



Learning Access Program

Faculty and Staff Handbook Part Two

Policies and Procedures for University Students with Disabilities

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Colleges and universities typically serve students with the following disability conditions: mobility impairments, vision impairments, hearing impairments, learning disabilities, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, systematic disabilities, psychiatric disabilities, and brain injuries. An estimated 428,280 students with disabilities were enrolled at 2 year and 4 year postsecondary education institutions in 1996 or 1997-98. According to the U.S. Department of Education, specific learning disabilities was the most frequent disability with almost half of the students with disabilities (195,870 out of 428,280 students.) The remaining was comprised of 59,650 students with mobility and orthopedic impairments, 49,570 students with health impairments or problems, 33,260 students with mental illness or emotional disturbances, 23,860 hearing impaired students, 18,650 students who were blind or visually impaired, 4,020 students who had a speech or language impairment and 38,410 specified as "other" (1999).

Some of these conditions are readily apparent, while others are not always visible to an observer. This section presents an overview of disability conditions and the instructional strategies one can implement to enhance the accessibility of course instruction, materials and activities.

No two students are alike, even with the same disability; each student is an expert concerning his or her own specific disability and in some cases has a lifetime of experience at creating accommodations. Therefore, communicating with the student is essential to discovering methods of accommodation. In thinking about necessary accommodations, faculty should consider a student's physical accessibility to the classroom as well as the student's ability to fully participate in all course activities. Accessibility and communication are key to providing an environment where a student with a disability can realize his or her academic potential.

General Strategies for Optimum Learning

Many teaching strategies that assist students with disabilities are also known to benefit students without disabilities. Instruction utilizing different approaches will reach more students than instruction using one method. The LAP offers the following suggestions to help professors in meeting the needs of the growing diversity of student needs in the classroom particularly those with disabilities.

During registration

- Make class syllabus and list of required texts available by request to students. This allows time for students to obtain materials in alternative formats and to begin reading assignments.
- Be available to discuss class content and teaching style.
- If available and appropriate, select a textbook with an accompanying study guide for optional student use.
- If available and appropriate, select a textbook that is already in an e-text or tape format.

Early in the semester

- Include a disability access statement in your syllabus and make an announcement at the first meeting of the class such as: "Any student who may need an accommodation due to a disability, please make an appointment to see me during my office hours. A letter of accommodation from the Learning Access Program authorizing your accommodations will be needed." This approach preserves students' privacy and also indicates your willingness to provide accommodations as needed.
- Include a disability access statement in your syllabus and make an announcement at the first meeting of the class such as: "Any student who may need an accommodation due to a disability, please make an appointment to see me during my office hours. A letter of accommodation from the Learning Access Program authorizing your accommodations will be needed." This approach preserves students' privacy and also indicates your willingness to provide accommodations as needed.

- spoken and written language skills
- reading skills
- mathematical

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- Allow the use of spell-check and grammar assistive devices.
- When in doubt about how to assist the student, ask him or her.
- Allow the student the same anonymity as other students.

Hearing Impairments

The causes and degrees of hearing loss vary across the deaf and hard of hearing community, as do methods of communication and attitudes toward deafness. In general, there are three types of hearing loss:

Conductive loss affects the sound conducting paths of the outer and middle ear. 4th ed () Tr-0.0dfTdkleand

Instructional Strategies

The following strategies are suggested in order to enhance the accessibility of course instruction, materials, and activities. They are general strategies designed to support individualized reasonable accommodation (NETAC, 1998).

- Attempt to arrange to be in a classroom with proper acoustics.
- Include a disability access statement on the syllabus.
- Reduce as much as possible interfering sounds emitted from lights, vents, air conditioning units etc.
- Close doors and windows to reduce interference from outside noise.
- Do not speak while writing on the blackboard.
- Point out who is speaking in group

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Mobility Impairments

Mobility impairment broadly describes any disability that limits movement of the body. Some mobility impairments are caused by conditions present at birth while others are the result of illness or physical injury. Injuries cause different types of mobility impairments, depending on what area of the spine is affected. *Quadriplegia*, paralysis of the extremities and trunk, is caused by a neck injury. Students with quadriplegia have limited or no use of their arms and hands and often use electric wheelchairs. *Paraplegia*, paralysis of the lower extremities and the lower trunk, is caused by an injury to the mid-back (University of Minnesota, 1997). Students often use a manual wheelchair and have full movement of arms and hands. Below are brief descriptions of other causes of mobility impairments.

Amputation is the removal of one or more limbs, sometimes caused by trauma or another condition.

Arthritis is the inflammation of the body's joints, causing pain, swelling, and difficulty in body movement.

Back disorders can limit some functions of the body. Some back disorders are caused by trauma or another condition.

Instructional Strategies

The following strategies are suggested to enhance the accessibility of course instruction, materials, and activities. They are general strategies designed to support individualized reasonable accommodations.

- Include a disability access statement on your syllabus.
- Spend extra time with the student,

Common accommodations for students with speech impairments include:

- Reserve a front row seat for the student
- Consider replacing verbal assignments with written assignments
- Allow students who are unable to communicate orally to use a typewriter, word processor, sign language interpreter or real-time captioner in class

Instructional Strategies

Be patient.

Some Considerations

Students affected by systemic disabilities differ from those with other disabilities because systemic disabilities are often unstable. This causes a person's condition to vary; therefore, the need for and type of reasonable accommodations must be personalized to the individual.

Some common accommodations for students with systematic disabilities include:

- Conveniently located parking
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Students with traumatic brain injuries (TBI) are one of the fastest growing groups of students with disabilities. In teaching a student with a traumatic brain injury, one must keep in mind that individual strengths differ and are directly

- Bright lighting
- Raised lettering
- Adaptive "talking" computer equipment
- Readers and scribes for exams
- Print scanners
- Priority registration
- Taped lectures
- Lab or library assistants

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PART III: FURTHER DISABILITY INFORMATION

DISABILITY ORGANIZATIONS

Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD)

107 Commerce Centre Drive, Suite 204
Huntersville, NC 28078 USA
voice: 704.947.7779 • fax: 704.948.7779
www.ahead.org

Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorder CHADD National Office

4601 Presidents Drive, Suite 300
Lanham, MD 20706
Tel: 301306-7070 / Fax: 01-306-7090
www.chadd.org

Council for Exceptional Children

2900 Crystal Drive, Suite 1000
Arlington, VA 22202
1-888-232-7733
<https://www.cec.sped.org>

Department of Justice

U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Civil Rights Division
Disability Rights Section NYA
Washington, D.C. 20530
202-307-0663
<http://www.justice.gov/crt/005eohttp://wwtpt://wwwlwwt/www3>

Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html>

Glossary of Learning Disabilities Terms

This glossary is a compilation of terms and definitions adapted from a number of sources.

Accommodations-Techniques and materials that allow individuals with disabilities to complete school or work tasks with greater ease and effectiveness. Examples include note takers, extra time on tests, tape recorders and expanded time for completing assignments.

Achievement Test-A test that measures the extent to which a person has acquired certain information or mastered certain skills, usually as a result of education or training.

Akathisia-Extreme restlessness.

Amphetamines-A group of drugs used to stimulate the cerebral cortex of the brain.

Anorexia- A deficient amount of oxygen in the tissues of a part of the body or in the bloodstream supplying such part.

Aphasia-The inability to acquire meaningful spoken language by the age of three as

the inability to speak or understand spoken language. It is a disorder of language that is not due to hearing impairment, intellectual disability, or a physical condition of the mouth or throat.

Dyspraxia-Difficulty in performing fine motor acts such as drawing, buttoning etc.

Encoding-The process of expressing language.

Figure-Ground Discrimination-The ability to sort out important information from the surrounding environment; identifying a part from the whole figure, the foreground from the background.

Fine Motor-The use of small muscles for precision tasks such as writing, tying bows, zipping a zipper, keyboarding.

Gross Motor-The use of large muscles for activities requiring strength and balance.

Handicapped- Any person with a physical and/or mental disability who has difficulty in doing certain tasks. Federal law defines handicapped individuals as those who are mentally retarded, hard of hearing, deaf, speech impaired, visually handicapped,

Perseveration-The repeating of words, motions, or tasks. An individual who perseverates often has difficulty shifting to a new task and continues working on an old task long after classmates have stopped.

Reasoning Ability-Specific meaning of this term varies, depending upon the manner in which a given test measures this ability; generally refers to nonverbal, deductive, inductive, analytical thinking.

Receptive Language (Decoding)- Language that is spoken or written by others and received by the individual.

Reversals-Difficulty in reading or reproducing letters alone, letters in words, or words in

their place while copying or reading may find a crowded page of print or illustrations confusing, etc.

Visual Motor-Ability to translate information received visually into a motor response. Visual motor difficulties are often characterized by poor handwriting.

Visual Perception-Ability to correctly interpret what to read

Gadbow, N.F. and DuBois, D.A. (1998). *Adult learners with special needs*.
Malabar, FL.: Krieger Publishing.

Gerber, P.J. and Reif, H. eds. (1994). *Learning disabilities in adulthood: Persisting
problems and evolving issues*. Stoneham, MA: Butterworth-Heinemann.

Gordon, Michael and

National Center for Learning Disabilities, 231 Park Avenue South, Suite 420,
New York, NY 10016. *Visual and auditory processing disorders.*

National Center for Learning Disabilities. (1999). General information packet on learning disabilities. <http://nclcd.org/brochure/geninfo.html#warning>

National Institute

The head injury survivor on campus: Issues and resources. HEATH Resource Center. American Council on Education. One Dupont Circle. Washington, D.C.

Teaching Students Who Are Hard of Hearing. NETAC. (1998). Northeast Technical Center.

Understanding

ADDENDUM

1. Guideline for Documentation of a Specific Learning Disability
2. Guidelines for documentation of a medical. Mobility or visual impairment
3. Testing Accommodation Scheduling Form and direction to Student and Faculty
4. Testing Accommodation Form