommodations may include:

**Use of a computer:** Test questions can be read to the student and the student types out answers on the computer.

**Use of a recorded test** (especially for a foreign language; ex. the DSS reader may not pronounce Spanish correctly.)

## **Teaching Students Who Have Limited Vision**

Very real differences exist in the way each student's vision may be impaired. Therefore, student needs will vary according to the specific disability.

One student may only see through a tiny "window" and be able to read but may have mobility difficulties. Another student may have no central vision and need to use large print or magnifying appliances to read using the remaining peripheral vision. A student's vision may fluctuate in clarity or strength depending on the nature of his/her disability.

Students with a visual limitation may be able to get around without assistance, and therefore, may be accused of "faking it". Some visually impaired students may be able to participate in sports that you might not think they "should" be able to do if "visually

impaired.” Their difficulty seeing may affect fine detail reading or they may lack of central vision, but they can see well enough to get around.

Many visually impaired students write by printing large enough for them to see which, because it is large, may be misinterpreted as immature. A student with a visual impairment may also need a high contrast between the color of paper and the ink. When working with any student with a disability, the student is the best source of information about what he/she is able to easily see.

### **Customary accommodations for students who are visually impaired**

Accommodations for the visually impaired students parallel the needs of totally blind students. *Please refer to the previous section.* Other accommodations may include:

- Use of Image Enlarging Computer Equipment
- Use of tape recorders or note-takers in class
- Enlarged materials

### **Testing Accommodations**

- Closed Circuit TV Magnifier (CCTV) to enlarge tests or quizzes (*DSS office has*)
- Enlarged tests and quizzes
- Extended time on tests and quizzes
- Computer with image enlarging soft or hardware

### **FACULTY TIPS: Classroom presentation**

- Preferential seating
- Diagrams or visual aids explained verbally
- Enlarged handouts

## **Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities**

Learning disability (LD) is a generic term for a number of specific disorders which significantly impact the ability of a student to read, write, calculate, or process information. Learning disabilities affect incoming and/or outgoing information. Students may have difficulties in the following areas:

- Reading comprehension
- Written expression
- Spelling
- Writing skills
- Math computation
- Math problem-solving skills
- Organizing
- Time management
- Spoken language
- Visual or auditory processing
- Attention
- Memory

Because of the subtlety of learning disabilities, students may not get diagnosed early in their school career. It is not until students consistently run into difficulties that the problem is discovered and diagnosed. As a result, students with learning disabilities may think of themselves, and have others believe, that their academic difficulties are the result of intellectual deficiency, faulty study habits or poor motivation. They may have low self-esteem or be demoralized because they construe their difficulties as a “moral issue,” when in fact more recent research indicates that learning disabilities are genetic or biological.

Students with learning disabilities who are “otherwise qualified” for the college setting have intelligence in the average to superior range. It is the discrepancy in scores between intellectual capacity and cognitive processing which characterizes a learning disability.

Documentation of the learning disability is required, not only to establish the need for special services, but to determine the individual needs of students. It is the Student’s responsibility to provide documentation. (LCC does not diagnose). Students who think they may need to be evaluated for a learning disability should be referred to the Disability Support Services for consultation and referral information. The DSS can provide the names of community professionals who do LD testing. Learning disabilities cannot be cured. However, the impact of the disability can be lessened by appropriate accommodations.

### **Instructional strategies**

Everybody has a difficulty integrating any information presented orally. This means that students may not be able to follow information presented in lecture format. They get most of their information through visual or “hands-on” experience. Accommodations may be similar to those for student with a hearing impairment.

The following may help:

- Allow use of a tape recorder to review the lecture more than once
- Allow use of a note-taker
- Outline class topics, key words, and new terms on board or overhead
- Illustrate abstract concepts by using concrete examples: visual or physical models or personal experience repeat and summarize often

Some students have difficulty integrating any information presented orally. This means that the students reading may be slow and laborious, and comprehension may be difficult. Auditory input helps these students. Accommodations may be similar to students who are visually impaired.

- Connect abstract concepts to concrete examples
- Read aloud any changes or written instructions

Allow use of a tape recorder in class  
The student may be provided  
Enlarged handouts (*ask DSS font size or send to DSS to enlarge*)  
Syllabus on audiotape  
Class outlines

### **Memory processing difficulties**

Memory or sequencing of information may impede the student's ability to execute complicated directions.

### **FACULTY TIPS:**

Keep oral instructions logical and concise  
Pair oral instructions with a visual map of the instructions  
Reinforce steps with cue words or mnemonic reinforcers  
Repeat and reword instructions

**Writing difficulties:** Spelling, Sentence organizing, Sequencing sentences, Using appropriate grammar, Thematic organizing, and Physical writing mechanics.

### **FACULTY TIPS: Classroom**

Allow use of a note-taker or tape recorder  
Provide class outlines  
Use both auditory and visual presentation

### **FACULTY TIPS: Testing**

Use multiple choice or fill in the blank tests  
Use oral tests  
Allow use of a computer  
Use enlarged print  
Do not require scantron forms  
Allow alternate testing styles

## **Students with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD)**

Attention Deficit Disorder is a genetically transmitted neurological condition. Genetic transmissions are thought to be polygenetic and dominant. It is not an acquired disorder, as through head injury. Individuals may have aspects of both inattention and hyperactivity or predominantly one aspect. To be diagnosed with AD/HD, some characteristics must have been present before the age of 7 years.

Although AD/HD is sometimes confused as a type of learning disability, it is not. It is often treated medically, addressing whatever symptoms are causing the most difficulty for the student at the time. Students with AD/HD may have associated disorders such as depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder and/or substance abuse problems, which are often genetically related. Individuals with AD/HD may have the need for medical and psychological intervention. It is a disorder which lasts through life and is reactive to stress.

A number of other disorders may be confused with AD/HD. Students who have had a Traumatic Brain Injury may have symptoms which are very similar to AD/HD. Depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder and M.S., among a number of other disorders, may also have symptoms which may be mistaken for attention deficit disorder.

The following criteria are characteristics a student with AD/HD might display:

**Inattentive**

- Misses details
- Has difficulty sustaining attention except when really interested
- Has difficulty following a sequence of instructions
- Is unorganized
- Has difficulty starting to study or read
- Is absentminded; loses track of time
- Loses items necessary for tasks
- Is distracted by noises in and out of classroom (lawnmower, truck, rustling papers)

**Impulsivity**

- Interrupts
- Blurts out answers
- Is impatient

**Hyperactivity**

- Fidgets with hands or feet
- Has difficulty sitting still
- Acts as if driven by motor
- Talks excessively
- Exhibits restlessness

**Associated characteristics**

- Writing difficulty (lack of physical fine motor movements)
- Visual perceptual difficulties due to tracking and sustained attention

**Classroom Accommodations**

- Note taking
- Tape recording lectures
- Copies of overheads
- A computer for in-class writing

**Testing Accommodations**

- Enlarging tests
- Allowing extra time for in-class quizzes and tests
- Using computer for essays

## Students with Mobility Impairments

A wide range of conditions limit mobility and/or hand function. These are described as any physiological disorder condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting the ability of the students to access classes and services.

Conditions such as arthritis, active sickle cell anemia, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, HIV/AIDS, cystic fibrosis, post-polio syndrome and cancer are all covered under this area of disability. Although these disabilities may not appear as mobility impairments, they may affect the student in ways that significantly interfere with stamina, the ability to breathe after exertion, and other symptoms. Effects of this disability may include inability to get to class, to perform in class, or to manage library research.

### Physical Access

The college is mostly accessible; however there are areas of the campus and classrooms which are inaccessible. The DSS uses priority registration with advising to allow time for a change in class location if a room is inaccessible or the student cannot move between classes in the time allowed.

Student who use wheelchairs, braces, crutches, canes, prostheses, or who fatigue easily may find it difficult to move quickly between classes, this could delay their ability to get to class.

### In –Class Access

Students in wheelchairs may request adjustable tables from the DSS which are place in classroom. Faculty can also contact the DSS if they become aware. **NO DOCUMENTATION IS NEEDED FOR ACCESS SERVICES** if it is evident the student needs accommodation. (*Students with wheelchairs, canes, visually impaired, etc.*)

If there is extra furniture in the classroom which will affect evacuation during an emergency, please ask that it be removed by contacting Campus Services. Students in a laboratory section of a class who have problems with dexterity may request and aide accommodation to assist them in performing the lab experiments. The student is responsible for the knowledge required for the lab and gives directions to the aide.

### Access to books accommodations

Students with mobility impairments which also affect their arms may have difficulty handling large books. Some will use texts in alternative format. Some will arrange not to bring large books to campus. Arrangements may need to be made to accommodate this student if the book is required in class. The DSS can assist you in problem solving this issue.

## **Chronic Pain**

Students with chronic pain or recent back injuries may need to get up during class to walk off pain. Students with chronic pain usually have testing accommodations. During testing, these students may need extended time so they may stretch or walk to diffuse the pain.

## **Hand Impairment**

Students with impairments which affect their hands may need the following accommodations:

- Note-taker or tape recorder
- Lab partner or assistant
- Adaptive computer equipment for lab assignments (*Dragon Naturally Speaking program*)
- In-class written work completed outside of class
- Extended time for written assignments or exams
- Writer for tests

## **Library Access**

The library often needs prior notice in order to arrange time for student workers to assist students with disabilities in researching, and accessing books from book shelves. Time extensions may be necessary for the students with mobility impairment.

## **Wheelchair Checkout**

The DSS has one wheelchair which can be checked out for student use on an emergency basis.

## **Students with Psychological Disabilities**

Students with psychological disabilities are among the population of students with hidden disabilities. The disability or the medication side effects may cause the students to have learning or performance problems similar to those of students with learning disabilities.

The most common psychological disabilities are depression, anxiety-based disorders, schizophrenia, obsessive-compulsive disorder, bi-polar disorder, and personality disorders. All are reactive to stress influences, whether personal or external.

Depression and anxiety disorders can occur at any time in a person's life. These may be disorders that have a genetic predisposition component or they may be situation specific.

Both bi-polar disorder and schizophrenia research provide strong evidence of a genetic influence. Recent studies in the neuropsychological field indicate effects from neurochemical deficiencies and influences from auto-immune mechanisms.

### **Instructional strategies**

Psychological disabilities are often stress reactive. A number of students with psychological disabilities will experience stress over deadlines. Allowing the students a few days beyond the deadline **might** be an appropriate accommodation. If the student exhibits behavior which you feel is inappropriate, discuss the issue with the student privately (unless the behavior has an immediate disruptive effect on the class.) Use concrete terms to describe the behavior which is inappropriate and what behaviors are acceptable. If you feel you need a neutral observer or witness for your interaction, you may contact Student Conduct Officer or the Disability Support Services for assistance.

### **Testing Accommodations**

The students may experience cognitive difficulties due to the disability or medication side-effects. If so, extended time for testing and/or quiet room testing may be appropriate.

### **Students with other Disabilities**

A number of other conditions may interfere with a student's academic functioning. Accommodations will vary according to the symptoms of the disability and will be indicated on the DSS Faculty Accommodations E-mail. The following are brief descriptions of some of the more prevalent disabilities among college student.

#### **Auto-Immune Disorders**

The number of Auto-Immune disorders which affect college students is increasing, but the disorders are now more treatable. The Auto-Immune disorders are highly unpredictable, varying in severity from person to person and following different courses of progression and remission. All of the auto-immune disorders are stress-reactive, meaning that stressful times may exacerbate the worst symptoms (e.g., mid-terms and finals). The difficulties that students may encounter are

- Never knowing when the exacerbation will occur
- Not knowing which types of exacerbation will last

#### **The most common auto-immune disorders are:**

- Arthritis
- Fibromyalgia
- HIV/AIDS
- Lupus
- Multiple sclerosis

Students with these disabilities may have visual, physical, neurological, or psychological problems which may be associated with the disorder or side effects of medications.

**Multiple Chemical Sensitivity** is a more recent disorder which has received a lot of media coverage. There are some studies which point to auto-immune system involvement, while other research indicates toxic exposure to chemicals. Students must provide documentation which indicates significant impairment in their ability to learn. Any alleged neurological impairments must be documented by neuropsychological testing. A number of students may have been exposed to toxic chemicals which impact them physically and or neurologically. Documentation describing the history of the physical reactions and neuropsychological tests are both necessary. No accommodations will be given until documentation is provided.

**Cerebral Palsy** is caused by an injury to the brain which could have occurred before, during, or shortly after birth. The injury results in disorders of differing degrees of severity in posture or movement, vision, hearing, and or speech.

For appropriate classroom accommodations, please refer to the sections on physical, hearing, speech, and visual disabilities.

**Chronic Disorders** can cause disruption in a student's ability to learn because of the waxing and waning of symptoms. Most students do not appear disabled, but may very disabled when they are symptomatic. Students may need to walk off pain, run to the restroom, or stand in the back of the room to reduce pain or relieve other symptoms. The DRC Faculty Letter you received will indicate accommodation needed.

**Diabetes** is a common disease. Recent research indicates that some types of diabetes are genetic with environmental triggers. Other types of diabetes are acquired later in life. In most students it is well controlled by a combination of diet and medication. A small number of students have diabetes that is not as easily controlled.

Older students may have accompanying disorders as the result of the course of the diabetes. These may include limited or blurred vision to complete blindness, loss of circulation in extremities which can lead to loss of limbs, neuropathy (lack of feeling) or loss of hearing, among others

Accommodations will vary according to the symptoms of the disability and will be indicated on the DSS Faculty Accommodations e-mail.

**Epilepsy** is a neurological condition and a general term for more than 20 types of seizure disorders produced by temporary changes in the normal function of the brain. The sudden change of brain activity, called a seizure, can last from seconds, petit mal, to minutes, grand mal. Because seizures are often controlled by medications, breakthrough seizures may interfere with class attendance. The DSS will advise you if any absences or time extensions may be necessary. If a student has a seizure in class, you should call Campus Security.

Some epileptic students may be sensitive to changes in lighting and things like dim lighting, power points, and videos may trigger seizures or symptoms. If a student is

aware they are easily sensitive Faculty will be notified in their Accommodations e-mail from the DSS. An appropriate accommodation for this situation is allowing the student to have a handout of the power point and view videos on Angel. This would allow the student to be excused from class during these incidences.

Accommodations will vary according to the symptoms of the disability and will be indicated in the DSS Faculty E-mail.

**Sickle-Cell Anemia** is a hereditary disease that reduces both the blood supply to vital organs and the oxygen supply to the blood cells. Because vital organs are affected, the students may suffer from eye disease, heart condition, lung problems and acute abdominal pains. Limbs and joints may also be affected. The disease is characterized by severe crisis periods with extreme pain, which may necessitate hospitalization or absence from class. Accommodations will vary according to the symptoms of the disability and will be indicated on the DSS Faculty e-mail.

**Speech Impairments** range from problems with articulation to complete absence of voice. Difficulties may include production problems such as voice strength or stamina (associated with voice box or neurological difficulties), projection of voice (as in chronic hoarseness or esophageal speech) as well as fluency of speech (as in stuttering). Aphasia may also alter the articulation of words.

Some of these can be managed by mechanical devices such as electronic speech machines or computerized voice cue synthesizers. Others may be treated through speech therapy. Speech impairments are often exaggerated by anxiety.

Patience is the most effective strategy in reaching students with speech impairments Give student the opportunity, but do not force them to speak in class. If classroom participation is essential, consult with DSS. Permit the student s the time they need to express themselves without unsolicited aid in filling the gaps in their speech. Maintain comfortable eye contact with the students.

**Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI):** Because the survival rate for severe head injuries is increasing, more students are returning to school. TBI can result from an automobile accident, stroke, swelling due to infection (meningitis or encephalitis), tumor or other trauma. As a result there can be significant alterations in muscle control, ability to orient in space, speech, memory and personality. Some of the more difficult symptoms for students in college are

- Seizures
- Short term memory problems
- Serious attention problems
- Organization difficulties
- Impulsiveness
- Lack of awareness of social cues
- Serious anxiety attacks
- Visual or auditory problems

Students with a traumatic brain injury may have learning problems similar to a learning disability or attention deficit and be restless and distracted. They may also have difficulty with emotional and social cues and responses. This is a direct result of the brain injury.

Student may have vestibular difficulties as the result of a brain injury. The vestibular system controls the orientation of the body in space. As a result, they may have mobility problems. Quick visual movements, change in temperature from cold to warm, illness or stress may cause the body's balance system to be less stable. When the vestibular system is involved, visual and auditory input may exacerbate any response and cause dizziness and queasiness. Accommodations usually include longer test times. Most other accommodations will vary according to how students react when the vestibular system is aroused.

Hearing or visual difficulties are common among students who have had a brain injury. Hearing problems may be slight to severe, involved one or both ears, and may involve tinnitus (ringing in the ears). Visual problems may include blurry vision, seeing only parts of visual fields, i.e., only the right half of the field of vision, or clear top vision and blurry bottom vision. These symptoms can profoundly interfere with learning.

**Accommodations will vary dramatically from student to student.**

**Adapted with permission by Portland State University**  
**Communication Hints**

Treat people with disabilities with the same respect and consideration with which you treat others. There are no strict rules when it comes to relating to people with disabilities. However, here are some helpful hints.

**General**

- Ask a person with a disability if he or she needs help before providing assistance.
- Talk directly to the person with a disability, not through the person's companion or interpreter.
- Refer to a person's disability only if it is relevant to the conversation. If so, mention the person first and then the disability. "A man who is blind" is better than "a blind man" because it puts the person first.
- Avoid negative descriptions of a person's disability. For example, "a person who uses a wheelchair" is more appropriate than "a person *confined* to a wheelchair." A wheelchair is not confining- it's liberating!
- Do not interact with a person's guide dog or service dog unless you have received permission to do so.

### **Blind or Low Vision**

- Be descriptive. Say, “The computer is about three feet to your left,” rather than “The computer is over there.”
- Speak all of the content presented with overhead projections and other visuals.
- When guiding people with visual impairments, offer them your arm rather than grabbing or pushing them.

### **Learning Disabilities**

- Offer directions or instructions both orally, visual aids, and in writing. If asked, read instructions to individuals who have specific learning disabilities.

### **Mobility Impairments**

- Sit or otherwise position yourself at the approximate height of people sitting in wheelchairs when you interact.
- Don't touch or push chair- It's their personal space.

### **Speech Impairments**

- Listen carefully. Repeat what you think you understand and then ask the person with a speech impairment to clarify or repeat the portion that you did not understand.

### **Deaf or Hard of Hearing**

- Face people with hearing impairments so they can see your lips. Avoid talking while chewing gum or eating.
- Speak clearly at a normal volume. Speak louder only if requested.
- Use paper and pencil if the person who is deaf does not read lips or if more accurate communication is needed.
- In groups raise hands to be recognized so the person who is deaf knows who is speaking. Repeat questions from audience members.
- When using an interpreter, speak directly to the person who is deaf; when an interpreter voices what a person who is deaf signs, look at the person who is deaf, not the interpreter.

### **Psychiatric Impairments**

- Provide information in clear, calm, respectful tones.
- Allow opportunities for addressing specific questions.

Copyright 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004, 2003, and 2001, University of Washington. Permission is granted to copy these materials for educational, noncommercial purposes provided the source is acknowledged.

**DO-IT is a part of University of Washington, College of Engineering, UW Information Technology, and College of Education.**

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### ***What exactly is an accommodation?***

An academic accommodation is defined as any alteration in the usual manner of teaching, demonstrating, or evaluating a course objective that enables a qualified student with a disability to have an equal opportunity to participate in the educational experience.

### ***How are accommodations determined?***

Accommodations are developed from the individual student's documentation of disability that is provided to the Disabilities Support Services Office. Two students with the same disability may qualify for and be eligible to receive different accommodations. The particular accommodations that a student utilizes will depend upon his or her particular characteristics and needs.

### ***Am I being fair to other students by granting one student an accommodation?***

Appropriate accommodations do not compromise the essential elements of the course, nor do they weaken the academic standards or integrity of the course. Accommodations simply provide an *alternative* way of accomplishing the course requirements by eliminating or reducing disability-related barriers. The goal of accommodations is to provide a level playing field, not an unfair advantage.

### ***How do I know if the student is "faking" his or her disability?***

The Disabilities Support Services Office has policies and procedures for the documentation needed for each type of disability. It is the function of the Disabilities Support Services Office to determine eligibility for accommodations. We have strict guidelines that are required for the documentation of a disability and follow the national standards recommended by the Association for Higher Education and Disability.

***Faculty members should not expect to see diagnostic information.***

### ***What happens if I do not agree with a formally requested accommodation?***

Call the Disabilities Support Services Office for more information about the specific accommodation. If you refuse the accommodation, the student may be able to take legal action against you and/or the institution. Denial of accommodations could be considered a violation of a student's civil rights. Colleges and universities cannot discriminate against qualified people with disabilities in recruitment, admission, or

treatment after admission. *If you have a concern about a particular accommodation request, you should discuss it with the Disabilities Support Services Office.*

***A student just brought me an Academic Accommodations form. I don't have the flexibility in my schedule to provide extra time for testing, or the ability/know how to provide the accommodations. What do I do?***

The Disabilities Support Services Office provides a quiet testing room and proctoring services. We can assist with other accommodations as well, such as securing volunteer note-takers or enlarging materials. Just give us a call. Most academic accommodations are handled primarily through the Disabilities Support Services Office and require very little time commitment from faculty.

***A student came to me in the middle of the quarter and said he has a disability. What do I do?***

The student with a disability is responsible for requesting and initiating all disability related services and accommodations. The instructor should immediately refer the student to the Disabilities Support Services Office. Please do not provide accommodations until you have received an Accommodations e-mail from the DSS Director.

***I have a student with a disability who is behind in the assignments. This student has not done well on the exams. May I fail the student if she or he does not earn the required points to pass the class?***

A student with a disability should be held to the same standards as any other student. You may wish to contact the Disabilities Support Services Office to discuss your concerns, and you would certainly want to talk to the student just as you would with any other student.

***How can I encourage the student to talk to me about her disability?***

Each student has the right to determine when, and if to disclose the nature of her or his disability to the faculty. We know that communication is important and we encourage students to discuss their learning needs, as well as their strengths and weaknesses. Some students, especially those with hidden disabilities, such as psychological or learning disabilities, may need time to feel comfortable to discuss their disability. Some students may never choose or need to discuss their disability. Feel free to contact us for more information about specific disabilities.

***Why does the SPECIAL SERVICES OFFICE keep asking me to choose a textbook for my class in the fall? It is months away and I cannot decide right now.***

Students whose disability impacts their reading may receive accommodations for their course materials (textbooks, handouts, syllabi, lab manuals) to be in accessible format.

Formats include cassette tape, CD, DVD, Braille, large print, e-text or scan and read access.

Advance planning is essential in the provision of alternate format materials. Depending upon the particular format, it can take from 8 weeks to 3 or more months to produce the document.

## **Contact Information:**

**Mary Kate Morgan, Disability Support Services Director**

ADM 143

360-442-2341

[mmorgan@lowercolumbia.edu](mailto:mmorgan@lowercolumbia.edu)

For appointments:

DSS Office 442-2340