

# THE COLLEGE STUDENT WITH A DISABILITY

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## FACULTY and STAFF HANDBOOK

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***Compiled by:***  
**Disability Support Services**  
**Counseling Center**  
**Macon State College**  
**Macon, GA 31206-5144**  
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Revised August, 2011

To: Macon State Faculty and Staff

From: Ann E. Loyd, Director  
Counseling Center/Disability Services

Re: Handbook for working with students with disabilities

Every human has strengths and weaknesses and learns to capitalize on the former while compensating for the latter, especially when confronting new situations. So it is in the classroom. We see students selecting faculty whose teaching styles suit the preferred learning style and we see students select courses that parallel the learning strengths and weaknesses, striving to reach a balanced schedule. Advisors have learned to help students reach that balance.

For students with disabilities, achieving that balance can be tricky. Too many courses in one semester requiring significant reading or writing challenge the gifted student; for the student with a disability involving verbal skills, such a schedule promises frustration and often failure. So the student and advisor learn to balance the schedule. Qualified students with disabilities are fully capable of learning; however, the way they learn and respond may require reasonable accommodations in the ways that materials are presented in the classroom and in the ways that testing and evaluation methods are used.

It is this deliberate approach to college work that yields success coupled with the accommodations (aids) provided to students. Just as no one would require a student to remove his/her eyeglasses during a written test (glasses are, after all, aids to compensate for a disability), no one would deny additional time to a student whose documentation underscores the need for extended testing time (in this case, time=glasses, an aid). Just as each of us expects others to be patient as we hobble on crutches after an injury, so does the student for whom the "hobbling" is a long-term reality related to physical disability.

Disability Services ensures that accommodations are necessary and appropriate, thus safeguarding equitable treatment of all students on the part of faculty and staff. It also ensures that the students have the capacity to succeed. This handbook is intended to help us satisfy our obligation to students.

## INTRODUCTION

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Macon State College is committed to helping students pursue educational goals to the fullest of their abilities. Accessibility for the disabled is part of that commitment.

### **A person with a disability is someone who:**

1. has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities (functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working);
2. has a record of such an impairment (has a history of, or has been classified as having a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities); or
3. is regarded as having such an impairment. A person may be included in this definition. If he or she:
  - a. has a physical or mental impairment that does not substantially limit major life activities but is treated by the institution as though such a limitation exists.
  - b. has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits major life activities only as a result of the attitudes of others toward such an impairment; or
  - c. has none of the impairments defined under "physical or mental impairment," but is treated by the institution as having such an impairment.

To help determine what treatment you should accord an individual with a disability, imagine yourself, your spouse, or your child suffering the disability. While you may not understand the physical ramifications of the situation, you will likely understand the desire to be treated with open-mindedness, human dignity, and equality of opportunity.

This handbook is designed as a reference that the professor can consult when working with a student with a particular disability. It is not meant to substitute for interaction between professor and student but rather to facilitate it. The information presented in this handbook should be seen as a general guide to providing appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities.

For more information please contact Ann E. Loyd, Director of Counseling Center-Mathematics 110.

## SUPPORT SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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### Counseling Center

Phone: 478/471.2985

Fax: 478/471.5730

Director:	Ann E. Loyd, CSC
Counselor:	Ruth Hagemann, LPC
Secretary:	Courtney Stephens

Our office coordinates services and provides resources which allow students with a temporary or permanent disability to function as independently as possible. These services offer the student the opportunity to obtain a higher education and to experience those things which are common to all college students. An example of services:

- Registration assistance
- Orientation
- In-consultation with the professor various forms of testing accommodations may be provided, such as:
  - a. extended time for tests
  - b. modification of test format
  - c. test proctor to read test
  - d. test proctor to transcribe test
  - e. test administration
- In-service orientation for faculty
- Advocacy letters for faculty (on request from student)
- Private testing rooms
- Maintenance of a schedule of classes of students with disabilities for emergency purposes
- Library of publications, catalogs, books and videos having to do with concerns of people with disabilities
- Referral services
- Handbook describing services
- Photocopying service as an academic accommodation

## **REGENTS' CENTER FOR LEARNING DISORDERS**

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The Board of Regents' of the University System of Georgia has established three centers for provision of assessment, resources, and research related to students within the University System with learning disorders. The Centers are located at the University of Georgia, Georgia State University, and Georgia Southern University.

These centers assist institutions in obtaining assessments for students who have learning problems due to a disability. Center personnel are also available to provide information regarding requests for special accommodations, to review outside evaluations, and to provide recommendations regarding how to best maximize students' functioning in college.

## INTRODUCTION TO FEDERAL REGULATIONS

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Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.S. 93-112), as amended (P.L. 93-16) mandates equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities in education programs and activities for all recipients of federal financial assistance. Section 504 is a civil rights statute that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability, obligates colleges and universities to make certain adjustments and accommodations, and offers to persons with disabilities the opportunity to participate fully in all education programs and activities.

The Americans with Disabilities Act and ADAAA gives civil rights protection to individuals with disabilities similar to those provided to individuals on the basis of race, sex, national origin, and religion. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services and telecommunications.

Additionally, under the U. S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights regulations, "a handicapped person" is defined as "any person who (I) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, (II) has a record of such an impairment, or (III) is regarded as having such an impairment."

### **Academic Requirements:**

Modifications and reasonable accommodations may include the following:

1. Changes in the length of time permitted for the completion of degree requirements;
2. Substitution of specific courses required for the completion of degree requirements;
3. Adaptation of the manner in which specific courses are conducted.

Thus, for example, a person with a learning disability may be granted more time to fulfill degree requirements than is normally granted by a division; and an otherwise qualified disabled student who is deaf may receive alternate assignments in foreign language studies to replace language laboratory work.

It is important to remember that modifications and reasonable accommodations should not be made based on generalizations regarding categories of disability, but should be made on an individual case by case basis.

If a requirement is shown to be essential to a program and a disabled person cannot fulfill it, then the person is not "otherwise qualified" within the definition of this term. Traditionally, the academic program faculty decides what is an essential academic requirement. But it is critical that consideration be given to how the program faculty decides what is essential and to identifying alternative learning methods that will enable the student to fulfill the essential requirements. It is important to note these laws and regulations are not intended to dilute the quality of education offered, and contain no requirements that essential program requirements be modified or waived.

## **Academic Rules or Regulations**

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An institution may not impose upon disabled students rules that limit participation in education programs or activities, such as the prohibition of tape recorders or braille-writers in the classrooms or guide dogs in campus buildings. Potential problems may be solved by requiring students who use tape recorders to sign agreements that they will not release the tape recording or transcription of otherwise hinder a professor's ability to obtain a copyright.

(Since new copyright laws contain more protection of an author's rights in published and unpublished materials, this may be less of a problem than earlier anticipated).

## **Course Examinations**

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In course examinations or other procedures for evaluating student's academic achievement, institutions shall provide such methods for evaluating the achievement of students who have a disability that will best ensure that the results of the evaluation represent the student's achievement in the course, rather than a student's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (except where such skills are the factors being measured).

Alternatives in testing may include a reliance on "power" tests that measure ability or level of achievement (rather than "speed") for persons with visual or manual impairments; the use of aids such as braille-writers and abaci by persons with visual impairments; the use of translators or typed materials to provide information on test instructions to persons with hearing impairments; the modification of certain features of a test, such as verbal portions for persons with visual impairments in cases where elaborate tables or graphs would be the basis for test answers; and the provision of auxiliary aids to persons who cannot take written tests or make the marks required for mechanically scored objective tests.

## **Auxiliary Aids**

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Auxiliary aids may include typed texts, lecture notes, film transcriptions, interpreters, or other methods of making orally delivered materials available to students with hearing impairments; readers or taped texts for students with visual impairments; and other similar services and actions. Institutions should also consider special events or activities, such as a student lecture series, where interpreters or other auxiliary aids may be required to ensure full participation.

## **Legal Mandates**

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There are three legal mandates that protect students with disabilities from discrimination and ensure that they have equal access to all aspects of college life. These laws include Section 504 and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADAAA) of 2011.

### **Section 504 states:**

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

### **Section 508 states:**

Section 508 requires that electronic and information technology that is developed or purchased by the Federal Government is accessible by people with disabilities. The 1986 version of Section 508 established non-binding guidelines for technology accessibility while the 1998 version created binding, enforceable standards that will be incorporated into the Federal Procurement procedures. In addition to providing for enforceable standards, the amended Section 508 establishes a compliant procedure and reporting requirements, which further strengthen the law.

### **Title II of the ADA states:**

“A public entity shall make reasonable modifications in policies or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the public entity can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity.”

In our efforts to provide appropriate services, DSS works to make sure services are in compliance with the law. At the same time, we are available to assist you in making sure that your efforts as instructors of students with disabilities are also consistent with the law.

## Seven Points to Guide Instructors

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1. **Providing accommodations for students with disabilities is a collaborative process usually involving the student, instructors and DSS.** Although DSS is the designated campus office to provide appropriate accommodations and auxiliary aids for students with disabilities, in order for most accommodations to occur, instructors, students, and DSS staff must collaborate, communicate, and follow through on commitments in a timely fashion.
2. **Include a statement regarding accommodations in your syllabi.** This statement should state, “If you are a student with a disability and need accommodations, you are welcome to meet with me to discuss the arrangements for the accommodations.”
3. **Students with disabilities have a right to meet with you privately regarding disability matters, and their confidentiality must be maintained.** Conduct disability-related meetings in a private location. They may be requesting assistance getting notes or asking you to fill out a “proctor sheet,” a form used to facilitate taking exams with accommodations at DSS. In either event, privacy is essential.
4. **Some students need print materials, i.e. textbooks, hand-outs, etc., converted to alternate formats, and you play a vital role in ensuring the timeliness of the completion of these materials.** Students need to get materials at the same time as their peers. Therefore, it is critical that you inform DSS about the textbooks you plan to use and all other print materials as soon as you are requested to do so either by a student or DSS.
5. **If a student with a known disability has not requested accommodations, you are under no obligation to provide accommodations.** In other words, you are not asked to guess or predetermine what a student may need. Students have the right to choose not to use accommodations. On the other hand, if a student asks retroactively to “fix a problem” because he/she has failed to use accommodations, you are not under any obligation to do so.
6. **Accommodations should not be provided to a student who is not registered with DSS.** Not all students with disabilities are registered with DSS. This office is the only office designated to review documentation of a disability and determine eligibility for specific accommodations for students. If in doubt ask the student to provide a letter from DSS. Also, if a request for an accommodation is questionable or seems unreasonable, consult with the student’s disability counselor.

7. **Reasonable accommodations, auxiliary aids, and support services are individualized and based upon disability documentation, functional limitations, and a collaborative assessment of student needs.** DSS generally coordinates services for students with disabilities, but should you choose to provide accommodations without making arrangements through DSS, it is important that you provide appropriate accommodations. Contact the student's disability counselor if you are uncertain what is appropriate.

## ACCOMMODATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

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### Faculty Responsibility

1. The instructor is not to lower his/her expectations in terms of academic standards. Instead, the instructor and student are encouraged to work together to find alternate methods of accomplishing required tasks. **(The goal is to minimize or eliminate the impact of the disability.)**
2. The instructor should insure that the disabled student is fully aware of the requirements of the course. That sounds simple, but course requirements are sometimes unclear until half way through the course. The requirements of the course should be clear in the beginning and in written form on your class syllabus.

**“If you have a disability that may require assistance or accommodations, or if you have any questions related to any accommodation for testing, note taking, reading, etc., please speak with me as soon as possible. You may also contact the Counseling Center (478/471.2985) with any questions.”**

Or

**“Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodations, who have any emergency medical information the instructor should be aware of, who need special arrangements, should make an appointment with the instructor as early as possible, and no later than the first week of the semester.”**

3. In instances where teaching aids are used which are in conflict with the student's disability, the instructor should provide other materials which the student can use. For example, the instructor who makes heavy use of audio tapes might provide transcriptions of the tapes to a deaf student.
4. Allow extra time for examinations. A reasonable time limit is based on documentation of the specific disability and will vary with each student. Specific time limits are determined by the Counseling Center Director. The disabled student will provide his/her instructor with an exam proctoring checklist form to be completed by the student and the instructor. It is the responsibility of the student to return the form to the Counseling Center.

5. Consider alternative test design when appropriate. Some learning disabled or head injury students may find essay format difficult and a perceptually impaired student will always have trouble with matching tests.
6. Whenever possible, the instructor should inform other faculty within the department of experiences or techniques that have been successful. If successful experiences can be encountered and shared, a positive base for creating additional opportunities for students with disabilities can be established.
7. Where possible, and within reason, allow extra time for assignments, remembering that for a student with a disability the process of research, etc. may involve scheduling an assistant to help with library work.
8. While it may be the primary responsibility of the student to initiate the discussion of modifications, the outcome of the negotiations also depends on the receptivity, flexibility, and understanding of the instructor. It is important that adjustments are discussed and agreed upon early in the semester, at the time when the awkwardness and uncertainty will be the greatest. Both faculty and students, together or separately, may find it useful to consult with the Counseling Center.
9. Many disabilities are obvious, and the question then is one of the degree of accommodation and assistance required. However, there are cases in which a faculty member may have no way of knowing that a student has a disability. For example, a student with epilepsy on medication may not expect to need any adaptation and may not mention his or her condition to the professor. During a remission period, a student with multiple sclerosis may not feel the need to mention anything.
10. One good policy is for the professor to announce at the first meeting of the class something to this effect: "Any student who feels that he or she may need an accommodation for any sort of disability, please make an appointment to see me during my office hours." This approach preserves the students' privacy and also indicates a willingness of the faculty member to provide assistance.

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

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It is the responsibility of a student with a disability at Macon State College, who seeks individual accommodation and assistance, to:

1. Contact the Counseling Center for intake interviews and to provide appropriate documentation of the disability.
2. Read A Guide for Students with Disabilities, MSC catalog and MSC Student Handbook.
3. Make an appointment with professors prior to, **but no later than**, the end of the first week of classes, so the individualized needs can be known (i.e., test accommodation, peer note takers, etc.)
4. It is the student's responsibility' to provide an advocacy letter for their professors.
5. If special accommodation is required for taking exams, it is the student's responsibility to provide the instructor with the Exam Proctoring Checklist. It is best to do this in the professor's office. Special assistance is scheduled through the Counseling Center and is only available if the student has completed Exam Proctoring Checklist. The student should return the completed form to the Counseling Center.
6. The student should communicate with fellow students whenever possible to contribute to class interaction. Peer interaction is an important aspect of learning. It is also important that the class begin to understand that students with disabilities have some of the same concerns and problems as their peers. Non-disabled students sharing in a class with a student with a disability often feel they have had at least two basic opportunities - one from the course content, the second from the disabled student.
7. Notify the Counseling Center of any difficulties or problems incurred: Ann E. Loyd, 471.2985, [ann.loyd@maconstate.edu](mailto:ann.loyd@maconstate.edu)
8. If assistance is required (reader, test proctor, taping, etc.) schedule the time by calling 471-2985. (See page detailing the procedures for obtaining assistance).
9. The student should not use a disability as an excuse for poor academic performance unless clear evidence supports that view. It seldom happens, but occasionally students will use the disability as a crutch or an excuse for poor performance in a class. Such students would logically be asked how they coped with their classes in the past.

## CLASS EXAMINATIONS

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At the beginning of the semester, it is the student's responsibility to approach the instructor and inform him/her of the anticipated problem(s) regarding participating in classroom assignments and especially in taking examinations. If, from experience, the student or the instructor can offer one or more solutions to the problem(s), it is appropriate to do so at this time.

Provision of extended time is not given as a privilege, but as an accommodation in order to minimize or eliminate the impact of the disability and to give student an equal chance to demonstrate mastery of the information. Extended time is not defined as unlimited time. The time limit is adjusted only to suit the constraints of the disability.

### Options:

1. If a student cannot complete the exam in the allotted time, one option is for the student to complete the exam in the instructor's office or conference room during office hours. Some students are willing to take exams orally, while for others this option should be avoided as it provokes anxiety.
2. Another option would be for arrangements to be made for the student to take the exam or any part of it, through DSS. If this arrangement is used, the instructor is asked to fill out the Exam Proctoring Checklist. The conditions specified on the form will be followed in the administration of the exam by a Counseling Center staff professional.

A student's eligibility for receiving accommodation is determined after review of the medical and/or psychological documentation provided by the student to the Counseling Center.

The responsibility of this office is to: (1) determine what accommodation is appropriate for each student with a disability seeking assistance; (2) to provide the appropriate environment that enables the student with a disability to demonstrate mastery of the information being tested. **The goal is to minimize or eliminate the impact of the disability.**

Appropriate accommodations can take the form of a quiet room, extended time, use of reader or scribe (proctor), assistive technology, alternative test design, or enlargement of test--to name some of the most common forms.

## Exception to Attendance Policies

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1. In most cases, class attendance is critical to a student's mastery of the knowledge and/or skills that are taught in a specific course.
2. Students are expected to follow the attendance policy established by the instructor in each class.
3. Macon State recognizes, however, that there may be times when a qualified student with a disability cannot attend class because of disability-related reasons.
4. If such a student believes it may not be possible to abide by the attendance policy because of medical issues related to a disability, the student should contact the Disability Service Provider prior to the beginning of the semester, or as soon as possible after the need for an exception arises, to discuss the matter of a possible accommodation. Determination of eligibility for a disability-related exception to the policy is made by the Disability Service Provider in consultation with the instructor of the course for which the exception is sought and, if necessary, with the department chair or other appropriate administrators. The Disability Service Provider will consult with the Regents Center of Learning Disorders at the University of Georgia for this request.
5. Essential Course Requirements: Macon State College will make every effort to reasonably accommodate a student's disability related academic needs. Please note, however, that neither Macon State nor an individual faculty member may be required to waive an essential or fundamental academic requirement of a course, regardless of the nature of the student's disability.

The academic department identifies and defines the essential or fundamental academic requirements for its courses and instructors may establish an acceptable number of excused absences in light of these essential requirements. Attendance requirements for each course are usually stated on the course syllabus.

The following questions will be considered when determining the extent to which attendance is an essential requirement of a course and whether an exception to the attendance policy may be appropriate:

- a. Is there classroom interaction between the instructor and students and among the students themselves?
- b. Do student contributions in class constitute a significant component of the learning process?
- c. Does the fundamental nature of the course rely on student participation as an essential method of learning?
- d. To what degree does a student's failure to attend class constitute a significant loss to the educational experience of other students in the class?
- e. What does the course description and syllabus say regarding attendance? Each instructor may have different requirements regarding attendance.
- f. By what method is the final grade calculated?

6. As with all disability accommodations, exceptions to the attendance policy will be determined on an individual, case-by-case basis depending on:
  - a. the extent to which the supporting medical or psychological documentation from a licensed professional qualified to diagnose and treat the disability in question supports the need for an exception to an attendance policy, and
  - b. the reasonableness of this accommodation in each requested class as determined by discussions between the Disability Service Provider and the course instructor based upon the above criteria. In questionable cases, the academic department head and/or other appropriate academic administrators will be included in these discussions. Consultation with the Regents Center for Learning Disorders/University of Georgia may be accessed.
7. Students who are approved for an exception to the attendance policy based on disability are required to provide a memo from the Disability Service Provider to each instructor confirming the accommodation.
8. Accommodations are **not** retroactive. All accommodations, including an exception to the attendance policy, become effective when the student delivers the notification memo from the Disability Service Provider to the instructor.
9. An exception to the attendance policy does **not** mean that unlimited absences will be permitted. The number of additional absences a student may receive as a reasonable accommodation will be determined on a case-by-case basis for each class, depending on the student's individual disability, the nature of the course and the degree to which class attendance is an essential requirement of the specific course as provided in Paragraphs 5 and 6 (a) & (b) of this Policy.
10. Exception to the attendance policy does **not** mean exception to any of the other academic requirements of the course. Students are required to fulfill all course requirements and will be held to the same evaluation standards as specified in the course syllabus.
11. Students who are approved for an exception to the attendance policy are expected to contact instructors in advance of an anticipated absence. This is particularly important if the anticipated absence will result in the student missing a quiz or exam or a deadline for turning in an assignment. For emergencies or unexpected disability-related absences, contact should be made as soon as possible to verify the reason for the absence and to discuss make-up work. The student and instructor should come to a clear agreement about the nature of the make-up work and deadlines for completing it. This agreement should be put into writing and signed by both the student and the instructor. The instructor should forward a copy of the signed agreement to Ann E. Loyd, Director of Counseling Center.
12. **It is the individual student's responsibility to obtain copies of lecture notes and/or materials from missed classes.** Students who are likely to be absent from class should plan responsibly ahead of time to get lecture notes from a classmate or "study buddy." Phone numbers should be exchanged in advance. The Disability Service Provider cannot provide note takers for students who are absent from class.
13. Students should understand that even though an exception to the attendance policy has been made for them, absences are likely to have a negative impact on their academic performance simply because of the content and experiential learning they may have missed by not being in class. For this reason, they should make every attempt to attend class. Students should make special effort to attend class for quizzes and exams and to observe deadlines for submission of assignments.

14. Students should be aware that exception to the attendance policy will not be possible in all courses because class attendance is an essential, integral part of some courses, as discussed in paragraph 4 of this policy. Some academic programs or majors may not be amenable to exceptions to the attendance policy. Students who know that attendance may be an on-going issue for them should consult with the academic department regarding the feasibility of attendance exceptions in the specific program of their interest.
15. All students who request an exception to the attendance policy for disability reasons will be given a copy of these policies and procedures by the Disability Service Provider/staff. Students will be required to sign a statement for their Disability Services file that they have read and understand the policies and procedures and that they agree to abide by them.

**Disability-Related Absences**  
**Macon State College**  
**Counseling Center**  
**Disability Services**

Attendance is not only an academic issue, but also an important job skill. A disability does not supersede classroom requirements. However, there are times when an absence may be unavoidable.

The following criteria are considered when requesting modifications to attendance policies:

- Are the impacts of the disability random, cyclical or triggered acute episodes?
- What is the typical frequency of episodes? (2-5 times per month; 1-4 times/year)
- What is the typical duration of episodes? (1-3 hours; 1-2 days)
- Describe any known triggers or cycles.
- Are you under a self care regimen for typical episodes?

**Attendance and Students with Disabilities**

What students with disabilities need to know about attendance?

The Counseling Center/ Disability Services do not determine class attendance policies. Because attendance may be integral to the learning process, the faculty of the college, at the departmental or individual level, sets these policies. In most cases attendance is fundamental to course objectives. For example, students may be required to think and argue critically or to participate in group projects. In other instances faculty may determine that students can master course content despite some or many absences. Rarely, faculty may decide that students do not need to attend class at all. Similarly, faculty also determines policies regarding make-up work and missed quizzes and exams.

Faculty is **not** required to lower or effect modifications of standards for accommodation purposes.

**What are the responsibilities of the students?**

Students are required to submit appropriate medical and/or psychological documentation at the beginning of the semester to the Counseling Center/Disability Services. Letters from Disability Services verifying the documentation has been submitted and meets the ADA qualifications are distributed by the students to professors to initiate discussions concerning polices of attendance and make-up of course work. Students who are absent from class due to a disability related absence, should obtain verification notices for their professors. The type of verification notices should be discussed at the beginning of the semester with the professor as to what is considered appropriate medical and/or psychological verification. Students are required to submit appropriate documentation for the period of absence. It is the responsibility of the student to notify professors of prolonged absences (i.e., hospitalization, prolonged treatment, etc.).

Listen closely to faculty announcements about attendance and make-up policies and procedures. Also, refer to your syllabus frequently throughout the semester for information about these issues.

## **Procedures for Verifying Disability-Related Absence:**

The following procedure is used to verify disability-related absences. Disability Services does not excuse students with disabilities nor does it establish attendance policies. Verification of disability-related absences notifies the instructors of legitimate absences due to a student's disability. The verification of disability-related absences does not usually apply to routine appointments to a health-care provider. Disability-related absences apply to hospitalizations, illness-related to a disability, and lengthy treatment processes (such as chemotherapy). This is determined on a case-by-case basis.

If the student is absent from class because of a disability-related circumstance such as those mentioned above, the student will need to provide verification of the absence from their health care provider to the professor or to Disability Services, per prior arrangements made with the professor. The documentation should establish the reason for the absence, but not necessarily a disclosure of the disability.

If the student encounters an unexpected disability-related circumstance, such as an emergency hospitalization or illness, he/she should notify Disability Services and his/her professors. The student will need to notify the instructors to arrange make-up work or other assignments.

The student may wish to medically withdraw if the student's health care provider, Dean of Students and/or Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs advises the student to do so. See "Medical Withdrawals" in the Macon State College Student Handbook or Macon State College academic catalog.

Faculty is ultimately responsible for determining the weight and importance of class attendance and participation. Faculty determines if attendance and participation are integral components to the learning process. If the student is not meeting these requirements, then the student may not be "otherwise qualified" to attend school at this point in time.

For questions contact:

Ann E. Loyd, Director of Counseling Center  
Disability Services  
478.471.2985  
Ann.loyd@maconstate.edu

## LANGUAGE OF DISABILITIES ..... WORDS WITH DIGNITY, ENCOURAGE EQUALITY FOR EVERYONE

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### Words With Dignity

person with a disability / disabled

person who has/person who experienced \  
person with (e.g., person who has cerebral  
palsy)

uses a wheelchair

non-disabled

deaf / without speech / non-verbal

disabled since birth / born with

emotional disorder / mental illness

seizures

developmental delay

### Avoid These Words

cripple / handicapped / handicap / invalid

victim / afflicted by / afflicted with  
(e.g., victim of cerebral palsy)

restricted, confined to wheelchair /  
wheelchair bound (The chair enables  
mobility. Without the chair, the person is  
confined to bed.)

normal (referring to non-disabled as  
“normal” insinuates that people with  
disabilities are abnormal)

deaf mute / deaf and dumb

birth defect

crazy / insane

fits

slow

### Other Terms Which Should Be Avoided Because They Have Negative Connotations and Tend to Evoke Pity, Include:

abnormal  
burden  
condition  
deformed  
differently abled

disfigured  
incapacitated  
imbecile  
maimed  
moron

palsied  
pathetic  
physically challenged  
pitiful  
poor

spastic  
stricken with  
suffer  
tragedy  
unfortunate

### Preferred Terminology

blind (no visual capability)  
visually impaired (some visual capability)  
deaf/profoundly deaf (no hearing capability)  
hearing impaired (some hearing capability)

hemiplegia (paralysis of one side of the body)  
quadriplegia (paralysis of both arms and legs)  
paraplegia (loss of function in lower body only)

## MOBILITY IMPAIRED

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Some of the disabilities that limit mobility include spinal cord injuries, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, amputation of limbs, injuries to limbs, arthritis and back injuries. There are many other physical conditions that result in limitations in mobility. A student's mobility limitations may be consistent throughout the semester or may fluctuate depending on the cause of the disability.

Physical access is one of the major concerns of students who use wheelchairs or have limited mobility. Students must learn routes to and from classes and across campus that do not present barriers. A barrier may be a stair, a curb, a narrow walkway, a heavy door, an elevator door that has no delay mechanism, a crowded elevator, a vehicle blocking a curb cut or ramp, or a sign in the middle of a walkway. Physical barriers also include objects such as books, equipment, and laboratory materials which students must manipulate in order to complete course requirements.

It is difficult to make generalizations about the needs of students who use wheelchairs since some students are, for example, able to stand for short periods of time, while others are not able to stand at all. Some students have full use of their upper limbs, while others have minimal or no use of their upper limbs. For those who have limited hand use and upper body strength, the need for accommodation will be greater.

Most students who use wheelchairs will ask for assistance if they need it. It is best not to assume automatically that assistance is required. An offer of assistance is fine and is often very much appreciated, but do not insist, and accept a "no, thank you" graciously.

1. If a classroom or faculty office is inaccessible, it will be necessary to find an accessible location or alternate class section that is held in an accessible location. The Counseling Center will assist with any changes under the direction of the Vice President for Academic Affairs office.
2. For those students who may not be able to participate in a laboratory class without the assistance of an aide, the student should be allowed to benefit from the actual lab work to the fullest extent. The student can give all instructions to an aide - from what chemical to add to what type of test tube to use to where to dispose of used chemicals. The student will learn everything except the physical manipulations of the chemicals.
3. Students are not "confined" to wheelchairs. They often transfer to automobiles and to furniture. Some who use wheelchairs can walk with the aid of canes, braces, crutches, or walkers. Using a wheelchair some of the time does not mean an individual is "faking" a disability. It may be a means to conserve energy or move about more quickly.
4. Most students who use wheelchairs will ask for assistance if they need it. Don't assume automatically that assistance is required. Offer assistance if you wish, but

do not insist, and accept a "no, thank you" graciously.

5. When talking to a student in a wheelchair, if the conversation continues for more than a few minutes, sit down, kneel, or squat if convenient.
6. A wheelchair is part of the person's body space. Don't automatically hang or lean on the chair - it's similar to hanging or leaning on the person.

### **Classroom Accommodations**

1. **Test Scribe:** The student could take his or her exam through the Counseling Center and have a professional staff member record the answers.
2. **Typed Exam:** Some individuals are able to use computers. If the instructor does not object, the exam could be word processed in the Testing Center with the appointment coordinated by the Counseling Center.
3. **Extended time** and alternate location for exams.
4. **Note taker:** It is helpful for students with hand impairments to obtain copies of other student's class notes. Some students ask their professor to solicit volunteer note takers to share their class notes with the hand impaired student. If this is the case, the student's notes may be photocopied free of charge in the Counseling Center. It is helpful if the professor will allow the student to photocopy overhead projector transparencies or notes.
5. **Tape recorders:** Understand the use of tape recorders in the classroom. Most students who rely on taped notes do not save the tapes - it is too bulky and time consuming. They usually listen to the tape once or twice and extract the information they feel is important, just as other students do when they take notes in class.
6. **Equipment Use:** Try to adapt situations which require handwriting by permitting extra time on exams or for research. Some students who have severe hand impairments can type exams and arrangements can be made for the use of a computer, with voice activated software, through the Counseling Center or MSC Library.

### **Assistive Technology**

Students with mobility impairments use a variety of types of assistive technology, from canes and walkers to adapted computer systems. Computer adaptations include voice recognition software, mouthsticks or headsticks used to hit the keys, adapted keyboards, trackballs, and systems that allow the person to select something on the screen using eye gaze.

- **If a classroom or faculty office is inaccessible, it will be necessary to find an accessible location or alternate class section that is held in an accessible location.** The Vice President of Academic Affairs's office handles room scheduling

and can assist faculty members and students as necessary. The need for an accessible table is discussed below.

- **A table may need to be placed in a classroom that normally has only desks.** The student should contact DSS to request the table. Ask the student where he or she would like the table placed. Ideally, the table would be placed prior to the beginning of classes or soon after classes begin and would remain in that location throughout the semester. Some students with back injuries also require a table and chair. Please do not move this furniture to division offices or locations other than classrooms since they are placed in classrooms specifically for use by students with disabilities.
- **Theater-type classrooms with raised seating may present difficulties** unless there is a large enough flat floor space in the front or rear of the room for a person to position a wheelchair (there must also be an entrance to and from that level).
- **Classrooms with adjustable, movable tables and chairs are more accessible to students in wheelchairs than are rooms with standard classroom desks.**
- **Keep in mind that students may need to wait for an elevator, take a circuitous (but accessible) route, wait for assistance in opening doors and maneuver along crowded paths and corridors.** Most students will be aware of time restrictions and will schedule their classes accordingly. Some physical barriers, however, are unpredictable. An elevator may not operate. Construction may begin on a sidewalk mid-semester. These barriers may result in tardiness on the student's part.

***Required accommodations are those listed on the Accommodation Letter, as well as those negotiated with Counseling Center staff. These are listed below along with other helpful strategies.***

### **Classroom Guidelines**

- **Facilitate the process for the student to use a classmate as a note taker.** You will probably be asked to help recruit a volunteer. You can ask the student to bring a letter from the Counseling Center if you wish, and make a brief announcement. In your initial private meeting with the student clarify whether the student wants to be pointed out as the person to contact or would prefer not to be pointed out to the class as a person with a disability. Most people with disabilities that are not immediately visible prefer not to be pointed out to others, and we must honor this request. The student can pick up some NCC paper from Counseling Center for the note taker to use.
- **Provide copies of overheads or PowerPoint slides, either on paper or electronically.**
- **Allow students to tape record lectures.** Students with disabilities are legally entitled to tape record lectures.
- **Consider providing copies of your class notes.** Some faculty prefer to post these on a website for all students.

- **Provide minimal physical assistance if needed.** If you have the class follow along with pages in a text or workbook, the student may need a classmate to help physically manipulate the pages. In the event that the student consistently needs significant physical assistance, the student is responsible for providing his or her own personal assistant.
- **In physical education classes enlist the assistance of a classmate or provide it yourself if minimal assistance is needed.** Classmates are usually more than willing to assist, if necessary. These classes often can be modified so that students in wheelchairs can participate. Most students know their limitations and their needs and will discuss these with you. Call Counseling Center when accommodation issues arise and you are unsure what to do.
- **Classes taught in laboratory settings (e.g., sciences, language labs, and art studios) will usually involve some modification of the workstation.** Considerations include: under-counter knee clearance, working counter-top height, horizontal working reach, and aisle widths. Working directly with students is the best way to provide modifications to the workstation. However, if a station is modified in accordance with established accessibility standards it will be usable by most students in wheelchairs.
- **Students who may not be able to participate in a laboratory class without a lab assistant should be allowed to benefit from the actual lab work to the fullest extent.** Students can give all instructions to a lab assistant, such as what chemical to add, what type of test tube to use, or where to dispose of used chemicals. The lab assistant may need to record answers in the lab manual. Students should do everything except the physical manipulation. Counseling Center can assist by hiring the lab assistant and providing him or her with some guidelines. You and other faculty in your department might be able to help us recruit someone who is familiar with your lab procedures.

### **Testing Guidelines**

- **Allow dictation of responses into a tape recorder (physical assistance may be requested in setting up equipment) or use a scribe who writes as the student responds orally.**
- **Provide extended time (double time is standard),** and access to you as instructor for questions during the test.
- **Allow the student to record answers on blank paper or to circle responses on the exam itself.** A scribe could transfer answers to a scantron answer sheet.
- **Provide a separate time in a low-distraction room if indicated by the type of accommodation (e.g., if the student is taping his or her answers).**
- **Remember that the same accommodations that apply to full-length exams also apply to pop and other quizzes, in-class writing, or other in-class assignments.** For quizzes, the student should be scheduled to complete the quiz either the same day or as close as possible to the same day. A possible solution for quizzes when a low distraction room is not an accommodation would be to have the student start in class and finish after class. For in-class assignments consider giving the student until later that day or the next day. Discuss these issues in your initial meeting with the student.
- **If the student fatigues easily, you may need to break up the test into separate sessions.**



## HEARING IMPAIRED

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Students with hearing impairments constitute a small percentage of the disabled student population at MSC. Obstacles which they must overcome are often overwhelming. Deafness is a physical disability owned by some two million Americans, with another 15 million coping with fewer severe hearing impairments each day.

A few important things to remember concerning students who are deaf or hearing impaired.

Most individuals who are deaf will use an interpreter in the classroom. This person is interpreting /or/ transliterating everything being said and is simply there to facilitate communication between yourself, other students, and the student who is deaf or hearing impaired. Interpreters follow a very strict code of ethics, and are professionals.

Students with hearing impairments, depending on age of onset and many other factors, may have a problem with English. This is due to the fact that American Sign Language, not English, is their primary means of expressive thought. Most faculties find it helpful to think of the deaf students in their class as coming from a different culture (i.e., Hispanic) where English was not their primary language. Many deaf students have the same difficulties with grammatical constructs as international students. This should be factored into the grading of their work. Accommodations, not "allowances," should be made wherever possible. Pre-lingual acquisition of a hearing loss contributes heavily to this factor, and is often the student's only disability.

Individuals with hearing impairments (or individuals who are deaf and have been trained with the Oral method of instruction) will depend heavily on lip-reading and may or may not use an interpreter. At the maximum level of comprehension those who lip read can only process 30 to 40 percent of that which is spoken on the lips.

Most, if not all students require assistance with note taking. It is virtually impossible to watch the interpreter, the instructor, follow what is going on in the class, and take notes. Copies of other students' notes would be helpful. The Counseling Center will photocopy the notes.

Writing is a perfectly acceptable means of conveying information to a deaf student when an interpreter is not present. Use it liberally. The more you attempt to communicate with a student, the more that student feels included in the daily routine of collegiate life.

### **Class Accommodations for Hearing Impaired**

- Look at the person when you speak.
- Don't chew gum, or otherwise block the area around your mouth with your hands or other objects.
- Using facial expressions, gestures, and other "body language" is helpful in conveying your message.

- Speak naturally and clearly. Don't exaggerate lip movements, volume or speed.
- If you are talking through the assistance of an interpreter, **direct your conversation to the deaf individual**. This is more courteous and allows the deaf person the option of viewing both you and the interpreter to more fully follow the flow of conversation.
- When other people speak who may be out of the person's range of vision, repeat the question or comment and indicate who is speaking (by motioning) so the individual can follow the discussion.
- The use of visual media may be helpful to students who are hearing impaired since slides and videotaped materials supplement and reinforce what is being said. Alteration in lighting may interfere with the deaf student's capacity to read manual or oral communication. These materials may be difficult to interpret because of sound quality and speed of delivery. Therefore interpreter "lag" may be greater. If a written script is available, provide the interpreter and student with a copy in advance.
- Captioned visual aids such as Captioned Films for the Deaf are extremely helpful. If appropriate, foreign language films with English subtitles are also useful.
- When new materials will be covered which involve technical terminology not in common usage, if possible, supply a list of these words or terms in advance to the deaf student and the interpreter. Unfamiliar words are difficult to speech read or interpret.
- Avoid speaking with your back to the person who is hearing impaired (i.e., such as when writing on the chalk board). Overhead and opaque projectors are often a good substitute and allow you to face the class while writing.
- When particularly important information is being covered, be sure to convey it very clearly. Notices of class cancellations, assignments, etc. can be put in writing or on a chalk board to ensure understanding.
- Establish a system for getting messages to the deaf student when necessary. Class cancellations can be particularly costly if an interpreter is not informed, in advance, of any such changes. You may use the **Georgia Relay Center** at 1-800-255-0135 to call the student. This is a relay service for the deaf and hearing impaired whereby you may contact the student at pre-established phone locations. Ask the deaf student for more information on how to use this service. Interpreting will be easiest in lecture classes and more difficult in seminar or discussion classes. Because class formats are so varied, it is recommended that the professor, interpreter, and student arrange a conference early in the course to discuss any special arrangements that may be needed.

The interpreter and student who is deaf will usually sit in front of the classroom. The

interpreter is aware that sign language may be a distraction to the class and professor. The interpreter has also learned that the initial curiosity of the class wanes and the professor adapts easily to the interpreter's presence. Interpreters who are certified by the **Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf** subscribe to a strict code of ethics that requires confidentiality of private communications and honesty in interpretation or translation.

Many students can, and do, speak. Most people who are deaf have normal organs of speech and many learn to use them in speech classes. Some people cannot automatically control the tone and volume of their speech so the speech may be initially difficult to understand. Understanding improves as one becomes more familiar with the person's speech.

Most students who are deaf will be able to take examinations and be evaluated in the same way as other students. If the test is written, it has been found that some deaf students do better if an interpreter reads and translates the questions to the student in sign language (because of English subtleties). However, many other deaf students prefer to read the test themselves. If the method of evaluation is oral, the interpreter can translate for the deaf student. Extended time and alternate location is advised when an interpreter is used.

Assumptions should not automatically be made about the student's ability to participate in certain types of classes. For example, students who are deaf may be able to learn a great deal about music styles, techniques and rhythms by observing a visual display of the music on an oscilloscope or similar apparatus or by feeling the vibrations of music. Some students will have enough residual hearing so that amplification through earphones or hearing aids will allow participation. It is always best to discuss with the student, the requirements of a class and to determine if there are any ways that the materials can be modified so that the student can participate in what may become an exciting learning experience for all concerned.

### **Communication Issues**

- The deaf or hard of hearing students you have in your class may use sign language, speech, or a combination of the two. It is best not to make assumptions about how a student will communicate.
- Students who are deaf or hard of hearing receive information in various ways: through an interpreter, speechreading, an Assistive Listening Device (ALD), real-time captioning, TypeWell or a similar system of speech to text transcription.
- Sometimes students use a combination of accommodations (for example, an ALD and TypeWell).
- Having a student who is deaf or hard of hearing in your class does not mean you have to learn sign language. Although it is always appreciated when faculty learn some finger spelling or some sign language (perhaps being able to say, "My name is..." or "Good morning. How are you?") to help put the student at ease, it is not expected that teachers who only occasionally have deaf or hard of hearing students in their classroom will learn to sign. Interpreters or transcribers will be provided upon request from the student to facilitate the communication in the classroom (or the lab, field trips, etc).

- If a student requests an interpreter or any other accommodation, direct the student to DSS to make a written request.
- Always look at the student when you speak, whether or not an interpreter or transcriber is used.
- Address the student directly using first--person speech. Never say to an interpreter, "Tell him (or her)."
- Speak naturally and clearly. Don't exaggerate lip movements or volume.
- Use appropriate facial expressions, gestures, and other natural body language.
- Students with significant hearing loss will likely use a TDD (Telecommunication Device for the Deaf) to communicate on the telephone. If you need to contact the student by phone and don't have a TDD, be aware that the Georgia Relay Service allows you to use your telephone to call a deaf student and have a conversation through an operator who types what you say to the student, and voices what the student types to you. Email and instant messaging may also be appropriate methods for contacting students.

### **Using Interpreters**

- Interpreters facilitate communication between you and your class and the student who is deaf or hard of hearing.
- Interpreters are certified professionals who train for many years to do their job and who abide by a code of ethics.
- Interpreters sign in the language or mode that the student prefers. This can include American Sign Language (ASL), signing more in English word order, or somewhere along the continuum between the two. The oral interpreter mouths without voice what is being said so students can speech read more easily. The interpretation between the spoken and/or signed message requires processing time. The processing time is usually equivalent to a few words or concepts and may vary depending on the subject matter. The communication facilitated through the interpreter allows the student to receive information, make contributions to lectures or discussions, and have individual dialogues with students and faculty.
- The interpreter will usually stand or sit near the speaker. The student then has the option of viewing both you and the interpreter to more fully follow the flow of conversation.
- If you know a student uses an interpreter and you want to catch him or her in the hall but do not see the interpreter, communicating with written notes is appropriate. For lengthier discussion, give the student a note requesting an appointment time and asking the student to bring an interpreter. Due to a shortage of interpreters, the timing of this meeting may need to be negotiated.

### **Using Transcribers**

- Transcribers also facilitate communication between you and your class and the student who is deaf or hard of hearing, by typing what is said onto a notebook computer using specialized abbreviation software called TypeWell. The transcript is transmitted via wireless cards to a notebook computer in front of the student, so that the student gets real-time access to the spoken word.
- The transcriber usually chooses to sit where overheads and PowerPoint presentations can be easily viewed, and doesn't necessarily have to sit near the student who is deaf or hard of hearing, since wireless cards are being used.
- Transcripts are provided only to the student who is deaf or hard of hearing (unless there is another student with a documented disability in the class who would use the transcript instead of a note taker). If you would also like to receive the transcripts, please notify your transcriber. Please be aware that the transcripts are not word-for-word representations of what was said in class, but rather meaning-for-meaning, so your exact wording may not appear in the transcript, but the content of your lecture is there.

### **Using Assistive Listening Devices**

- Many students who use hearing aids effectively in quiet environments have a difficult time following information presented in large college classrooms. In the classroom, the instructor's voice is competing with background noise, room echo, and distance. Therefore, the intelligibility of the instructor's voice is degraded by the poor room acoustics as well as the hearing loss. Most Assistive Listening Device systems (ALDs) use a microphone /transmitter positioned close to the instructor's mouth to send the instructor's voice through the air to the receiver worn by the student. By placing the microphone close to the instructor's mouth, ALDs can provide clear sound over distances, eliminate echoes, and reduce surrounding noises. Assistive Listening Devices have proven to be an effective teaching tool for students with hearing loss. Providing a good listening environment can have a major impact on an individual's academic performance.
- When ALDs are being used, it is helpful to repeat what is said off-mic. For example, if a question is voiced by a student in the class, repeating it on mic will ensure that the deaf or hard of hearing student gets the information, and will also likely benefit other students in the class.
- If a student or someone else in the classroom is going to speak for a protracted period of time, have that person wear the mic.
- If you are going to have a private conversation or leave the classroom, be sure to turn the transmitter unit off. Otherwise, you may be out of the classroom, but what you're saying isn't.
- The student will provide you with the mic and transmitter prior to each class. Return the equipment to the student at the end of class. The student is responsible for maintaining the equipment and making sure the batteries are charged.

***Required accommodations are those listed on the Accommodation Letter, as well as those negotiated with Counseling Center staff. These are listed below along with***

*other helpful strategies.*

**Classroom Guidelines**

- **Do not stand in front of a light source.** Standing in front of a light source puts your face in a shadow, making it very difficult to speechread you.
- **Face the student when speaking.** Try to avoid speaking any time the student can't see your face, such as when you write on the board or walk around the room.
- **Don't block your face from view.** When using an overhead projector, stand to the side of the projector so that it doesn't block your face. If a PA microphone is used in a large classroom, keep the microphone below your mouth to facilitate speechreading.
- **Use visual aids whenever possible.**
- **Be specific when referencing information.** When referring to items on the board, try to be specific about the word or phrase you're making reference to by pointing directly to it.
- **Show captioned tapes.** When showing a videotape to the class, make sure it is captioned. Make sure any videos you purchase for classroom use are captioned. Videos may be 'open captioned' (always visible) or "closed captioned" (visible only when a decoder within the television reveals them).
- **For small classrooms, arrange desks in a semi-circle.** If that is not possible, the deaf or hard of hearing student may want to sit in front and to the side to better see you, the interpreter, and the rest of the class.
- **Be aware of noise level.** Hard of hearing students, whether or not they are using an assistive listening device may be very sensitive to environmental sounds, which tend to 'mask' speech. Background noise should be kept to a minimum.
- **Repeat comments from other students if needed.** If the interpreter or transcriber was unable to hear the comments, or if the student is using an Assistive Listening Device, repeating comments or questions from the class ensures the student gets the information.
- **When new materials are to be covered which involve technical terminology not in common usage,** supply a list of these words in advance to the student and the interpreter or transcriber.
- **Facilitate the process for the student to use a classmate as a note taker.** You will probably be asked to help recruit a volunteer. You can ask the student to bring some recruitment fliers from DSS if you wish, and make a brief announcement. In your initial private meeting with the student clarify whether the student wants to be pointed out as the person to contact or would prefer not to be pointed out to the class as a person with a disability. Most people with disabilities that are not immediately visible prefer not to be pointed out to others, and we must honor this request.
- **Provide copies of overheads or PowerPoint slides, either on paper or electronically.**

- **Consider providing copies of your class notes.** Some faculty prefer to post these on a website for all students.

### **Testing Guidelines**

Most students who are deaf or hard of hearing will be able to take examinations and be evaluated in the same way as other students. Accommodations may be needed for some.

- **Permit students to utilize an interpreter when necessary to assess their knowledge of content.** On written exams, due to idiomatic expressions and syntactic English subtleties, some students may require an interpreter to interpret the questions in their preferred mode of communication. A voice interpreter may also be needed when students are being assessed for performance on oral presentations or in discussions.
- **Allow the student who is deaf to sign test answers to you through an interpreter when this is indicated as an accommodation.** This can be an effective way to ensure the student understands the content of the class material, and is not getting stuck on the English verbiage.
- **Provide extended time (double time is standard),** and access to you as instructor for questions during the test. Utilizing an interpreter to communicate the content of exams takes additional time. Extended time may also be recommended due to a student's lack of proficiency in English.
- **Remember that the same accommodations apply to pop and other quizzes, in-class writing, or other in-class assignments as to a full-length exam.** For quizzes, the student should be scheduled to complete the quiz either the same day or as close as possible to the same day. A possible solution for quizzes would be to have the student start in class and finish after class. For in-class assignments consider giving the student until later that day or the next day. Discuss these issues in your initial meeting with the student.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN INTERPRETER**

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- interprets or transliterates spoken message from English to Sign Language

- voices Sign Language into standard English
- conveys all messages faithfully without editing, this includes statements such as: "Don't sign this, but . . ."
- directs all questions concerning the deaf student to him/her; this enables the student to answer for him/herself
- informs the instructor if messages are not clearly understood or heard by interpreter
- becomes familiar with the class work through reading the books, asking for any specialized vocabulary ahead of time, and speaking with instructor
- educates faculty and staff concerning the roles and responsibilities of an interpreter and deaf Student
- abides by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (R.I.D.) Code of Ethics

## **VISUALLY IMPAIRED**

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The impact that vision loss has on learning and the accommodation process will vary. Some of the factors that influence those variations are:

- Age of onset of the vision loss
- Severity of loss
- Type of loss
- Educational setting
- Opportunities for training and exposure to assistive technologies

The majority of people with impaired vision have some usable, residual vision. Very few persons are "totally blind." How much a person can see often varies throughout the day depending on variables such as lighting, color contrast, physical health, eye condition, and weather conditions. Some individuals function better in subdued lighting rather than bright lighting. Some with impaired vision can see better with glasses or large print. Each student can help you understand what will maximize his or her functioning in your class.

Of primary concern to students with vision loss is access to information. A delay in gaining access to syllabi, handouts, and textbooks can have a major impact on a student's ability to perform in a class. It is therefore critical that these students have access to information in a timely manner. The methods that students use to access written materials will vary depending on their type of vision loss, personal preferences, and educational background.

Students with low vision will likely prefer large print and magnification devices. Among students who are blind, some prefer to access information through auditory means and others prefer to use Braille.

Determining what methods will work best in a given class is a process which will take some discussion between the student, instructor, and possibly the Disability Support Services staff. By the time some students with impaired vision reach college, they have developed their own methods for dealing with visual materials, and can inform faculty members of their needs. Others need to work much more closely with their instructors and Disability Support Services in an ongoing process to develop strategies that work. Even those students with the most experience will come across course requirements unlike any they have had in the past, making new strategies necessary. Students may use one of several methods or a combination of methods.

### **Class Accommodations:**

1. **Guide Dogs:** Some students who are blind will have guide dogs to assist them with daily activities. If a student brings his/her dog to class, the dog should not represent a distraction for the class. Guide dogs are well-trained to be "on the job" when they are in harness. It may be helpful to ask the blind student to give a brief description of the dog's responsibilities to the class. This would perhaps dispel any curiosity and clarify the dog's working relationship to the visually impaired student.
2. **Class Notes:** Depending on the student's degree of disability, the student may or may not be able to take class notes. Some students find it helpful to tape record lectures. If this is the case, the student will most likely ask permission of the instructor. Other students may ask for voluntary note-takers. Should other students volunteer to share their notes, regular or enlarged copies may be made free of charge in the Counseling Center. Professors who utilize overhead projectors in class discussions will sometimes allow students to borrow their notes to photocopy.
3. **Handouts:** Students may have course handouts enlarged or taped by the Counseling Center. If a course requires a great deal of handouts, it would be helpful for the instructor to allow the student to notify the DSS at the beginning of the semester and perhaps make the materials to be taped or enlarged available ahead of time.
4. **Books:** Many visually impaired students utilize the alternative technology (AT). AT assists the student by providing electronic or audio textbooks. Because it takes some time for the books to be mailed to the student, he/she may try to contact the instructor prior to the beginning of the semester to determine which book(s) to order.
5. **Assignments:** Written assignments may require extended time for a student who is visually impaired. If library work is involved, the student may have to schedule assistance with the DSS. Some students are able to type or use computers to prepare assignments; however, other students may have to rely on a typist. DSS of the Counseling Center does not provide typists for students with disabilities. If a student needs extended time for a written assignment, the student should request that time when the project is assigned.

Lab work may require special assistance for a student who is blind. It may be

necessary to pair up a visually impaired student with a sighted student or aid. While the student who is blind or visually impaired may not be able to perform a dissection, he/she should be able to give instructions for the project.

6. **Testing:** Student with visual impairments may require a very limited amount of accommodation or they may require a combination of services and accommodations. The Director of the Counseling Center will determine appropriate allocation of extended time for the student based on the student's disability and supporting documentation. It is important to recognize that the amount of time needed for a mathematics exam may differ from that needed for a history exam due to the conceptualizing which is necessary for a blind individual. Depending on the student's impairment, he/she may request any of the following testing accommodations: enlargements, use of computer, oral exams, taped exams, test scribe or proctor, and extended time. Testing arrangements are determined at the beginning of the semester when the student brings the professor the **Exam Proctoring Checklist**. A sample copy of this form and instructions for completion are included in this guide.

### **Assistive Technology**

Assistive technology and equipment will be very important when working with a student with impaired vision. There are a lot of options for students with visual impairments and no two students are alike. It is important not to make assumptions when working with a student with a vision loss. The preferred method of accessing information will depend on the student and his or her experiences. Despite the method, it will be crucial for students to achieve access.

### **Alternative Formats**

For students with impaired vision, print materials (including graphics) are accessed through alternative formats and adaptive devices. Faculty will probably be asked to provide handouts, including the course syllabus, and exams in another format. For the most part, MSC is required to provide information in the format the student requests, though there may be alternatives that can be discussed. For example, if a student asks for materials in braille, a diskette may also be acceptable to the student.

**MSC has a Web Accessibility Policy that makes each web designer responsible for learning to make their web pages accessible**, in this case for students who use screen readers for voice output. There are resources in Technology Support Services and on the Disability Support Services website (<http://www.maconstate.edu/counseling/>)

- **Digital voice/tape recorders are used for recording class lectures, putting textbooks/handouts on tape, recording tests on tape and recording responses to tests and quizzes.** It is important to know whether the student uses a standard two-track tape recorder or a specialized four track tape recorder as well as what size and length of cassette. Departments are responsible for purchasing small items such as tape recorders, but if you should need a 4-track player/recorder, Counseling Center can lend you one. Information on the proper method of reading onto tape is available from the Counseling Center.
- **Audio recordings are used for tests/quizzes, textbooks, handouts, copies of faculty or notetaker's notes, and overheads.** Students use the audio versions to actually "listen" to material through computers with synthesized speech, or to read

material on the computer screen with large font. Audio versions are also used to print out in large print. Students can type their responses to assignments or tests using an adapted computer and save on a CD. A scanner enables printed material to be put onto a CD assuming the quality of the print is good. The type of computer/software is an important issue to discuss with the student. Information can usually be easily translated from one type of software to another.

- **Large print can be produced in a variety of ways.** The simplest may be using copy machines to increase the size of print. Some (though not most) students may be able to use a portable, hand--held magnifier to read regular print in any location. A closed circuit television (CCTV) projects the material enlarged up to 60 times onto a monitor. Print materials can also be enlarged through your word processing software, a relatively simple, effective, and very portable alternative. In some cases a student may request a diskette, which enables the student to read directly on the computer screen or print out the information in large font. You might ask the student to provide an example of the size print he or she can use.
- **Braille is used by students to independently make notes for themselves using a slate and stylus, braille writer, or electronic note taker such as a Braille--n--Speak.** A slate and stylus is a simple device that produces "handwritten" braille, the braille writer is a form of typing in braille, and the Braille--n--Speak allows information to be typed using the portable braille keyboard, saved, then accessed through the synthesized speech or interfaced with a computer. Braille can also be produced using a braille printer once material is digitized (print can be scanned when the print quality is good).
- **Raised--line drawings of graphic materials are also possible.** You can use a screenboard or a Raised-line Drawing Kit to make simple raised-line drawings, or you can ask another student to make drawings of graphics you use while lecturing. This method is only appropriate for very simple graphics that will be used during class discussion. You can construct a simple screenboard by using a clipboard, a piece of window screen, a piece of paper, and a crayon or wax pencil to draw the simple diagram or graph.
- **Use of complex graphics requires advance notice.** For more complex graphics, let students know in advance what will be discussed in class, especially if the graphics are to be used as test material, so students can arrange to have graphics made. Some explanation to orient the student is usually required for more complex graphics.
- **It is important to plan ahead.** The Counseling Center will need planning time of two weeks for this process, and may need to consult you on how to best simplify a drawing without eliminating information you consider essential. For courses that are very visual in nature, such as science courses, it may be necessary to begin the process before the semester starts.

***Required accommodations are those listed on the Accommodation Letter, as well as those negotiated with Counseling Center staff. These are listed below along with other helpful strategies.***

### **Classroom Guidelines**

- **Provide a brief description of the layout of the classroom and furniture.** This is especially important if there are any changes from one class period to the next. Also consider any obstacles that might present a problem.
- **Be prepared to change seating arrangements if necessary to improve the students' ability to see you or others.** If the student has low vision, a seat in the front of the room may greatly improve his or her ability to participate effectively.
- **If a class is moved or cancelled, remember that a note on the board or door may not be sufficient notification for a student with vision loss.** Make sure that the message is delivered effectively to the student. If you don't have a phone number or email address for the student, contact the Counseling Center.
- **Keep in mind that students may be oriented to take a specific route to class each time.** If unexpected barriers occur (such as construction on a sidewalk), the student may have to seek assistance from someone to find an alternate route. Most students will be aware of time restrictions and will schedule their classes accordingly. Some barriers, however, are unpredictable. These barriers may result in tardiness on the student's part.
- **Be ready to provide reading lists, syllabi or assignments in advance.** This will allow the student time to have the materials translated into braille, read on tape, or printed in large print. By making textbooks and other readings available at least 10 to 12 weeks prior to the start of the course, faculty members assist in making it easier to obtain adapted materials. As you make textbook selections, please make this information available through your divisional office, the campus bookstore, and to any students who request it. Indicate if a previous edition will suffice, since an earlier edition may have already been recorded and would be available much more quickly. Students may call you to find out if there is any reading that is not made available through the bookstore, such as articles copied from journals, or anything put on reserve at the library. It is critical that these readings be available to the student as soon as possible.
- **Consider the impact of the lighting on the student's ability to see.** Avoid standing in front of a light source as this may cause a glare and make seeing you more difficult.
- **Provide copies of PowerPoint slides on paper and/or diskette,** or email these either directly to the Counseling Center to be brailled. Work out the specifics with each student. When creating a PowerPoint presentation, always use the auto layouts provided. If you create additional text boxes, the text in those boxes will not be accessible to students using assistive technology.
- **Facilitate the process for the student to use a classmate as a note taker.** You will probably be asked to help recruit a volunteer. You can ask the student to bring some recruitment fliers from the Counseling Center if you wish, and make a brief announcement. In your initial private meeting with the student clarify whether the student wants to be pointed out as the person to contact or would prefer not to be pointed out to the class as a person with a disability. Most people with disabilities that are not immediately visible prefer not to be pointed out to others, and we must honor this request. **Provide copies of overheads, either on paper or electronically.**

- **Allow students to tape record lectures.** Students with disabilities are legally entitled to tape record lectures (if you have concerns, there is a Tape Recording Agreement form which you can ask students to sign).
- **Consider providing copies of your class notes.** Some faculty prefer to post these on a website for all students. Ask for assistance from Technology Support Services if needed to make your website accessible to screen readers.
- **Be aware that some students may choose to use note taking devices that make some noise.** Some of these devices may include a braille writer, a laptop computer, an electronic note taker, or a slate and stylus. Seating arrangements can be discussed to minimize the impact on other students of the sound of these devices.
- **Write clearly on boards or overheads with adequate spacing between words and lines.** Handouts and any printed materials including photocopies should provide maximum color contrast and adequate spacing. Be prepared to make large print copies or provide handouts on a computer diskette if requested.
- **Read aloud any material written on the board, on overheads or in PowerPoint slides.** Even though you have provided a copy of the overheads or slides, the student may be unable to read these in class. Reading what is on the overhead as you lecture will enable the student to follow the concepts and organization of your lecture more easily.
- **When pointing to an object of discussion, use the name of the object instead of "this" or "that."** If you are using the blackboard or other visual aids, describe verbally what you are showing to the class. Be specific in your descriptions. Make objects available for students to explore more fully before (preferably) or after class.
- **Loan a copy of charts, maps, or other large graphics to the student to follow during the class lecture, or if not possible, before or after class.**
- **Use contrasting colors and less figure and/or ground clutter to provide better viewing when demonstrating or showing an object.** Allow the student to move closer in order to see the object or allow for demonstration through a literal hands-on method.
- **Keep in mind that braille and large print differ from standard print.** If you are reading from a textbook or handout in class, remember that the page numbers in your copy may not correspond to braille or large print versions. In addition to giving the page number, also provide descriptive information about the section you are reading, such as "the fourth paragraph in Chapter 6."
- **When planning field trips, remember that students may need to make arrangements for a sighted guide or may need to become familiar with the new setting in advance.** Inform students well in advance of such activities. Another student in the class may be willing to be the sighted guide, and the Counseling Center and/or the student will provide information about how this is done. If there are no volunteers, we will do everything possible to provide a sighted guide.
- **Understand that laboratory work will be considerably more complex.** Certain assignments may require some type of adaptation, which should be agreed upon by

the student and faculty member at the beginning of the course. Adaptations may include the student directing a lab assistant to take the necessary action required to complete a task that the student is physically unable to do. Some other tasks required of the lab assistant are to describe visual material in detail, and to read from and record in the lab manual. The Counseling Center can assist by hiring the lab assistant and providing him or her with some guidelines. You and other faculty in your division might be able to help us recruit someone who is familiar with your lab procedures.

### **Testing Guidelines**

- **Discuss plans for modifying testing procedures prior to the first exam.** You and the student should agree on a mutually convenient method or combination of methods for testing accommodations in advance, with the option to modify as needed throughout the semester. Consider factors such as extended time, the availability of assistive equipment, and a distraction--free location for taking the exam. In addition, some students experience pain, fatigue, or fluctuations in vision that may require them to take a break during testing. Time and place are important factors and it is the division's role to provide the room. Contact the Vice President of Academic Affairs's Office to reserve an empty classroom if there is no suitable space in or near your division office. Students may elect to take their exams with the Counseling Center. **Students must make advance appointments for this testing.**
- **Determine which format will work best for your student.** The student may choose to get the exam in braille, in regular print (and use a magnification device), in large print with or without a CCTV or magnifier, on cassette tape, as raised-line diagrams, or on computer diskette to be used with an adapted computer. Some students may prefer having the test read onto an audiotape or by a live reader.
- **Understand and plan for the fact that, except for braille, faculty are responsible for producing the test format themselves or in conjunction with division staff.** A good option may be taping the test and either leaving appropriate space between questions for student responses, or using a second tape for answers.
- **Consider how students will record their answers to the exam.** They may write their answers on an answer sheet or directly on the test, record their answers on an audiotape, type into an adapted computer, use a CCTV, or use a scribe.
- **Provide extended time (double time is standard),** and access to you as instructor for questions during the test. The use of adaptive equipment or an alternate format such as audiotape, large print or braille takes extra time.
- **Remember that the same accommodations that apply to full--length exams also apply to pop and other quizzes, in--class writing, or other in--class assignments.** For quizzes, the student should be scheduled to complete the quiz either the same day or as close as possible to the same day. A possible solution for quizzes when a low distraction room is not an accommodation would be to have the student start in class and finish after class. For in--class assignments consider giving the student until later that day or the next day. Discuss these issues in your initial meeting with the student.

## SPEECH DISORDERS

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Speech impairments include a wide range of disorders including, but not limited to:

- difficulty in the expression of language;
- stuttering
- paralysis of part or all of the vocal tract
- the removal of the larynx or other structures due to cancer.

In addition, many persons who have hearing impairments will have speech impairments.

Now that more persons with severe physical limitations are exercising their rights in higher education, the instructor will likely meet individuals who cannot use the spoken word as their primary means of communication. For these persons, an Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) system may be used. AAC systems vary widely from very simple communication boards to the sophisticated electronic devices which produce synthesized or digitized speech output.

***Required accommodations are those listed on the Accommodation Letter, as well as those negotiated with Counseling Center staff. These are listed below along with other helpful strategies.***

### **Classroom Guidelines**

- **If you notice a student has a speech impairment, encourage him or her privately to talk with you about it.** In most cases, the student with the speech impairment is the best person to evaluate his or her needs and to make these needs known to the instructor. The instructor should make every attempt as early as possible to work with those individuals to make modifications which would allow the students to participate in the class.
- **Know when to contact the Counseling Center.** There may be cases in which the student cannot indicate his or her needs effectively, and the instructor may not be aware of what modifications can be made to assist the student. In these cases, the instructor may want to contact specialists who can provide consultation. The Counseling Center can refer to other professionals as needed.
- **Be supportive when the student attempts to express him or herself.** Some students with speech impairments may be hesitant to participate in course-related activities that require speaking. It is important for the instructor to be supportive and respond to all appropriate attempts at self-expression by the student whether during or outside class.
- **Be patient while the student is speaking.** Do not attempt to hurry the student along or finish the student's sentences. This may increase the student's anxiety that, in turn, is likely to make it more difficult for the student to express him or herself. In many cases (especially for persons who stutter or who use Augmentative and

Alternative Communication) it takes an individual with a speech impairment considerable time to express an idea.

- **Ask the student to repeat words or phrases that you do not understand.** Making an effort to truly understand the student communicates your positive regard for the student and recognizes him or her as an integral part of the class.
- **Once the student is finished speaking, summarize his or her statement or question to make sure that you understand.** Never pretend to understand when you do not. Most people quickly recognize this and this discourages the student from attempting to participate in the future.
- **Some students with speech-related disabilities may prefer not to speak in class.** Do not compel the student to speak, but consider agreeing upon a cue for the student to give you if he or she does want to participate in the conversation.
- **Never assume that because a person has difficulty speaking, that his or her comprehension is limited in any way.** Communicate with the student in the same way you communicate with other students.
- **Students may prefer to type or write their comments or questions and have another student read them aloud.** Some students may also use technology such as voice synthesizer software to participate in class discussions.
- **Consider modifying assignments such as class presentations.** Alternatives may include having the student present the material to you, accepting a paper instead of a presentation, permitting the use of a voice synthesizer, or having the student design a website or multimedia presentation to show to the class.
- **Alterations in how course requirements are met or course substitutions may need to be considered for speech communications class.** The approach to this will differ among students and may depend on the student's degree program.

### **Testing Guidelines**

- **Make modifications in testing procedures as necessary.** When the student also has a physical impairment, such as cerebral palsy, modifications may be needed based on the physical disability. Students who use communication boards may not have vocabulary specific to the courses they take. We may be able to help students to modify their communication systems by adding the necessary vocabulary.

## **LEARNING DISABLED**

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Students with learning disabilities (LD) by definition have average or better than average intelligence. Learning disabilities result from neurological differences that may alter an individual's ability to store, process, retrieve, or produce information. Some people with learning disabilities may have difficulty in only one of these areas; others may have difficulty in more than one. These difficulties may impact the following tasks:

- Reading
- Auditory processing
- Visual processing
- Writing
- Speaking
- Retrieving information from short-term memory
- Performing mathematical calculations

Every person processes information through a combination of a visual mode, an auditory mode, and a kinesthetic (or hands-on) mode. The difference for the person with learning disabilities is that one or more of these modalities may be impaired and the ability to attend to tasks is unreliable. This causes the message to become scrambled as it enters the brain during the learning process, and can trigger a scrambled response or output. The brain may not store information in an efficient manner, particularly when moving input from short-term to long-term memory. This results in poor memory, or difficulty retrieving information quickly in its complete form.

It is important to remember that students with this disability compensate by receiving and transmitting information in a modality or combination of modalities that works best for them, and may need extra time to "unscramble" information. They may learn to "learn differently," which does not mean they are "unable to learn."

It is not uncommon for people with learning disabilities to be undiagnosed or misdiagnosed. If you have a student you believe may need diagnostic testing for learning disabilities, please contact the Counseling Center for more information.

There is no one set of methods for each individual type of learning disability. The key to providing accommodations is to facilitate the student's ability to access and express information he or she has mastered. Otherwise, just as with the person who writes slowly due to a physical impairment, you risk "testing the disability" rather than what you wanted to test. The overall goal of classroom and testing accommodation is to allow the student to access his or her compensatory learning process through the following strategies.

### **A Learning Disability Is:**

- A permanent disorder which affects the manner in which individuals with normal or above average intelligence take in, retain and express information. Like interference on the radio or a fuzzy TV picture, incoming or outgoing information may become scrambled as it travels between the eye, ear, or skin, and the brain.
- Commonly recognized in adults with learning disabilities as deficits in one or more of the following areas: reading comprehension, spelling, written expression, math computation, and problem solving. Less frequent, but no less troublesome, are problems in organizational skills, time management, and social skills. Many adults also have language-based and/or perceptual problems.

- Often inconsistent. It may present problems on Mondays, but not on Tuesdays. It may cause problems throughout grade school, seem to disappear during high school, and the resurface again in college. It may manifest itself in only one specific academic area, such as math or foreign language.
- **Frustrating!!!** Persons with learning disabilities often have to deal not only with functional limitations, but also with the frustration of having to "prove" that their invisible disabilities may be as handicapping as paraplegia.
- **Descriptive Words:**
  - Dyslexia--a primary reading disability
  - Dysgraphia--a primary writing disability
  - Dyscalculia -- a primary calculating disability
  - Specific Language Disability -- difficulty with symbol systems
  - Strophosymbolia -- twisted symbol perception
  - Maturation Lag -- differences in the rate of maturation of different areas of the brain
  - Minimal Cerebral Dysfunction -- a quasi-medical term used when there are no hard neurological signs
  - Hyperkinetic Syndrome -- attentional and organizational difficulties
  - Developmental Aphasia -- a disorder of language functions
  - Attention Deficit Disorder (ADHD) -- developmentally inappropriate degrees of inattention, impulsiveness, and hyperactivity

### **A Learning Disability Is Not:**

- A form of mental retardation or an emotional disorder.

## **COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF LD COLLEGE STUDENTS**

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### **Reading Skills**

- 1) Slow reading rate and/or difficulty in modifying reading rate in accordance with material difficulty.
- 2) Poor comprehension and retention.
- 3) Difficulty identifying important points and themes.
- 4) Poor mastery of phonics, confusion of similar words, difficulty integrating new vocabulary.

### **Written Language Skills**

- 1) Difficulty with sentence structure (e.g., incomplete sentences, run-on's, poor use of grammar, missing inflectional endings).
- 2) Frequent spelling errors (e.g., omissions, substitutions, transpositions), especially in specialized and foreign vocabulary.
- 3) Inability to copy correctly from a book or the blackboard.
- 4) Slow writer.
- 5) Poor penmanship (e.g., poorly-formed letter, incorrect use of capitalization, trouble with spacing, overly-large handwriting.)

### **Oral Language Skills**

- 1) Inability to concentrate on and comprehend oral language.
- 2) Difficulty in orally expressing ideas which he/she seems to understand.
- 3) Written expression is better than oral expression.
- 4) Difficulty speaking grammatically correct English.
- 5) Cannot tell a story in proper sequence.

### **Mathematical Skills**

- 1) Incomplete mastery of basic facts (e.g., mathematical tables).
- 2) Difficulty in orally expressing ideas which he/she seems to understand.
- 3) Confuses operational symbols, especially + and x.
- 4) Copies problems incorrectly from one line to another.
- 5) Inability to understand and retain abstract concepts.
- 6) Difficulty comprehending word problems.
- 7) Reasoning deficits.

### **Organizational and Study Skills**

- 1) Time management difficulties.
- 2) Slow to start and complete tasks.
- 3) Repeated inability, on a day-to-day basis to recall what has been taught.
- 4) Difficulty following oral and written notes and compositions.
- 5) Lack of overall concentration in written notes and compositions.
- 6) Demonstrates short attention span during lectures.
- 7) Inefficient use of library reference materials.

### **Social Skills**

Some adults with learning disabilities may have social skills problems due to their inconsistent perceptual abilities. For the same reason that a person with visual perceptual problems may have trouble discriminating between the letters "b" and "d", he/she may be unable to detect the difference between a joking wink and a disgusted glance. People with auditory perceptual problems might not notice the difference between sincere and sarcastic comments, or be able to recognize other subtle changes in tone of voice. These difficulties in interpreting nonverbal messages may result in lowered self-esteem for some LD adults, and may cause them to have trouble meeting people, working cooperatively with others, and making friends.

It is difficult for people with learning disabilities to interact with authority figures such as professors and counselors. Many have not learned the appropriate voice and body language and may make requests too arrogantly or too shyly. Some may have had so many bad experiences with teachers that they may be afraid to ask for special help--or to identify themselves.

## **THE HEAD INJURY SURVIVOR**

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### **Acquired Brain Injury**

"An acquired brain injury is an acquired impairment of medically verifiable brain functioning resulting in a loss or partial loss of one or more of the following: cognitive, communication, psychomotor, psychosocial, and sensory/perceptual abilities." The preceding deficiencies are defined as:

- a. Cognitive - loss or partial loss of memory function, attention, concentration, judgment and problem solving, mental flexibility, organizational thinking skills, spatial orientation and information;
- b. Communication - impairment of speech, language and pragmatics;
- c. Psychosocial - untoward social behavior or impaired psycho-dynamics that limit or impede interpersonal relationships, coping strategies and goal-directed behavior;
- d. Sensory/perceptual - deficiencies in primary perceptual systems such as visual, auditory and tactile;

- e. Psychomotor - limitation in locomotion or motor functions and/or physiological dysfunction of a body part or system.

*(Consortium for Study of Programs for Brain Injured in California Community Colleges, 1987)*

**Traumatic Head Injury**

"Traumatic head injury is an insult to the brain, not of a degenerative or congenital nature but caused by an external physical force, that may produce a diminished or altered state of consciousness, which results in impairment of cognitive abilities or physical functioning. It may be either temporary or permanent and cause partial or total functional disability or psychosocial maladjustment."

*(Executive Committee of Board of Directors of National Head Injury Foundation, 1986)*

**Classroom Accommodations for Students with Head Injuries:**

- 1) Allow use of tape recorders in the classroom
- 2) If the student also has a hand impairment, he/she may wish to have other students take notes in class. The Counseling Center will photocopy the notes.
- 3) Allow extra time for examinations and/or alternate location.
- 4) Refer to suggestions on pages for learning disabled students for helping the student with a head injury.

**SURVIVORS WITH HEAD INJURIES HAVE SIMILAR PROBLEMS WITH STUDENTS WHO HAVE LEARNING DISABILITIES**

<b><u>General Characteristics of Learning Disabled Students</u></b>		<b><u>Additional Characteristics of Traumatically Brain Injured Students</u></b>	
1)	Mild memory problems	1)	Severe recent memory disorder with poor carry over of new learning
2)	Congenital, perinatal or early onset	2)	Later onset
3)	Slow onset	3)	Sudden onset
4)	Cause may be unclear, often appears when new demands are introduced (e.g., school starts)	4)	External event caused onset
5)	May or may not have deficits in interpersonal and coping skills	5)	Emotional stresses increased; greater degree of confusion, disorientation and lack of control
6)	No before-after contrast	6)	Marked contrast of pre- and post-onset capabilities - both in one's self view and in the perception of others
7)	Skills and knowledge show "splinter" development, or are underdeveloped	7)	Some old skills and knowledge remain, but there are peaks and valleys of performance

8)	Physical disability most likely to involve poor coordination	8)	Physical disability likely to involve paresis (weaknesses) or spasticity (over-tension)
9)	Magnitude of deficits range from mild to severe	9)	Degree and number of deficits Range from mild to severe, but often combine to produce severe disability
10)	Learning style is constant	10)	May have to change their learning style
11)	Slowed acquisition, but what gets in, stays in. Teach through strengths and weaknesses	11)	Slowed acquisition. What gets in may not stay. Unpredictable progress. Much practice using compensatory strategies needed.

**It is important to note, the student with acquired brain injury remembers how he was before the injury and often does not recognize how he has been changed by it.**

### **Assistive Technology**

Many students with learning disabilities may use assistive technology that assists them in accessing information and also in writing papers. An example is screen reader software that voices digitized text. Some screen readers have study strategies built in, such as the ability to add your own notes, highlight, color code, or bullet text easily. Another example is software to assist students to organize their writing by creating a concept map, and then outlining text from the graphic representations created.

***Required accommodations are those listed on the Accommodation Letter, as well as those negotiated with Counseling Center staff. These are listed below along with other helpful strategies.***

### **Classroom Guidelines**

- **Allow students to use equipment in the classroom** (e.g., tape recorders, electronic spellers, laptop computers, or assistive listening devices). Students with disabilities are legally entitled to tape record lectures (if you have concerns, there is a Tape Recording Agreement form which you can ask students to sign).
- **Facilitate the process for the student to use a classmate as a note taker.** You will probably be asked to help recruit a volunteer. You can ask the student to bring some recruitment fliers from Counseling Center if you wish, and make a brief announcement. In your initial private meeting with the student clarify whether the student wants to be pointed out as the person to contact or would prefer not to be pointed out to the class as a person with a disability. Most people with disabilities that are not immediately visible prefer not to be pointed out to others, and we must honor this request.
- **Provide copies of overheads or PowerPoint slides, either on paper or electronically,** or email these directly to the student, working out the specifics with each student. When creating a PowerPoint presentation, always use the auto layouts provided. If you create additional text boxes, the text in those boxes will not be accessible to students using assistive technology.

- **Consider providing copies of your class notes.** Some faculty prefer to post these on a website for all students. Ask for assistance if needed to make your website accessible to screen readers.
- **Be available for individual questions about lecture content.** The opportunity to ask questions will increase students' understanding of information and concepts.
- **Hand out the syllabus as soon as possible to the student,** even before the semester starts if requested, and provide ample opportunity through office hours for the student to ask questions clarifying course requirements, projects, and timelines.
- **Make reading assignments available before the semester begins, especially for students who use books on digital format.** By making textbooks and other readings available at least 10 to 12 weeks prior to the start of the course, faculty members assist in making it easier to obtain adapted materials. As you make textbook selections, please make this information available through your divisional office, the campus bookstore, and to any students who request it, so students have sufficient time to make the necessary arrangements. Indicate if a previous edition will suffice, since an earlier edition may have already been recorded and should be available much more quickly. Students may call you to find out if there is any reading that is not made available through the bookstore such as articles copied from journals, or anything put on reserve at the library. It is critical that these readings be available to the student as soon as possible.
- **Clarify concepts by breaking them down.** Provide tips or strategies on how to complete projects or prepare for exams. This is extremely helpful to the student with a learning disability and does not give the student an "unfair advantage" over the other students.
- **Have "model" papers/projects available** so the student can see what you consider excellent work and learn by example. You could either use work of past students or an example you work up yourself.
- **Provide a calendar that shows due dates for important assignments and tests.**
- **Provide instructions for exams and assignments in print as well as orally.**
- **Supply names of potential tutors.** Refer students to MSC Academic Resource Center. Facilitate help groups led by upper level students if possible. You can also refer these students to Student Support Services to become paid tutors.
- **Provide vocabulary lists.** Consider providing handouts of new or technical vocabulary with examples of terms used in context. This will allow all students, especially those with learning disabilities, to organize material presented in class.

Some of these techniques can benefit the average learner in your classroom as much as a student with a learning disability. Your availability through office hours is crucial for these students, for many of whom a five to ten minute interchange can make a world of difference.

### **Testing Guidelines**

- **Provide extended time (double time is standard)**, and access to you as instructor for questions during the test. If the test is lengthy consider separating the testing into two days.
- **Provide a separate, low distraction room if needed and again access to you as the instructor for any student questions.**
- **Consider arranging for alternate grading for everyone.** If alternate assignments to tests are equivalent measures to exams in your course, allow the student the opportunity to complete, for example, a paper or special project.
- **Put tests on cassette or allow readers** for students whose auditory processing ability is strong. A scribe or a tape recorder for responses may be needed for a student who can dictate excellent essays, but has difficulty writing them down. Allow a student who can organize thoughts well using a computer or typewriter to type out answers.
- **Permit use of calculators, electronic spellers, spelling dictionaries, scratch paper, etc. on exams.** If security is a concern with electronic devices, ask the student to show you the device and seek to understand its use from a functional perspective based on the test content, its format and the student's particular disability.
- **Provide feedback on graded materials.** After returning test results to students, allow students with learning disabilities to speak to you after class or during office hours so they can gain a clear understanding of their errors. Relate test content and format back to classroom lectures, projects, and reading material.
- **If asked, provide clarification of test questions** including rephrasing a question or substituting a less complex word for a non--substantive word on the test. This is a matter of helping the student figure out what the question is asking and/or may be part of the "unscrambling" process.
- **Remember that the same accommodations apply to pop and other quizzes, in-class writing, or other in-class assignments as to a full-length exam.** For quizzes, the student should be scheduled to complete the quiz either the same day or as close as possible to the same day. A possible solution for quizzes when a low distraction room is not an accommodation would be to have the student start in class and finish after class. For in-class assignments consider giving the student until later that day or the next day. Discuss these issues in your initial meeting with the student.

There is no one set of methods for each individual type of learning disability. The overall goal of classroom and testing accommodation is to allow the student to access his or her compensatory learning process through various strategies.

## ATTENTION DEFICIT/HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

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Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder is a neurological disability characterized by difficulties with tasks involving executive function. These include:

- Planning skills
- Organizational skills
- Selective attention
- Maintenance of attention
- Impulse control

Students with ADHD may have difficulty with maintaining their attention for a long period of time or with "screening out" unimportant stimuli in the environment. These students may also have difficulty keeping up with materials, organizing information in a meaningful way, or planning a project or paper. Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder is often treated with stimulant medications but behavioral interventions are also recommended. Students with ADHD often benefit from external supports such as the use of day planners or personal digital assistants and coaching. Breaking tasks down into manageable parts is also helpful.

It is not uncommon for people with ADHD to be undiagnosed or misdiagnosed. If you have a student you believe may need diagnostic testing for ADHD, please contact Disability Support Services for more information. Additional support services may be available through the Student Support Services program. Eligible students may receive tutoring, and work with advisors on studying and test taking strategies.

***Required accommodations are those listed on the Accommodation Letter, as well as those negotiated with Counseling Center staff. These are listed below along with other helpful strategies.***

### **Classroom Guidelines**

- **Encourage selective scheduling of classes.** Scheduling classes so that students have a break between them provides an opportunity for the student to review and organize notes, and to prepare materials for the next class.
- **Vary classroom activities and teaching methods.** Include hands--on, interactive and small group activities when possible.
- **Facilitate the process for the student to use a classmate as a note taker.** You will probably be asked to help recruit a volunteer. You can ask the student to bring some recruitment fliers from DSS if you wish, and make a brief announcement. In your initial private meeting with the student clarify whether the student wants to be pointed out as the person to contact or would prefer not to be pointed out to the class as a person with a disability. Most people with disabilities that are not immediately visible prefer not to be pointed out to others, and we must honor this request.
- **Provide copies of overheads or PowerPoint slides, either on paper or electronically.**
- **Allow students to tape record lectures.** Students with disabilities are legally entitled to tape record lectures (if you have concerns, there is a Tape Recording Agreement form which you can ask students to sign).

- **Consider providing copies of your class notes.** Some faculty prefer to post these on a website for all students.
- **Encourage the organization of study groups.**
- **Have "model" papers/projects available** so the student can see what you consider excellent work and learn by example. You could either use work of past students or an example you work up yourself.
- **Provide a calendar that shows due dates for important assignments and tests.**
- **Provide instructions for exams and assignments in print as well as orally.**
- **Supply names of potential tutors.** Refer students to the Academic Resource Center for peer tutoring. Facilitate help groups led by upper level students if possible. You can also refer these students to Student Support Services to become paid tutors.
- **Provide vocabulary lists.** Consider providing handouts of new or technical vocabulary with examples of terms used in context. This will allow all students to organize material presented in class.

### **Testing Guidelines**

- **Arrange for alternate grading for everyone.** If alternate assignments to tests are equivalent measures to exams in your course, allow the student the opportunity to complete, for example, a paper or special project.
- **Provide extended time (double time is standard), in a separate,** low distraction room, and access to you, the instructor, for questions during the test. If the test is lengthy consider separating the testing into two parts.
- **Provide instructions for exams and assignments in print as well as orally.**
- **Provide feedback on graded materials.** After returning test results to students, allow students to speak to you after class or during office hours so they can gain a clear understanding of their errors. Relate feedback and test content back to classroom lectures, projects, and reading material.
- **Remember that the same accommodations that apply to full--length exams also apply to pop and other quizzes, in--class writing, or other in--class assignments.** For quizzes, the student should be scheduled to complete the quiz either the same day or as close as possible to the same day. A possible solution for quizzes when a low distraction room is not an accommodation would be to have the student start in class and finish after class. For in--class assignments consider giving the student until later that day or the next day. Discuss these issues in your initial meeting with the student.

Some of these techniques can benefit the average learner in your classroom as much as a student with ADHD. Your availability through office hours is crucial for these students, for many of whom a five or ten minute interchange can make a world of difference.

### **OTHER STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

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There are many chronic diseases and medical conditions that may affect a student's educational pursuits on a continuing or periodic basis. The following are conditions which have required accommodations for MSC students: diabetes, seizure disorders, severe allergies, asthma, sickle cell anemia, low back injury, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, lupus erythematosus, kidney disease, AIDS, HIV, rheumatoid arthritis, chemical sensitivities and cancer. Obviously, the symptoms of these illnesses vary greatly and, as a result, the accommodations that students need vary. Accommodation is determined on an individual basis as a result of discussion and planning between the student, DSS, and faculty.

There are other disabilities that largely affect a student's mobility, such as cardiac conditions, arthritis, chronic back pain, diabetes, and respiratory disorders.

The student with **epilepsy** will have little problem in the classroom. In most cases seizures will be controlled by medication. Students with epilepsy will have learned to manage seizure activity through adequate rest, proper diet, and regular medication.

### **First Aid for Grand Mal Epilepsy**

- 1) Remain calm. Students will assume the same emotional reaction as the instructor.  
The seizure is painless to the individual.
- 2) Do not try to restrain the person. There is nothing you can do to stop a seizure once it has begun. It must run its course.
- 3) Clear the area around the individual so that he/she does not injure him/herself on hard objects. Try not to interfere with movements in any way.
- 4) Don't force anything between the teeth. If the person's mouth is already open, you might place a soft object like a handkerchief between the side teeth.
- 5) It isn't generally necessary to call a doctor unless the attack is followed almost immediately by another major seizure, or if the seizure lasts more than about ten minutes.
- 6) When the seizure is over, let the person rest if he/she needs to.
- 7) Turn the incident into a learning experience for the class. Explain that the seizure is not contagious and that it is nothing to be afraid of.  
*(from the Epilepsy Foundation of America)*

**Emergency Care Procedures Guide:** The objective of the College is to place a sick or injured student, faculty, or staff member into the care of family, personal physician or medical facility.

#### **Daytime Emergencies:**

1. Dial 911
2. Call Public Safety @ 471-2414 and share that ambulance has been requested. Give location for officer.
3. Patient will be transported to appropriate medical facility.

**Nighttime Emergencies:**

1. Dial 911
2. Call Public Safety @ 471-2414 and share that ambulance has been requested. Give location for officer.
3. Patient will be transported to appropriate medical facility.

**Spina Bifida (open spine)**

The student with Spina Bifida may have short stature and may use a wheelchair, braces or crutches. Classroom modifications that may be required will depend on the student's functional limitations. Most adaptations that are required have been discussed in earlier sections.

**Multiple Sclerosis (MS)**

The number one cause of chronic disability among young adults, may affect the student in a multitude of ways. Because MS most often occurs between the ages of 20 and 40, the college student with MS is apt to be currently adjusting to having a disability. Depending on the degree to which the MS has progressed, the student's mobility, speech, vision, and emotional state may be affected. One of the most difficult aspects of MS is that the symptoms have a tendency to come and go, but they continue to progress. "In between" periods may last from a few days to months in the early stages. The student may appear as if intoxicated - slurred speech, staggering, and/or unfocused eyes. Understanding the fluctuations that may occur in the student's behavior make it easier to understand variations in classroom performance. The physical adaptations required by the student with MS, if any, will vary from student to student, depending on functional limitation. The most common adaptations required have been discussed in previous sections.

Other conditions that may result in marked fluctuations of behavior and performance are Muscular Dystrophy and certain kidney problems that may necessitate dialysis. Muscular Dystrophy refers to a group of hereditary, progressive disorders, producing degeneration of voluntary muscles of the trunk and lower extremities. The atrophy of muscles results in chronic weakness and fatigue and may cause respiratory or cardiac problems.

**Back Injured**

Individuals with back injuries may find it difficult to sit for long periods of time. It may be necessary for these students to sit in the back of the classroom so that they may stand at intervals.

**Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)**

AIDS is caused by a virus that destroys the body's immune system. This condition leaves the person vulnerable to infections and cancers. Extreme fatigue is a common symptom. Treatment often requires absence from class.

**SUGGESTIONS FOR HELPING ALL STUDENTS TO SUCCEED**

## **IN THE CLASSROOM**

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- 1) Provide students with a detailed course syllabus. Make it available during pre-registration, if possible.
- 2) Clearly spell out expectations before course begins (e.g., grading, material to be covered, due dates).
- 3) Start each lecture with an outline of material to be covered that period. At the conclusion of class, briefly summarize key points.
- 4) Speak directly to students, and use gestures and natural expressions to convey further meaning.
- 5) Present new or technical vocabulary on the chalkboard or use a student handout. Terms should be used in context to convey greater meaning.
- 6) Give assignments both orally and in written form to avoid confusion.
- 7) Announce reading assignments well in advance for students who are using alternative text materials.
- 8) Provide study questions for exams that demonstrate the format, as well as the content, of the test. Explaining what constitutes a good answer and why.
- 9) If necessary, allow students with learning disabilities to demonstrate mastery of course materials using alternative methods (e.g., extended time limits for testing, oral exams, taped exams, individually proctored exams in a separate room, alternative test design). Some students may find essay format difficult, and a perceptually impaired student will always have trouble with matching tests.
- 10) Permit use of simple calculators, scratch paper, and speller's dictionaries during exams.
- 11) Provide adequate opportunities for questions and answers, including review sessions.
- 12) Encourage students to use campus support services (e.g., assistance in ordering taped textbooks, alternative testing arrangements, study skills, academic tutorial assistance, specialized study aids, peer support groups, diagnostic consultation).

## **CHRONIC MEDICAL DISABILITIES**

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## **EMERGENCY SITUATION GUIDELINES**

There are some medical conditions that may, at some time, cause an apparent emergency situation in the classroom. Knowing what to expect and what should be done can lessen anxiety and help keep the situation in perspective.

### **Seizures**

Seizures have different causes and vary considerably in appearance. Students with epilepsy or other seizure disorders should talk to you at the beginning of the semester to let you know what symptoms they have and what you should do. The degree of severity ranges from a brief staring episode to a grand mal seizure. The latter is the more frightening to observe.

- Don't panic. Seizures are usually short and not life threatening.
- Protect the person from injury by removing chairs or desks, not letting a crowd form, and placing a towel or coat under the person's head if needed for protection.
- Do not try to force anything into the mouth.
- If a person seems to be having trouble breathing, turn the person on his or her side; or from behind, push the lower jaw up and out; or tilt the head back to open the airway.
- Following a seizure, the person may be sleepy or confused.
- Call 911 to seek medical assistance for student. Contact Security @471.2700 during day hours and 747.0155 during evening hours. Counseling Center can assist you in seeking a family member, if necessary.

### **Insulin Reactions**

Occasionally, a person with diabetes may experience a rapid drop in blood sugar, causing restlessness, irritability or confusion, followed by increasing stupor and loss of consciousness.

- The immediate need is for orange juice, a regular soft drink or something else sweet, followed shortly by more substantial food. Usually a person with diabetes will carry food.
- You may need to find and get it out of the person's purse, backpack, or pockets.
- Emergencies from elevated blood sugar do not happen rapidly, so don't worry about doing the wrong thing: give the drink or candy first.

The exception to this rule is if the person is losing consciousness. In this case do not give fluids or put food in the person's mouth. Call for help.

### **Breathing Emergencies**

An allergic reaction, asthma or heart disease may cause a person to become short of breath.

- Staying calm will help diffuse the situation and allow you to use good judgment.
- Ask the student if he or she knows what is causing the problem and what helps.

- Follow any directions given by the person if he or she seems to be in control.
- The person may have medication to take.
- Call 911 for severe allergic reactions.

### **Environmental Illness or Chemical Sensitivity Disorder**

If a student with Environmental Illness or Multiple Chemical Sensitivity Disorder is severely allergic to something in the classroom environment, it may be necessary to move the class to another building or a room with better ventilation. For example, chemical substances associated with new carpeting, painting, or other restoration work found in one building may not be found in another. If the allergy seems to be to something like the type of markers used on overheads, you can easily accommodate the student by finding another kind, or a different way to display information. Sometimes different cleaning materials can be substituted for those that might be causing problems. Faculty may need to encourage students in the class to avoid using hair sprays, perfumes or other chemicals on the days they have a class with these individuals. The Environmental Illness Letter from DSS is available as a means of documenting the disorder, and it gives a statement to be read to the class. Symptoms include headaches, breathing disorders, intestinal problems, memory loss, flu-like symptoms, dizziness, mental confusion, depression, and chronic exhaustion.

### **General Considerations**

Since medical disabilities vary greatly, the implications and accommodations will vary greatly as well. An awareness of the possible implications of medical disabilities will help you determine teaching strategies and accommodations that might be helpful. Be aware of the following possibilities when teaching students with medical disabilities.

- **The student's symptoms may vary during the semester. A student with a chronic illness may begin the semester in good health but have an episode or relapse during the semester.** The need for accommodations, therefore, may vary from time to time.
- **The student may have to miss classes occasionally or may have an extended absence.**
- **The student may have symptoms that directly affect his or her ability to perform academically.** Symptoms that may have a direct impact on learning include: difficulty concentrating, fatigue, memory and recall problems, and drowsiness. All of these symptoms can be caused by an illness or may be side effects of medications.
- **The student may have other symptoms that affect his or her participation in other ways.** It is important to be aware that many symptoms influence a person's ability to participate in class. For example, a student may not be able to tolerate sitting or standing for long periods of time and may need to have the freedom to change positions during the class period. Some illnesses or medications make a person susceptible to dehydration, so students with these illnesses may need to have water available or leave the classroom to get a drink occasionally. Even though these symptoms do not directly affect learning, they do have an impact on how the student engages in the learning process.

- **The disability may be a "hidden" disability.** There may not be outward signs that a student has a chronic illness. Students with "hidden" or "invisible" disabilities often have to deal with disbelief from others regarding the implications of their illness. This can lead to insecurities and hesitancy to request accommodations. The variability of symptoms may also contribute to the skepticism of those around them. It is important to be aware that variability of symptoms is common and a person doesn't have to "look sick" to have severe symptoms.
- **Students with medical conditions may not be aware that they qualify for services available to people with disabilities.** If a student reveals to you that he or she has a medical condition and the student is having difficulties in class, you may want to refer him or her to the Counseling Center.
- **Chronic pain may result from the presence of many disabilities or illnesses.** Pain has unique implications and impacts on learning. When a person is in pain, his or her ability to concentrate and perform mental tasks is often reduced. Chronic pain also results in fatigue, which in turn further reduces a person's capacity to concentrate. In addition, the medications that are prescribed for chronic pain often have a direct impact on concentration, memory, and alertness.

*Required accommodations are those listed on the Accommodation Letter, as well as those negotiated with Counseling Center staff. These are listed below along with other helpful strategies.*

### **Classroom Guidelines**

- **Allow early access to syllabi and reading lists.** Getting organized ahead of time and beginning reading assignments early may help the student stay on track in case of later illness and absences.
- **Facilitate the process for the student to use a classmate as a note taker.** You will probably be asked to help recruit a volunteer. In your initial private meeting with the student clarify whether the student wants to be pointed out as the person to contact or would prefer not to be pointed out to the class as a person with a disability. Most people with disabilities that are not immediately visible prefer not to be pointed out to others, and we must honor this request.
- **Provide copies of overheads or PowerPoint slides, either on paper or electronically.**
- **Allow students to tape record lectures.** Students with disabilities are legally entitled to tape record lectures (if you have concerns, there is a Tape Recording Agreement form which you can ask students to sign).
- **Consider providing copies of your class notes.** Some faculty prefer to post these on a website for all students.
- **Support modifications in seating arrangements.** Seating location in the classroom can have an impact on ability to focus and concentrate.

- **Allow students to have beverages in class and/or tolerate them leaving the classroom for breaks.** Some medications cause thirst or dry mouth as a side effect.
- **Grant incompletes or late withdrawals rather than failures in the event of prolonged illness-related absences.** Such cases may need to be reviewed or discussed with the Counseling Center.

### **Testing Guidelines**

- **Provide extended time (double time is standard),** and access to you as instructor for questions during the test. Since concentration ability may be compromised by either the illness or the medications, extended time may be an appropriate accommodation.
- **Consider providing exams divided into segments with rest breaks.** Students may need a break during an exam. In order to maintain the security of the exam, consider providing long exams in segments so that the student can leave the room if needed during the break.
- **Provide low-distraction rooms to take exams.** For students whose medication or illness causes concentration difficulties, taking a test in an environment with fewer distractions may improve performance.
- **Remember that the same accommodations apply to pop and other quizzes, in-class writing, or other in-class assignments as to a full-length exam.** For quizzes, the student should be scheduled to complete the quiz either the same day or as close as possible to the same day. A possible solution for quizzes when a low distraction room is not an accommodation would be to have the student start in class and finish after class. For in-class assignments consider giving the student until later that day or the next day. Discuss these issues in your initial meeting with the student.

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL DISORDERS**

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Psychiatric illnesses can affect individuals of any age, gender, and intellectual group. The onset of these illnesses can occur at any developmental period, but the onset of many types of psychiatric illnesses most commonly occurs between the ages of 18 and 25. This is of critical importance to those of us working in postsecondary education settings since at most institutions the majority of students fall within this age range. A psychiatric illness is considered a "disability" when it results in a substantial limitation in a major life activity.

In the higher education setting, students with psychiatric disabilities have been typically underserved. The impact of these disabilities on academic achievement is not widely

understood or recognized. Psychiatric disturbances are grouped into a number of categories including psychoses, organic brain syndromes, substance abuse, mood disorders and personality disorders. There are many treatments available to individuals with psychiatric disabilities, including both medication and mental health therapy.

The stigma of psychiatric labels, the stereotypes that come with these labels, and concerns over disruptive behavior (generally unfounded) often result in exclusion and isolation for the student with a psychiatric disability. Recognizing that disruptive behavior is not a defining characteristic of most people with psychiatric disabilities is important. Not every student who has a psychiatric disability is disruptive. Most are not. The converse is also true: Not every student who is disruptive has a psychiatric disability.

Many persons in this group are without sufficient community support and relevant interventions. The higher degree of social stigma also separates this group from the rest of the population of persons with disabilities at Macon State, and may prevent us from providing adequate support. Sometimes students choose not to seek assistance from the Counseling Center, and prefer not to request accommodations from their instructors. Some choose to identify themselves to the Counseling Center, but not to their instructors. Others will approach you and ask for accommodations in the same way as any other student with a disability.

Issues that arise with these students may be a result of the disorder itself, the medication taken to control symptoms, or a combination of the two. Environmental factors may also have an impact. Functional limitations include difficulty concentrating and staying focused during stressful situations (including exams), maintaining orientation to the physical layout of campus, and selecting appropriate courses and a workable course load. Social skills involved in one-to-one and group interactions vary widely.

Students with psychiatric disabilities have accommodation needs just as other students with disabilities do. Individual students must identify themselves and provide documentation to the Counseling Center if services are needed.

### **General Considerations**

- **The need for accommodations may vary from time to time.** The student's symptoms may vary during the semester. A student with a psychiatric disability may begin the semester in good health, but may have an episode during the semester.
- **The student may have to miss classes occasionally or may have an extended absence.**
- **The student may have symptoms that directly affect his or her ability to perform academically.** Symptoms that may have a direct impact on learning include: difficulty concentrating, fatigue, memory and recall problems, and drowsiness. These symptoms can be caused by the disability or may be side effects of medications.
- **Psychiatric disabilities are "hidden" disabilities.** Psychiatric disabilities have long carried a certain stigma. These disabilities are sometimes misunderstood or perceived in a negative light. Students with these disabilities sometimes express concerns that they will be treated differently or discriminated against once their disability is revealed. These students, therefore, may not get accommodations that would allow them to perform at their full potential. Faculty and staff can help to

break this cycle by providing a safe and supportive atmosphere for students and by taking students who disclose their disabilities seriously.

- **Students with psychiatric disabilities may not be aware that they qualify for services available to people with disabilities.** If a student reveals to you that he or she has a psychiatric disability and the student is having difficulties in class, you may want to refer him or her to the Counseling Center.

Some of the more commonly diagnosed psychiatric illnesses - major depression, bipolar disorder, dysthymia, anxiety disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, phobia, and schizophrenia - are described briefly at the end of this section.

***Required accommodations are those listed on the Accommodation Letter, as well as those negotiated with Counseling Center staff. These are listed below along with other helpful strategies.***

### **Classroom Guidelines**

- **Allow early access to syllabi and reading assignments.** Getting organized ahead of time and beginning reading assignments early may help the student stay on track in case of later absences.
- **Facilitate the process for the student to use a classmate as a note taker.** You will probably be asked to help recruit a volunteer. In your initial private meeting with the student clarify whether the student wants to be pointed out as the person to contact or would prefer not to be pointed out to the class as a person with a disability. Most people with disabilities that are not immediately visible prefer not to be pointed out to others, and we must honor this request.
- **Provide copies of overheads or PowerPoint slides, either on paper or electronically.**
- **Allow students to tape record lectures.** Students with disabilities are legally entitled to tape record lectures (if you have concerns, there is a Tape Recording Agreement form which you can ask students to sign).
- **Consider providing copies of your class notes.** Some faculty prefer to post these on a website for all students.
- **Support modifications in seating arrangements.** Seating location in the classroom can have an impact on ability to focus and concentrate.
- **Allow beverages in class and/or tolerate the student leaving the classroom for breaks.** Some medication regimes cause extreme thirst as a side effect.
- **Offer alternative ways of completing assignments.** For example, a student with severe anxiety may perform better doing a written assignment or a pre-recorded presentation versus an oral presentation. In doing so, do not lower your standards; just consider other ways that the course objectives might be met.
- **Allow for periodic appointments outside of class to discuss progress, provide support and feedback.** A symptom of some psychiatric illnesses is extreme self-doubt, while other illnesses may result in an inflated self-esteem.

Meeting with the student regularly to give the student a realistic picture of his or her progress in your class may help the student stay on track.

- **Allow the student to take an "incomplete" or grant a late withdrawal rather than failure in case of prolonged absences due to severe symptoms or hospitalization.** Such cases may need to be reviewed or discussed with staff in the Counseling Center.

### Testing Guidelines

- **Provide extended time (double time is standard),** and access to you as instructor for questions during the test. Since the ability to concentrate may be compromised by either the illness or the medications, extended time may be an appropriate accommodation.
- **Provide low distraction rooms to take exams.** Being easily distracted is a symptom of some psychiatric disabilities. Taking a test in an environment with fewer distractions may improve performance.
- **Remember that the same accommodations apply to pop and other quizzes, in-class writing, or other in-class assignments as to a full-length exam.** For quizzes, the student should be scheduled to complete the quiz either the same day or as close as possible to the same day. A possible solution for quizzes when a low distraction room is not an accommodation would be to have the student start in class and finish after class. For in-class assignments consider giving the student until later that day or the next day. Discuss these issues in your initial meeting with the student.

### Commonly Diagnosed Psychiatric Illnesses

- **Anxiety Disorder:** This can be diagnosed as either a generalized anxiety disorder or a panic disorder. Symptoms can include changes in sleep patterns, rapid heart rate, dizziness and fainting, tremors, tension, and general uneasiness. People with anxiety disorders often seem to be unable to relax. They may focus on mistakes, worries, regrets, or potential future problems.
- **Bipolar Disorder:** This disorder is characterized by the alteration between two states: mania and depression. It is also called manic-depressive disorder and bipolar affective disorder. In the manic phase, individuals may experience an inflated self-esteem, a decreased need to sleep, inappropriate irritability, grandiose notions, poor judgment, inappropriate social behavior, and disconnected and racing thoughts. In the depressive phase, individuals may experience any of the characteristics associated with a diagnosis of depression including but not limited to feelings of worthlessness, inactivity, appetite changes, and feelings of sadness.
- **Dysthymia:** This is another type of depression that is less severe in nature. It involves more long-term, chronic symptoms that do not disable, but keep a person from functioning at full capacity or from feeling good about himself or herself. Individuals who experience dysthymia can have episodes of major depression.
- **Major Depression:** A person can be diagnosed with depression at any age. Characteristics of major depression include a persistent sad or anxious mood, feelings of sadness, inactivity, difficulty with thinking and concentration, thoughts of

suicide, insomnia, feelings of worthlessness, feelings of guilt, an increase or decrease in appetite, and persistent physical symptoms such as headaches and stomach aches. Depression affects a person's mind, body and thoughts, and certainly affects the way a person feels about himself or herself.

- **Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder:** Individuals with this disorder think thoughts or behave in ways they do not want to. They cannot control their behavior despite recognizing that the behavior is bizarre, unhealthy, irrational, or illegal. Individuals may not always act out obsessive thoughts but the thoughts disturb the person and prevent him or her from functioning in daily life. Compulsive behavior is repetitive and ritualistic in nature, and although perceived as bizarre, seems purposeful to the individual.
- **Phobia:** Phobias are extreme, irrational fears that severely interfere with an individual's daily functioning. Everyone has certain fears. However, an individual diagnosed with this disorder has a fear to such an irrational extent that life becomes severely disrupted.
- **Schizophrenia:** This psychiatric illness is categorized as a psychotic disorder. Schizophrenia is characterized by extreme distortions of reality and a loss of contact with the environment. Some characteristics include a retreat from reality, emotional blunting, and disturbed thinking. All of these characteristics can vary in severity within individuals. Individuals may experience hallucinations, delusions, withdrawal, loss of self-control, and bizarre behavior. A diagnosis of schizophrenia is very serious and ultimately can affect all functional areas of an individual's life.

**Disability Support Services  
Counseling Center**

**Testing Accommodation Form**

**Part 1**

**To Be Completed by Student:**

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Professor: \_\_\_\_\_

Class Time: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Part 2**

**To Be Completed by the Instructor:**

**Check One Option:**

\_\_\_ Please proctor exams in the Counseling Center, Learning Support, 110.

\_\_\_ Please proctor exams at the Warner Robins Campus.

\_\_\_ I will proctor the student's exams within my department.

**Choose Delivery Option:**

**All exams, quizzes, etc., must be delivered to the Counseling Center at least three (3) hours prior to the scheduled test time**

\_\_\_ I will email exams, quizzes, etc. to [dstesting@maconstate.edu](mailto:dstesting@maconstate.edu)

\_\_\_ Exam will be hand delivered to the Counseling Center

\_\_\_ Exam will be faxed to the Counseling Center (478) 471-5730

***\*How can our office contact you during the exam if needed?***

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Class related material(s) student could use during test (if any):

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Instructor's signature:

Date:

**STUDENT MUST RETURN FORM DIRECTLY TO DSS OF COUNSELING CENTER ONE WEEK PRIOR TO FIRST TEST**

***Note: Submitting a Testing Accommodation Form does not guarantee testing accommodations at DSS. Testing accommodations are provided on a first-come, first-served basis.***

04/11

## **Faculty Frequently Asked Questions**

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### **Who do I contact about questions I may have pertaining to disability related issues?**

Macon State provides services for students with disabilities on both the Macon and Warner Robins campuses. Please contact the Counseling Center for information about eligibility of services and accommodations:

Revised: December, 2009

Counseling Center  
Macon State College  
478/471.2985  
Fax: 478/471.5730  
[www.maconstate.edu/counseling](http://www.maconstate.edu/counseling)

### **What is the Disability Support Services office?**

The Disability Support Services office of the Counseling Center provides services and supports for Macon State students with disabilities in order for these students to have equal opportunities to benefit from all programs, services and activities offered at Macon State.

**Disability Support Services offers the following services:**

- Recommendations for program accommodations in accordance with recent documentation which meets the criteria established by the University System of Georgia
- Referral to appropriate student support services on campus
- Information and assistance in the area of academic planning
- Liaison activities between faculty, staff and students with disabilities
- Referral to off-campus resources
- Alternative testing
- Consultation with public school administrators, rehabilitation or high school counselors, parents, and prospective students concerning Macon State services for students with disabilities

**Disability Support Services will not:**

- Perform psycho-educational diagnostic assessments
- Offer self-contained classes or training programs for students with learning disabilities
- Ask faculty to compromise the quality of instruction or evaluation or sacrifice class standards.

The following is a list of frequently asked questions regarding the roles and responsibilities of faculty and teaching associates in providing accessible learning for students with disabilities. Although these questions address the most common of concerns, the issue of faculty responsibility is situation-specific and as such can be difficult to define. As you are confronted with some of your concerns, keep in mind that Counseling Center is the office on campus that coordinates services. Feel free to call the office at 471-2985 if there is a need to discuss specific situations or need for clarification about these questions and answers.

**Who is responsible for determining appropriate accommodations?**

The Counseling Center is the office on campus that determines appropriate accommodations. The office bases decisions upon documentation collected from a student with a disability, the student's functional limitations, and the student's clarification about specific needs and limitations.

**Am I required to provide exam accommodations to students who request it?**

**Yes you are.** Students with disabilities are protected by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, as well as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). These laws require that qualified students with disabilities get equal access to an education, including exam accommodations.

**A student has asked for accommodations. How do I know the student truly has a disability and needs accommodations?**

You may ask the student to provide you with a letter verifying that s/he has a disability. The student, if registered with Counseling Center will be given a letter within 24 hours after a request is made. Counseling Center has a file with documentation of the disability for every student who is registered with the office and uses services. The specifics of the disability cannot be disclosed due to confidentiality issues.

**A student with a disability has requested that s/he take an exam at DSS. How do I know that my exam will be safe and that the student will get no unfair advantage?**

Counseling Center has developed a very systematic and secure procedure for getting exams from faculty and returning them once the student has taken the exam. There are very rigid checking in and checking out procedures for exams, and no student is able to take an exam with appropriate accommodations without authorization. While exams are at the Counseling Center, they are kept in a locked file during the night. While students are taking the exam, they are monitored. Students are monitored by video while taking all exams. Any inappropriate behaviors or exam materials are reported back to the instructor. Suggestions and feedback are always welcome.

**Students with disabilities ask me to fill out “proctor sheets.” I have a million things to do. I don’t mind if they use exam accommodations, but do I have to fill out that form?**

Yes you do! In order for students to arrange for exam accommodations at the Counseling Center, and in order for Counseling Center to administer your exam to your student, you must quickly and totally fill out the “proctor sheets.” It is often very helpful to meet with the student during office hours so that you and the person requesting accommodations can complete the proctor sheet together and are in agreement about the arrangements for the administration of your exam. Not only does the proctor sheet help facilitate scheduling and preparing to administer exams with appropriate accommodation, but it also helps Counseling Center to administer the exams using your specific requirements for the administration of the exam for the entire quarter.

**I’ve been debating about what book I want to use for my class, but the Counseling Center keeps asking me to select a book ASAP. Do I have to?**

Yes you do. Textbook conversion is a time consuming, labor intensive task, and DSS has many books or other reading assignments each semester to be converted to electronic formats, audio tapes, Braille or enlargements. Students who are print impaired need to be able to access their textbooks at the same time as others in the class. By delaying the selection of textbooks, Counseling Center may not be able to get books converted to an appropriate format in a timely fashion. This means that students may have to start the semester without access to their textbooks. None of us want to contribute to a student

getting behind or failing a class.

**When I have a deaf student in class, am I required to have an interpreter or transcriber in the class too? My class is very crowded and also, the students sometimes watch the interpreter instead of me.**

There is no question about it. You are required by law to have what is essential for the student to have equal access to an education, and this includes having a sign language interpreter or transcriber in the classroom when there is a need.

**A student in my class has asked me for assistance getting notes. After I have made these arrangements, the student has missed most of the lectures. Should s/he be getting these notes?**

If a student with a disability regularly skips class, then s/he has no right to get notes on the days skipped. The note taker should be informed of this. If the student has a legitimate excuse for the absence, i.e. illness, death in the family etc., handle the situation as you would all other students.

**I have a student who is having difficulty in my class. I think this student may have a disability. What should I do to help the student?**

Talk privately with the student to discuss your observations. The student may reveal s/he has a disability. If this is the case and the student is registered with the Counseling Center, suggest that the student talk to his/her counselor in this office.

The student may also be referred to the Counseling Center for diagnostic testing referral for a suspected learning disability, or the Counseling Center may refer students to other qualified professionals for other disability diagnoses. Suggest that the student call 471.2985 for further information.

**Am I required to lower the standards of a required assignment because the student has a disability?**

**No, the standards should be the same for all students;** however, some students with disabilities may exhibit their knowledge, production, and other course expectations differently than their peers. For example, a student with a learning disability in writing may produce an essay exam by using a computer or scribe rather than writing out an answer without the use of accommodations. The quality of the work should be the same.

**I have a student with a disability getting behind in his/her schoolwork. This student has missed a number of classes and has not handed in several assignments. Although s/he has taken a midterm and used accommodations, the student received a “D” for the midterm. At this point, the student is not passing the class. Do I have a right to fail a student with a disability?**

The student with a disability has the same right to fail as anyone else. Their work should be equivalent to their peers. It may be a good idea to discuss your observations with this

student just as you would with anyone else in your class who is experiencing difficulty.

**I have a student who is blind in my chemistry lab. How is s/he going to participate and be graded in his/her lab work?**

If possible, assist the student in getting a lab partner or assign a student assistant to work with the student with a disability. In either situation, the student who is blind should direct the assistant to carry out the functions of the lab assignment. If a volunteer lab partner cannot be found, suggest to the student that s/he needs to contact the Counseling Center as soon as possible for assistance in getting a lab partner. The speed in making these arrangements is critical so that the student will not fall behind. In most situations, students have made arrangements for a lab assistant prior to classes starting.

**Do I have any recourse if I disagree about requested accommodations?**

To clarify any disagreement about a requested accommodation, you can first contact DSS at 471.2985. Start with the student's disability counselor, but you are also free to talk to the director of the Counseling Center. If there continues to be conflict, you can contact the Macon State ADA Coordinator at 471.2780. Occasionally, some students may ask for unreasonable accommodations. When in doubt, call the office to discuss your concerns.

**We are making a decision about accepting a student with a disability into our professional degree program. I am concerned about the cost of providing accommodations, the extra time this student will require, etc. Are we required to accept this person?**

Students with disabilities need to meet the same requirements as all other students when considering acceptance in a program. If a student with a disability meets the same requirements as other applicants and are otherwise qualified, then any disability related concerns cannot be taken into consideration.

**A student came to me in the sixth week of the semester requesting accommodations. I feel that this is too late to ask for accommodations and that arrangements should be made at the beginning of the semester. I even made an announcement on the first day of class to meet with me about these arrangements. Do I have to provide accommodations for someone this late?**

Yes, you do. There could be numerous reasons why a student makes a late request. Perhaps s/he could not get documentation of his/her disability any earlier and therefore could not initiate accommodations earlier. Some students try to take a class without accommodations, but find that they aren't doing well and need accommodations. Whatever the reason, students may make requests for accommodations any time during the semester. There may be a few situations where students make a request for accommodations so late that appropriate arrangements are impossible to make. An example of such a request might be a student requesting an entire textbook be converted to alternate format at the end of a semester. You must only provide accommodations at the point when a student makes a request, and you and the Counseling Center are able to make appropriate arrangements. The student is too late if s/he reveals a disability after the

completion of a class and requests deletion of unsatisfactory grades.

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### **Specific Suggestions for Instruction**

**Students with disabilities vary considerably, even those with the same disability.** For example:

- Some students with visual impairments have no vision; others are able to see large forms; others can see print if magnified; and still others have tunnel vision with no peripheral vision or the reverse.
- Some students with visual impairments use Braille, and some have little or no knowledge of Braille.
- Students who are deaf are often expected to use sign language; however, some students who are deaf do not use sign language.
- Some students with learning disabilities have difficulty with reading and writing but excel in math. Others can read and write well and perform math problems well, but their pace is well below that of an average student.

Since students with disabilities vary so much, when you are instructing students with disabilities and they come to you to discuss accommodations, ask them about instructional strategies that might be helpful to them.

**Students do not have to tell you the nature of their disability.** As you probably already know, most of the students that come to you requesting accommodations have invisible disabilities. Some will choose to tell you, but many may choose not to discuss the specifics of their disability. What they have been instructed to do is to self advocate and make requests for accommodations. Some will want to discuss their disability and not request accommodations. Accommodations may not be needed in every class. Please note that although a disability is invisible, those who provide you with a proctor sheet or a letter verifying a disability, or a letter from the Counseling Center requesting assistance recruiting a note taker, have a diagnosed disability. Counseling Center has documentation that verifies the disability. The functional impact of an invisible disability may be just as impactful in an academic setting as someone with a more visible disability.

**Students with disabilities vary in their academic success.** You need to expect that some students with disabilities using accommodations will get A's on every test whereas some may fail every test. Just because a student gets A's doesn't mean that student doesn't need accommodations.

There are often special considerations when instructing students with disabilities. The following instructional considerations involve good teaching practices that may be helpful to all students in the class.

**Practice universal design for learning:** Universal design for learning is an approach to designing course instruction, materials, evaluation, activities, and content in such a way that all persons can participate in the educational process without adaptation or retrofitting. Using this concept as a design for instruction, accommodations would likely not be

necessary because options for learning and evaluation are available to anyone participating in a class. This approach to teaching and learning is an ideal, but incorporating some aspect of this instructional approach may be feasible as well as helpful to students.

**Make sure web-enhanced instruction is accessible:** If any of your classroom instruction is on the web, check with the Technology Support Center at 757.2634 to make sure that your instruction is accessible.

**Collaborate and take responsibility in your role in providing accommodations.** Provide opportunities to meet with students, fill out those proctor sheets, assist in getting note takers, inform the Counseling Center of textbooks when requested, provide Counseling Center with exams when students need to take exams, and consult.

**Be responsive to the needs of students with specific disabilities.** Examples of such situations are:

- Don't turn your back to a student who is deaf or hard of hearing. S/he may be reading your lips.
- If you have a student who is blind, refrain from vague language such as "look at this" and "examine that." Use words to describe what you and others see.
- Assist with preferential seating when necessary, and provide students who are blind with orientation to the classroom describing the physical layout of the room including any obstacles, furniture, lecture position, location of steps, or any low-hanging objects.
- Assist with making arrangements for a room change if the room is inaccessible and you have a student who needs an elevator in order to gain access to the classroom. Do not suggest to the student to drop the class. Students must have access to all classes.
- Students with disabilities may have additional helpful suggestions. Most are knowledgeable about their disability, the strategies and accommodations that work for them, and the assistive technology that they use.

**Learning support strategies are helpful to students with learning disabilities, ADHD, head injuries, or other cognitive disorders.**

- Particularly helpful are strategies and aids that provide structure. Some examples are a comprehensive syllabus that clearly delineates expectations and due dates; study aids such as study questions, study guides, opportunities for questions and answers; and review sessions to help the student who needs a lot of repetition.
- Be receptive to students meeting with you for clarification during office hours.
- Also, students may ask for assistance in identifying a "study buddy," another student who is willing to meet regularly to review notes, explain complex materials and provide two-way quizzes.

**Be sensitive to disability-related classroom etiquette.**

For example:

- If a student has a guide dog, understand that this is a working animal. They must be allowed in the classroom, but do not feed or pet a guide dog.
- Interpreters are in the classroom only to facilitate communication and must not be asked to do other things like run errands, proctor an exam etc. Speak to the student who is deaf and not the interpreter. The interpreter will voice student questions.

- Never discuss disability-related arrangements in front of the class unless it's a situation where there is no chance that the student with a disability will be identified.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

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Emergencies such as fire and tornadoes occasionally occur as well as emergency drills. Instructors and staff should develop a plan of action if they are aware that they have a student with mobility, visual or hearing impairment in their classroom. Ultimately, the person with a disability is responsible for his/her own safety in an emergency situation, but it is important that classroom instructors play a role in student evacuation. If you need assistance in developing a plan, contact the ADA Coordinator's Office at 471.2780. The following are some suggestions:

### **Students with Mobility Impairments**

In case of fire or tornadoes, individuals with mobility impairments should be directed to an area of refuge. This can include near a stairway or a classroom adjacent to a stairway with a fire rated door and/walls or to an internal room away from windows (in case of tornadoes). Note the location of the stairway or adjacent room (i.e. NW corner, 2nd floor).

**The student should not block the stairway. This can result in harm to the student and others as people evacuate via the stairway.**

- The instructor should alert emergency personnel of the location and need for evacuation of the person with a disability.
- Assist the student with the mobility impairment in accessing the area of refuge, and let him/her know you will be contacting appropriate rescue personnel.
- If you have a cell phone and the student does not, leave the student with the cell phone.
- In most instances, do not attempt to carry the person in the wheelchair. You can injure yourself or the student.

### **Elevator Breakdowns and Repair**

With such a large number of buildings on campus, elevator breakdowns are a relatively common occurrence and can be extremely inconvenient or even life threatening to a person who uses a wheelchair. When an elevator ceases to operate, contact the Plant Operations at 471.2780 immediately. If a person who uses a wheelchair is stuck on an upper level floor and also uses a respirator to breathe, time is of the essence. Consult with the person in question to determine the amount of oxygen remaining in the respirator and assess their desire for emergency rescue.

If there is a breakdown of the main elevator and there is a freight elevator, assist the student in finding the freight elevator. Students sometimes need assistance getting on and off a freight elevator. If you become alert to long-term repair issues with an elevator and you have a student taking a class in an upper level classroom, contact Counseling Center about getting the class changed to another site.

### **Students with Visual Impairments**

Students with visual impairments should already be familiar with their surroundings after mobility and orientation training. They may not, however, be aware of emergency exits.

- In case of emergencies, alert the student to the nature of the situation. Offer assistance to the student and guide him/her to the nearest emergency exit and out of and away from the building to safety. Some types of emergencies require safety within a building. Depending upon the nature of the emergency, during crises periods, there may be a lot of commotion and noise. A student who is blind may not be able to orient him/herself as well as in calmer times. Your assistance is critical to their safety.
- A good way of offering assistance to a person who is blind is to use what is known as the sighted guide technique. You do this by offering this person an elbow. The person holds on to your elbow, and you proceed ahead.
- As you walk, alert the student to where he/she is and inform him/her of any obstacles, debris, doorways, or narrow passages.
- Once guided to safety, orient the student to his/her surroundings and determine if further assistance is needed.

### **Students with Hearing Impairments**

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing may not hear alarms or other audible warnings. Instructors should inform the student of an emergency. There are two ways to get the person's attention:

- Write a note for the student alerting him/her to the emergency and instructing him/her where to go.
- Turn the light switch off and on to gain attention.
- Tap his/her shoulder.

In most instances, there will be an interpreter/transcriber in the classroom to explain the emergency to the student. Provide any assistance a student might need during the evacuation process.

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