



Office of Disability Services

## **Faculty Resource Guide**

### **Supporting Students with Learning Disabilities**

#### **Office of Disability Services**

Center for Academic Success

Pate Hall

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## St. Andrews University Disability Services Office Location and Contact Information

The Office of Disability Services is located at the **Center of Academic Success** in Pate Hall. If you have questions regarding accommodations for students with disabilities, please call 910-277-5040 or email any of the following persons for further information.

<p><b>Disability Services Coordinator</b> Dr. Teresa M. Reynolds 910-277-5667 reynoldstm@sapc.edu</p>	<p><b>Academic Dean</b> Dr. Robert Hopkins 910-277-5240 HopkinsR@sapc.edu</p>
<p><b>Center for Academic Success</b> Megan Parlow, Director 910-277 -5149 parlowme@sapc.edu</p>	<p><b>Associate Academic Dean</b> Dr. Edna Ann Loftus 910-277-5256 loftusea@sapc.edu</p>
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## What are the St. Andrews University Disability Services?

St. Andrews University works to provide equal access to higher education students that are academically qualified by have physical, learning or psychiatric disabilities.

The Office of Disability Services promotes equitable access to university opportunities by pursuing means to eliminate environmental and attitudinal barriers within the teaching and learning environment. To guide these efforts, The Office of Disability Services embraces the **sociopolitical model of disability**, **neurodiversity** and the **principles of universal design** for the teaching and learning environment. To support equitable access to educational opportunities, The Office of Disability Services provides eligible students with individually tailored support services, academic skill-building, and reasonable accommodations.

The objective of the Office of Disability Services and ensuing programs is to empower qualified students with documented disabilities to engage in all facets of the St. Andrews University academic, residential and student life.

The Office of Disability Services collaborates with the academic departments throughout the university to help ensure the programs and facilities are accessible to all members of the SAU community. Collaborative services at the Center for Academic Success include:

- ❖ Testing Accommodations
- ❖ Note-takers
- ❖ Mentors
- ❖ Assistive Technology via Kurzweil Reader
- ❖ Other St. Andrews resources
  - Writing Center
  - Specific academic department assistance – i.e. math and biology tutorials, etc.

The disability services program at St. Andrews University is designed to meet the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act (1990) and its most current amendments (2009) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 – Section 504.

## Differentiating High School and University Disability Support

HIGH SCHOOL	UNIVERSITY
<b>Applicable Laws</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA- previously PL 94-142)</li> <li>• Rehabilitation Act of 1973– Section 504</li> <li>• IDEA is about academic <b>success</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Americans with Disabilities Act -1990</li> <li>• Rehabilitation Act of 1973 – Section 504</li> <li>• ADA Amendment Act- 2009</li> <li>• ADA about <b>access</b></li> </ul>
<b>Required Documentation</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I.E.P. (Individual Education Plan) and/or 504 plan</li> <li>• School provides evaluation at no cost to student</li> <li>• Documentation focuses on the determination of eligibility for services based on pre-specified categories through IDEA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation must provide information of specific functional limitations and demonstrate the need for specific accommodations for each specific category of disability</li> <li>• Student assumes responsibility for the cost of evaluations</li> <li>• Individual Education Plans and 504 plans from K-12 IDEA programs are not sufficient</li> </ul>
<b>Identification and Advocacy</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School district responsible for identifying and evaluating disability at no cost to the student or family.</li> <li>• Primary responsibility for modifying and accommodating for disability is placed on the school and district personnel</li> <li>• Teachers and other school personnel approach and initiate referral if instructional intervention has failed and student is still not achieving at grade level</li> <li>• Fewer responsibilities for student/parent</li> <li>• More responsibility on LEA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student must self-identify and provide documentation of disability.</li> <li>• Student must pay cost of evaluation.</li> <li>• Postsecondary institution responsible for most, but not all costs involved in providing accommodations and/or essential auxiliary aids.</li> <li>• Postsecondary institution not legally required to provide special programs with comprehensive support services.</li> <li>• Primary responsibility for self-advocacy and arranging for accommodations belongs to the student.</li> <li>• Professors are open and helpful, but expect the student to initiate conversation and provide evidence of documentation for accommodations.</li> <li>• More responsibility on student for self advocacy</li> <li>• More independent living for student</li> </ul>
<b>Parental Role and Decision Making</b>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents are advised of rights and participate in planning the educational program</li> <li>• Parent has access to all student records</li> <li>• Parent advocates for the student</li> <li>• Student is assisted with decisions.</li> <li>• Limits set for student by parents and teachers</li> <li>• Attendance and progress well monitored</li> <li>• Student's time structured by home and school.</li> <li>• Special education teacher liaison between student, parents, teachers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student assumes the role of decision maker for own educational planning process</li> <li>• Parent does not have access to student information or records without student's written consent.</li> <li>• Increased number of decisions.</li> <li>• Student expected to make independent decisions.</li> <li>• More self-evaluation and monitoring required.</li> <li>• More independent reading and studying required.</li> <li>• Student more responsible for managing time commitments.</li> <li>• Student establishes and attains own goals.</li> <li>• Student determines when they need help. Interest in learning generated by student.</li> <li>• Motivation to succeed generated by student.</li> <li>• Student responsible for attendance and awareness of progress or lack thereof.</li> <li>• Student manages own time.</li> </ul>
<b>Instruction – Modifications and Accommodations</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers must modify the curriculum and pace of the instruction according to the IEP.</li> <li>• Reading is divided into smaller amounts and discussed in class.</li> <li>• Tutoring and assistance is the responsibility of the school district</li> <li>• Testing accommodations are specifically spelled out in the IEP and must be practiced throughout the school year to be applicable on standardized state tests.</li> <li>• Testing is frequent and covers small amounts of material</li> <li>• Make-up tests are often an option</li> <li>• Teachers remind students of due dates for assignments or tests</li> <li>• IEP changes must follow strict protocol and only occurs with the consensus of the IEP team</li> <li>• Due process hearings are available for grievances regarding instructional practices.</li> <li>• Tutoring and academic intervention and assistance may be provided under the IEP</li> <li>• Student time and schedule are structured by adult IEP team members.</li> <li>• Study time may be two hours or less a week with most of that as test preparation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professors are not required to modify the curriculum design or alter assignment deadlines.</li> <li>• Reading and writing material is much more substantial and may not be addressed during actual class time.</li> <li>• Students are expected to know and learn much material on their own</li> <li>• Continuous and regular review and organization of materials is needed</li> <li>• Grading and test format changes (i.e. multiple choice vs. essay) are generally not available.</li> <li>• Accommodations to HOW tests are given (extended time, test proctors) are available when supported by disability documentation</li> <li>• Testing is less frequent throughout the semester and may be cumulative or cover large amounts of material</li> <li>• Make-up tests are not often an option and must be requested by the student</li> <li>• Professors expect you to read, save and consult the course syllabus (outline); the syllabus spells out exactly what is expected of you, when it is due, and how you will be graded.</li> <li>• Course syllabi may be changed should the professor feel the need to do so.</li> <li>• Tutoring DOES NOT fall under Disability Services. Students with disabilities must seek out tutoring resources as they are available to all St. Andrews students.</li> <li>• The student manages their own time and completes assignments independently</li> <li>• The student may need to spend 2-3 hours of study outside of class for each hour of class time.</li> </ul>
<b>Summary</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students labeled as in "special education" and possibly served separately from other students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student must self-identify disability and request services from postsecondary institution.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student is required to provide recent documentation of disability and documentation must clearly support desired accommodations. (within three years)</li><li>• Student not labeled or served separately from others.</li><li>• Other students and faculty will not know about student's disability unless student elects to reveal such information.</li><li>• Faculty only notified about required accommodations.</li></ul>
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**Adapted from: St. Louis Community College**

# Reframing the Learning Environment

St. Andrews University recognizes the flexibility and adaptability within the teaching and learning environment as a requisite for meeting the academic needs of a diverse spectrum of learners. To help realize the goals of equity, access and excellence in higher education, the Office of Disability Services assists with the removal of environmental and attitudinal barriers to the teaching and learning environment. Our efforts focus on promoting inclusive development for the design of teaching, learning, curriculum and pedagogy. We embrace the concept of neurodiversity, the sociopolitical model of disability and the principles of universal design to guide our efforts in helping students achieve their highest personal level of academic success.

## Concept of Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity is a construct that allows for a change of perspective for viewing how the brain may form patterns and thinking in a non-typical manner. This concept utilizes a positive approach to diversity similar to cultural diversity or bio-diversity. Neurodiversity, according to Armstrong (2012), is an ecological perspective purporting an environment in which persons with atypical needs can flourish and be successful. The concept of neurodiversity provides the lens through which we acknowledge the complexity of human nature and realize that neuro-diverse learners lend richness to the classroom experience for all members of a learning community.

## Sociopolitical Model of Disability

The sociopolitical model of disability attends to how the environment either empowers or oppresses individuals or groups and helps individuals work within that social construct. This model is differentiated from the traditional medical model, which primarily focuses on rehabilitation and attempts to “fix” individual differences.

Medical Model	Sociopolitical Model
☞ Disability is a deficiency or abnormality	☞ Disability is a difference
☞ Being Disabled is a negative	☞ Being disabled is neutral
☞ Disability resides in the individual	☞ Disability derives from the interaction between the individual and society

## Universal Design in Learning Organizations

Architects and designers practicing universal design create structures that accommodate the widest possible spectrum of users (UNC1997). Universal design in



*Students with Disabilities fall within a continuum of Learner differences.*

*Faculty adjustments for learning*

education extends the principles of universal design as used in architecture and product design. Educators find universal design offers a similar promise for accommodating a wide spectrum of learners. Universal Design for Learning (sometimes referred to as Universal Instructional Design) draws on current brain research

regarding the impact the learning environment has on human learning and individual learner differences (CAST, 2005). The term “universal design” means a concept or philosophy for designing and delivering products and services that are usable by people with the widest possible range of functional capabilities, which include products and services that are directly accessible (without requiring assistive technologies) and products and services that are interoperable with assistive technologies.

<http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/29/3002>

The areas of curricula, media, instructional practices and policies when universally designed are flexible and help reduce the demand for individual accommodations, therefore increasing the availability of resources for all learners and practitioners. The concept of Universal Design is a catalyst for a paradigm shift in thinking and designing curriculum for all learners within the learning environment.

The principles of universal design can be broadly applied to the design of the learning environment.

- **Equitable use:** provide the same means of use for all users.
- **Flexibility in use;** the design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.
- **Simple and Intuitive Use:** use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user’s experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.
- **Perceptible Information:** the design communicates necessary information effectively to the use, regardless of ambient conditions or the user’s sensory abilities.
- **Tolerance for Ambiguity:** the design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.
- **Low Physical Effort:** the design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.
- **Size and Space for Approach and Use:** appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, and manipulation, and use regardless of user’s body size, posture, or mobility.

## Universal Design for Learning

Recently, the concept of Universal Design has moved in the field of education. Universal Design for Learning (UDL), also known as Universal Learning Design, is based on principles from the field of architecture but modified to more specifically address issues in the classroom.

- Represent information in multiple formats and media
- Provide multiple pathways for students to demonstrate knowledge of material
- Provide multiple ways to engage students' interest and motivation

## ACADEMIC SUPPORT RESOURCES

### Assistive Technology

- **Assistive Technology Device:** any item, piece of equipment or product system – whether acquired commercially, modified or customized- that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. (<http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/29/3002>)
- **Audio Texts:** Several students may use an audio book format – or a device that allows for the reading of an e-text. While it is the student's responsibility to communicate that need to the disability services program coordinator, the students will need to know what to request regarding a specific course. It is imperative that instructors supply the St. Andrews bookstore/ordering personnel with information early helps expedite the process. Often books are easily downloadable, or can be purchased directly from the publisher, but sometimes- according to the type and title- it may take 4-6 weeks to get the books. This is especially difficult for Spring Term.
- **Computer Use for Tests and Assignments:** Some students have as an accommodation the use of a computer for tests and written assignments. This often alleviates the need for a scribe and allows the student to be more independent with producing their own work. St. Andrews has two Kerzweil Readers for student use. They are located at the *Center for Academic Success* in Pate Hall. This assistive technology can scan documents and allow students to have the document read to them or to enlarge the text. Personnel are available at the Center for Academic Success (CAS) to provide assistance as needed. Students may elect to use personal equipment for tests if arrangements are

made for an academic aide to attend them as a proctor. If the student intends to use this format, the instructor may choose to give them a document on a flash-drive or email it to the CAS director in advance (i.e. 20 short answer questions would be difficult to retype and the student can enlarge (zoom text) as needed- if it is on a shared document).

- **Extended Time (not unlimited time):** While some students are allowed extended time for tests, no student is allowed unlimited time. The majority of students usually are approved for **time and a half** so as not to give a student an unfair advantage or more time than is necessary. This time extension is based on their documentation and specific disability. Some students require 2X or 3X the regular test time – but that accommodation is rarely used. If the instructor/student finds the allotted time extension is not adequate, feel free to contact the ODS program director. Together we will devise a solution. The need varies with course requirements and the assessment structure as well as the specific disability. However, if UDL is applied and all students are given as much time as needed, then by all means instructors should give that to the students with disabilities as well. It is the responsibility of the student to request the test or assignment accommodation and that process should begin with the instructor of the class. This protocol is easily established by clarifying your expectations for such in your syllabus. Encourage students to come to you first; thereby establishing a quality trust in learning relationships. The extra time accommodation may be arranged by the student taking the assessment at the *Center for Academic Success* or by the instructor – whatever is most convenient for the instructor- but the test must be sent to the CAS two days in advance. The Director for the CAS has established processes regarding time and location. Please feel free to contact the CAS for more information.
- **Document Conversion** (large print, email, disk, scan): Students with visual impairments may be accommodated in a variety of ways:
  - Placing handouts on Moodle so they may save and enlarge as desire
  - Sending handouts by email for the same purposes
  - Provide handouts on a Flashdrive or via Google Docs/Skydrive etc.
  - Allowing students to use a voice recorder for lectures
  - Scan documents that are not available on a computer/CD etc. and then send per email or save to CD or Flashdrive
  - Use digital video recording tools such as Vimeo/Debut to record class sessions or lectures.
  - Use large print and any color combination other than black and white on PWPT presentations with voice readings and comments – then save to CD/ Flashdrive or post to Moodle

- Avoid white paper with black text – colored paper or other colored text is easier to read.
- Suggest or offer colored acetate for use with reading material or for tests.
- Students that need text read to them can download a free read aloud software. READPLEASE 2004 is an award winning text to speech software for Windows © based operating systems. All you have to do is copy desired text and past into READPLEASE. Click *Play* and the text is read to you.
- **Students Schedule Academic Aides:** Please note that it is the ***student's responsibility*** to notify the Director of the Center for Academic Success (CAS) if they have need of a note-taker, scribe or proctor for any course at the beginning of the semester.
  - Students must also notify the director when they have an upcoming test. It would be a good idea for Instructors to check with the CAS for specific procedures for testing requests at the CAS. However, an instructor is welcome to provide the accommodation themselves if they so choose.
  - If a student has requested a note-taker, one will be assigned to your class. If there are three students in your class with this need – the one note-taker will serve all three students. The notetaker is often a student that has applied to contract with the Center for Academic Success and neither the student needing the notes nor the note-taker can identify the other due to student confidentiality. It may not always be obvious for whom the note-taker or scribe is providing services.
  - On the same note, we do have some students with a disability who do not use the support persons; this is a personal choice.
- **Requesting Accommodations:** Students request accommodations as a part of their registration with Disability Services. A document called the Accommodations Memo is supplied to you by the student. It contains a list of reasonable accommodations that are approved for the student based on the documentation provided by a licensed learning evaluator. These accommodations are structural/behavioral in nature and should in no way cause a change in the course curriculum.
- **Documentation:** Each student registered with the Disability Services Program must provide extensive documentation for verification of a disability. Without documentation there can be no accommodations. Documentation must be a completed formal evaluation from a specialist and provides indicators for appropriate accommodations. There are legal guidelines that dictate what is acceptable for documentation and each student must submit documentation that meets these guidelines. If a student has not been approved for accommodations, it is generally because they have not submitted appropriate documentation.

- **Accommodation Memos (no form = no accommodations):** This is very important for all students. It is especially important for students with non-visible disabilities (LD, ADD, ADHD, Autism, Asperger's). *Please do not provide any accommodations to any student until you have seen a form identifying accommodations provided by the Disability Services Program office.*
- **Confidentiality:** All documentation of a student's disability is kept in the office at the Center for Academic Success. If you need information about a student please contact the coordinator for disability services. Discussions are limited to the disability in general, unless student permission is obtained for the discussion to be specific about a particular student. The student, however, is the best source of information about how the disability impacts their personal learning endeavors.
- **All students must meet the same standards:** All students must meet the same academic standards. This includes completing the same amount of work. There can be adjustments in timelines, formats, presentation of information content mastery, but the same standards apply.

## *Interacting With People Who Have Disabilities*

St. Andrews has a long history of educating students who have disabilities. The campus was designed with accessibility in mind at a time when few planned for the needs of the disabled. In today's world there is a greater level of understanding regarding the needs of learners with disabilities and the idea of diversity as a whole. The following tips will help you become more comfortable interacting with your fellow students.

- Remember that a person who has a disability is a person like anyone else. Talk about the disability if it comes up naturally, without prying. Be guided by the person who has the disability.
- Treat a person with a disability as a healthy person. Functional limitations do not mean that an individual is sick.
- Do not be concerned if you use the words "walking" or "running" when talking to a person who uses a wheelchair, "do you see?" when talking with a person who is blind. People with disabilities use these words themselves.
- Offer assistance, if asked, or if the need seems obvious. Respect the person's right to indicate the kind of help needed. Most people who have disabilities will ask for help and will be specific about how it should be given.
- Consider the extra time it might take for a person with a disability to get something said or done. Let the person set the pace in walking, talking or in group work.
- Don't move a wheelchair, walker or crutches out of reach of a person who uses them. When moving a wheelchair; ask the person how she or he would like you to proceed.
- When talking to a person who uses a wheelchair for any length of time, sit down in order to be at the same eye level. It is tiring to look up in a long conversation.
- Give unhurried attention to a person who has difficulty speaking. Don't be afraid to indicate when you are having difficulty understanding. Ask them to repeat, or try repeating what you think you heard, for verification. As you interact more, you will begin to better understand the person.
- Be sensitive to possible architectural barriers. Select accessible locations for study groups and social activities.
- Learn the locations of ramps on campus in case there is a need to direct a person with a disability the timeliest route to take.
- When greeting a person with severe loss of vision, identify yourself and others with you. In time, the person may recognize your voice and this will not be necessary. Use the person's name in conversation as a clue to whom the conversation is directed.

- Do not pet a guide dog or service dog without first asking permission. The owner can tell you if the dog is working or off duty.
- Remember that if a person does not turn around in response to a call, she or he may have a hearing impairment. Moving in front of the person is a good way to gain their attention. While a light tap on the shoulder *may* work if you are approaching from the back, it may also startle the person and perhaps distract them from attending to important tasks.
- When speaking to someone who is reading lips, do not turn your head away or look down. Remove obstructions (i.e.. Gum, food) from your mouth. Do not cover your lips with your hands.
- Not all disabilities are obvious. If you see someone using different methods of studying or requiring more time for exams, the person may have an invisible disability.
- Unusual behavior may be another sign of a hidden disability. Some disabilities involve physical or vocal tics which cannot be controlled by the person.
- Remember that the person who has a disability is entitled to confidentiality.

# *Advising Students with Disabilities*

## **Choice of Major**

Advisors play a key role in helping students identify a major and explore future career goals. An understanding of how the presence of disability can impact this decision is important.

Students may have a tendency to focus on identifying careers that they think fit their disability-related limitations, but this is generally not the best approach. With this focus, they will likely limit themselves to stereotypical careers, and may miss some that would suit them well or would optimize their gifts and talents. By focusing first on careers that fit their interest and abilities, they may find some careers that the disability precludes, but generate ideas that may lead to related careers. **Career Services** is a good resource for students to explore options.

At times, faculty may have concerns about a student's ability to function in the career of their major. It is important to understand that continuing in the major or changing to another major is the student's decision. As long as he or she is performing the required tasks for a class, concern about what will happen to him or her in the job market should not affect grading or other interaction with him or her in your class. However, faculties have valuable information about the demands of their career field that can be very useful to students. Instead of telling a student why you think someone with that disability cannot perform the job, it is more helpful to describe specific tasks he or she will be required to perform; subsequently the student can then think about possible accommodations that would allow him or her to perform those tasks, and then make their own decision.

## **Career Resource Guide**

A "Career Guide for People with Disabilities" lists disability resources for career selection, internships, job search, and job accommodation for St. Andrews students with disabilities. Copies are available through Disability Services and Career Services.

## **Course Load**

Some students with disabilities may be more successful if they carry less than a full course load. Among the reasons are:

- Students whose disability results in fatigue
- Students who read or write slowly, resulting in a larger amount of time devoted to homework than the average student
- Students who must devote significant amounts of extra time to activities of daily living
- Students who must carefully manage their stress levels

Students are responsible to communicate to their advisors about any course load issues. Students may take as little as 12 credit hours and retain full time status.



Students who need to carry less than 12 credits should be referred to Disability Services for a Reduced Course Load with Full Time Status application. If the student is approved, this will be communicated to the student's advisor, as well as others on campus that need to know.

### **Scheduling Issues**

Some students with disabilities may need to carefully select their class times. Among the reasons are:

- Student who fatigue easily and need to rest between each class
- Students who have sleep disorders and have difficulty with early morning classes
- Students who take medications whose side-effects have the greatest impact at certain times of the day
- Students who need to process information immediately after each class session
- Students who need to review immediately before each class session

These students are responsible to inform their advisor of any issues related to scheduling of classes, and to request assistance in picking specific sections.

### **Course combinations**

Even with the use of appropriate accommodations, it can be very time-consuming / stressful for students to take more than one course in the same semester that requires use of the skills most affected by the disability. For example, students with learning disabilities in reading or visual impairments may not want to take two intensive reading courses. Students with learning disabilities in written expression or physical disabilities which slow the writing process may not want to take two intensive writing courses, and students with autism or a psychological disability may not want to take more than one course that involves a great deal of small group work. ***Students are responsible for sharing these issues with their advisors.***

### **Frequency of advising**

Some students with disabilities have a difficult time assessing their performance in class. It is important for those students to have frequent external feedback. When a student identifies themselves as having a disability, it would be helpful for advisors to find out whether the student wishes to meet at all check-points, regardless of the content. Students are responsible for making appointments with their advisors.

### **Physical Education Requirements**

There are a number of ways that students with physical disabilities may meet the physical education requirement. Some courses are offered specifically for students with disabilities, and others are relatively easy to modify.

#### ***Specific courses:***

- PE 205 Horseback Riding for Students with Disabilities
- PE 200 Adapted Physical Education

**Easily Modified courses:**

- PE 223 Beginning Weight Training
- PE 246 Advanced Weight Training
- PE 274 Open Water Scuba (Physical required, consult instructor prior to course registration. May be able to complete course for credit but not get Open Water Certification).
- PE 275 Advanced Open Water Scuba (If Open Water Certified)

**Internships**

Internship experiences are especially valuable for students with disabilities. They may give students the opportunity to explore potential careers, and reassure themselves that they can function effectively in those careers. Listing an internship or summer job on a resume can be a powerful vehicle to convince a potential employer that the applicant can perform the job, overcoming fears of the disability. An employer also may be more willing to “take a risk” on a person with a disability in an internship position with a limited commitment. Some students with disabilities have no work experience, because the disability prevents work in the traditional entry-level jobs. When this is the situation, an internship or work-study position prior to completion of the degree is particularly important. Financial Aid is familiar with work-study positions that may be well suited for students with disabilities.

**Study Abroad**

Study abroad benefits students with disabilities for many of the same reasons that internships do. Successful participation in a study abroad program may be listed on a resume, and show potential employers the student’s skills in coping with their disability in a new environment. Disability Services can help a student explore disability-related issues when considering participation in a study abroad program.

## *Disability Related Absences*

A number of disabling conditions may cause a student to be absent from class. Examples include chronic illnesses that have fluctuating symptoms such as sleep disorders, fibromyalgia, etc. Absences of these students can be treated similarly to absences of athletes and for students for whom **a Notice of Absence** has been completed by the Dean of Students. Disability-related absences in no way alter the class requirements, faculty expectations or student responsibilities. **It remains the student's responsibility to discuss class attendance with their faculty member.**

While a disabling condition or reactions to medication may make class attendance impossible at times, students are encouraged to attend class as regularly as possible. At St. Andrews, class participation and discussion are integral to education.

Personnel in the Office of Disability Services do not have a role in determining course attendance policies. These policies are set by faculty at departmental and individual levels. In most cases, attendance is fundamental to course objectives but this may vary. Faculty members also determine policies regarding make-up work and missed quizzes and exams. Faculty members are not required to lower or effect substantial modifications of integral standards for accommodation purposes.

In Disability Services, we do have a role in documenting the existence of a disabling condition which may affect attendance. If a student registers with our office and provides appropriate, approved documentation, we will notify faculty if that student will be in her/his class. The student may miss class on occasion. It is requested that the student's disability be taken into consideration when applying classroom attendance policy. However, the student remains responsible for all class notes, assignments and for making up missed work in a timely manner. Faculty members are not required to make accommodations to essential course requirements. Faculty members are asked to discuss these requirements with the specific student.

If there are questions, please feel free to contact the Office of Disability Services at extension 5040.

## *Questions Related to Students who have Disabilities*

There are many issues related to educating students who have disabilities. Some questions are presented here to cover some of the more common concerns.

### **1. How do I know what type of disability a student has?**

Information about the specifics of a disability may be discussed by a student if she or he so wishes. The Office of Disability Services will be glad to offer suggestions for helping students to faculty once the student shares their need for accommodations.

### **2. What are some of the more common accommodations for students in the classroom?**

Students may require preferential seating due to a vision or hearing problem. Students with reading and or motor disabilities may need accommodated testing which might include: a reader and/or scribe, computer-based testing, and/or a distraction free environment. Students who have visual difficulties may need large print for handouts and exams.

### **3. Do faculty members have to alter class requirements?**

No, faculty members do not have to alter the requirements for courses.

### **4. Do I have to give students with disabilities fewer assignments or more time to complete assignments?**

No, students with disabilities are responsible for all course work in the time allotted. As with all students, there are often mitigating circumstances under which a faculty member might make adjustments to assignments.

### **5. What about attendance? Do students with disabilities have special policies?**

Please see the page entitled, "Disability Related Absences."

### **6. What about testing accommodations? Do I have that responsibility?**

The responsibility for testing does belong to the faculty. However, the Office of Disability Services had developed alternatives to assist faculty with this. Please see the pages entitled "Accommodated Testing for Students with Disabilities."

### **7. What about lectures? Are there things I need to do?**

Some students with disabilities may have difficulty in note taking. The accommodation provided may include an in-class note take, a student note taker, and a tape recorder for recording notes. We have asked all students using tape recorders to have the courtesy to notify faculty about this. We also discuss with students the proper use of tapes. Failure to utilize this accommodation effectively may result in the loss of this privilege. Faculty can help by providing copies of: power point or overhead presentations. Lecture notes, if available, can be helpful but are not required. Nor is it required to alter what is presented in course outlines. If a student has a hearing disability, making sure you face the class while speaking is important. On occasion, a hearing impaired student may use a personal auditory aide and the faculty member may need to use a portable microphone, provided by the student.

**8. I have students in my classroom that seem to be rude and/or inattentive or seem to act quite differently from what I would expect from a student. What is this all about?**

There are some disorders (Autism, Asperger's Syndrome, some Psychiatric Disorders) that may present different behaviors. It is best, whenever possible, not to call attention to these disorders. If, however, it becomes difficult to conduct class due to such behaviors, please contact us in the Office of Disabilities and we will discuss possible solutions.

**9. How are students with disabilities admitted to this College?**

There is no separate admissions procedure for students with disabilities. In fact, these students do not have to disclose their disabilities when applying. They must meet the same admissions requirements as any other student.

**10. What are invisible disabilities? How do we know some of these are real?**

Invisible disabilities include psychiatric disorder, Autism and Asperger's Syndrome, Specific Learning Disabilities, Attention Deficit Disorder with and without Hyperactivity, closed head injuries etc. If an admitted student has a disability and requires accommodations, that student must submit appropriate documentation to the Office of Disability Services. This documentation differs by disability and is quite extensive. Once the documentation is complete, accommodations are provided as required by law. Thus, we do have appropriate documentation for all students who have requested accommodations here at the college.

**11. I am having difficulty with students who have communication problems. What can I do about class presentations?**

We do have students on campus who have problems with expressive language. They may indeed have problems with oral presentations. Some possible alternatives are:

- They prepare a presentation and ask another student to deliver it.
- They prepare a power point presentation including captions or with a talking outline that class members can read as the presentation is given.
- A video presentation or a photographic presentation with printed captions might be possible

#### **12. What about students using note takers or tape recorders? What if they don't pay attention in class?**

We know every faculty member is a stimulating lecturer and discussion leader. We also know that all of our students are just yearning for knowledge and thus pay rapt attention in every class. However, a few exceptions may exist. Feel free to treat students with disabilities the same as you would students without disabilities when it comes to attention in your classes.

**Questions related to disabilities are numerous. Feel free to contact the Disability Services Program coordinator with any questions or concerns.**

## **TIPS and STRATEGIES**

**Ensure classroom access.** Most buildings on your campus should have entrances that are accessible to students who use mobility aids (wheelchairs, canes, crutches, and walkers). Individual classrooms and laboratories may differ in their accessibility. Contact your room scheduling office for assistance in obtaining an accessible classroom.

**Observe seating needs.** Students who use canes, crutches, or walkers appreciate having a chair or desk that is close to the door. Access to these seats should be flat: no steps, no uneven surfaces. Wheelchair users need flat or ramped access, and classroom tables or desks must have enough clearance for them to get their legs underneath. Lab tables and computer consoles should be set up so that wheelchair users can comfortably reach the equipment.

**Make seating available for students' in-class aides.** Students who are disabled usually locate and hire their own aides (note takers, lab assistants, readers), often through referrals from the campus disabled students program. You can help, at times,

by announcing to your class that a note taker is needed or by referring qualified tutors and lab assistants to students who are disabled. The student and aide will reach their own arrangements about the type of help needed.

**Ensure access to out-of-class activities.** Be sensitive to questions of access when planning field trips, assigning lab and computer work, and recommending visits to museums, attendance at off-campus lectures and dramatic presentations, and the like.

**Follow good teaching practices.** Many techniques that will help students who have sensory or learning disabilities will also benefit all the students in your class. For example:

- Open each session with a brief review of the previous session's material and an outline of that day's topic. Conclude each session with a summary of key points.
- Emphasize new or technical vocabulary by presenting it visually (on the chalkboard, an overhead slide, or a handout) as well as orally.
- Describe all visual examples (board work, demonstrations, props). As you work at the board, instead of saying, "Adding this here and dividing by that gives us this," narrate what you are doing: "Adding all scores and dividing by the number of scores, gives us the mean."
- Give students opportunities for questions, clarification, and review.

(Sources: McGuire and O'Donnell, 1989; Smith, n.d.; Wren and Segal, 1985)

**Be aware of students' cassette recorders.** Students who cannot take notes in class may routinely record lectures. For their benefit, speak clearly and position yourself close enough to the microphone. Explain what you are writing on the board or what you are demonstrating. Students with hearing disabilities may ask you to wear a lapel microphone, linked to a headset that amplifies your voice.

**Face the class when you are speaking.** Deaf or hearing-disabled students who read lips cannot follow the lecture or conversation when your back or head is turned. If you are writing on the board or narrating a desktop demonstration, try to avoid talking when facing the board or the desktop. Remember that, at best, people who are deaf can read only 30 to 40 percent of spoken English by watching the speaker's lips. Augment their understanding by using facial expressions, gestures, and body language. (Sources: Fisher, 1985; Smith, n. d.)

**Hand out written lists of technical terms for students who are deaf or hearing-disabled.** Unfamiliar words are difficult to speak, read, and interpret. If possible, supply a list of these words or terms in advance to the student and interpreter. (Source: Smith, n.d.)

**Make reading lists available in advance.** Students who rely on readers or need Braille, large-print, and tape-recorded books will appreciate as much notice as possible. By mid-semester, many students with disabilities try to obtain the reading lists for the courses they anticipate taking the following term.

**Arrange for classroom participation or an alternative activity.** Students who cannot raise their hand to answer or ask questions may feel isolated or ignored in class. During your first private meeting with such a student, ask how he or she wishes to be recognized in the classroom. Some students will want to be called on; others may prefer to meet periodically with you before or after class to ask questions about course content.

**In class discussion and conversation directly address the student, not the student's aide or interpreter.** In talking to deaf or hearing-disabled students, acknowledge the interpreter's presence but look at and address the student. When talking to a student in a wheelchair for more than a minute or two, it is best to sit down so that you can talk at eye level. (Source: Smith, n.d. )

**Repeat comments or questions from participants as necessary and, as needed, identify the person who is speaking.** When a student is speaking out of the range of vision of a deaf or hearing-disabled student, repeat the question or comment and indicate who is speaking (by motioning) so the student can follow the discussion. To accommodate students with visual disabilities, identify by name the student who is speaking or identify the person to whom you are speaking. (Source: Smith, n.d.)

**Listen attentively when a student with a speech disability is speaking.** Do not finish a student's sentences or interrupt. Never pretend to understand if you are having difficulty doing so. Instead, repeat what you have understood and allow the student to respond. (Source: National Center for Access Unlimited, 1992)

**Give options for oral presentations, if needed.** Oral presentations may pose difficulties for students who have speech disabilities. Students who wish to give their presentation without assistance should be encouraged to do so. But some students will want to give the presentation with the help of an interpreter, and others may want to write out their presentation and ask an interpreter or another student to read it to the class.

**Ensure that students get the academic help they need to succeed in your class.** Although a student may have an in-class aide (a note taker, or an amanuensis), these aides are not academic tutors. Students with learning disabilities can often benefit from ongoing tutorial assistance.



**Make the computer disks available to students.** If you prepare your syllabus, assignments, or handouts on a computer, give copies of the disk to students who might need them. Students who are blind or partially sighted can take the disk to an adaptive computer that will prepare copy in Braille. If your campus is networked, you may be able to send the material through electronic mail, eliminating the need for disks. Use a computer or photocopying enlarger to prepare large-type hard copy versions of your reading lists and other handouts for students who are partially sighted.

**As appropriate, encourage students to use computers.** Students with learning disabilities and students with reduced manual dexterity can benefit from drafting and revising their papers on a computer. Students with dyslexia and similar information-processing disabilities should be encouraged to use computers that have spell-checking features or to work with a proofreader or editor during the preparation of their final copy. Students who are partially sighted can use large point sizes on their computer screen and then reformat the text when they print out their papers.

**Provide appropriate test-taking conditions.** Federal law mandates academic accommodations. Some students with physical or learning disabilities may need one or more of the following kinds of accommodations to complete their exams:

- An in-class aide to read the test orally or to take down the student's dictated answers to exam questions
- A separate room that provides better lighting or fewer distractions or that houses special equipment (computer console, video magnifier, text-to-speech converter)
- An extended exam period to accommodate a student's slower writing speed or need to dictate answers to an aide or to equalize a student's reduced information-processing speed
- Option of substituting an oral exam for a written exam, or a written exam for an oral exam, or a multiple-choice exam for an essay exam
- Option of having exam questions presented in written or oral form

You and the student should agree early on how the student's progress in the course will be evaluated.

**Find out what technological aids your institution makes available for students with disabilities.** For example, some campuses have talking calculators, speech-activated computers, Braille workstations, and reading machines for use by students who are blind or visually disabled. One university has experimented with "stenocaptioning," a stenography machine hooked up to a computer for helping students with hearing disabilities read from the computer as the lecturer speaks ("New Technology Boosts Hearing- Impaired Students," 1992).

**Make certain that adaptive computer equipment is available for students with disabilities.** Check with your disabled students program or your computer center for information and advice. Adaptive technologies for people with mobility disabilities include modifications of keyboards, mouthsticks and headwands for striking keys, and floppy disk guides that make it easier to handle disks. For students with visual disabilities, equipment includes speech synthesizers, Braille or large-print output devices, and screen-reading programs. Students with learning disabilities can benefit from special software. Berliss (1991) offers advice and information for making computer laboratories and equipment accessible. (Source: Project EASI, 1991)

**If you assign films or videos, make sure they are close captioned.** Check with your media center about the Captioned Films Program, which distributes captioned theatrical, short subject, documentary, and educational films. (Source: Smith, n.d.)

Barbara Gross Davis – University of California - Berkeley

<http://teaching.berkeley.edu/bgd/disabilities.html>

## When Faculty are TOO Accommodating!

By Jane E. Jarrow, Ph.D.

Most Higher Education Faculty members understand that there are legal imperatives mandating equal access for students with disabilities through academic accommodations. However, there are times that problems arise when faculty who willingly provide appropriate adjustments may go too far due to their accommodating natures. It is that accommodating nature that can get them, their institution and often the students into trouble.

Most learning institutions have clear policies and procedures regarding the documentation of a disability, how students apply and receive accommodations for a declared disability and how that information will be communicated to faculty. But what happens when a student decides not to go through the established office for disability services and tries to work directly with faculty to negotiate their own accommodations? While there may be a simple or viable reason that a student may choose to go the route of independent self-advocacy, the faculty member who agreed to disregard institutional policy and honor requests without having verification from the Office of Disability Services is not helping anyone in the long run.

Dr. Jane Harrow from the University of California – Berkeley provides a set of examples that serves as a guide for faculty members when working with students with disabilities.

**Personal Jeopardy** - Faculty members who work directly with students, discuss the disability, (possibly) look over the documentation, and agree to accommodation may be establishing themselves as the “gatekeepers” without meaning to do so. If the faculty member agrees to provide accommodation “x” and not accommodation “y” and later the student maintains that he/she was not appropriately accommodated, it is the faculty member’s decision that is subject to question and the faculty member who could conceivably be held responsible for violating the student’s civil rights. The faculty member who agrees to provide accommodations without institutional authorization for a student with one disability (for example, LD) but is less familiar and comfortable with another disability (for example, ADD) and sends that student back through channels for official documentation could be opening himself/herself up for charges of discrimination, intimidation, or harassment. Faculty members who conscientiously try to make life easier for the student by allowing the student to bring the documentation directly to them may gain access to confidential information to which they should not be privy. For all these reasons, it would be best for faculty not to be drawn into

the collection of disability documentation or the decision making regarding accommodation.

**Institutional Jeopardy** – The student who provides documentation to a single faculty member (who accepts and acts on that documentation) may be able to make a legitimate case for saying that he/she informed the institution of the disability and the need for accommodation. The faculty member should not be discussing the information that has been shared (because of issue of privacy and confidentiality), and yet the student may be expecting to receive similar consideration and accommodation from other faculty on the basis of having provided the documentation to someone in authority at the institution. If it is not made clear that the institution has not been “notified” until the documentation is provided and requests are made from such-and-such an office, the institution may not be in a position to defend itself from charges of discrimination by neglect for as student who does not receive accommodation by others within the institution. Or consider this scenario – Professor A accepts the documentation and provides accommodation without going through channels, as do Professors B and C, then Professor D says, “I will provide accommodations when I receive proper notification from the disability services office that this is appropriate.” Professor D looks like the villain for following the rules! More distressing, however, is the possibility that the institution may be facing some very real difficulties if the disability services office determines that some of the accommodations that Professors A, B, and C provided were not warranted by the documentation and does not prescribe those same accommodations for Professor D to provide.

**Student Jeopardy** – Students with disabilities will still have those disabilities after they leave a postsecondary environment. Whether they choose to go on to graduate or professional school or seek a place in the world of work, chances are that if they needed accommodations function successfully in higher education, they will need accommodations in their future endeavors as well. More and more often, those settings beyond the postsecondary experience are ready and willing to provide accommodations on the basis of verification from the higher education institution that those same accommodations have been provided during the student’s postsecondary career. If the student has no record of having been served by the institution – if the student was never on file in the disability services office and received all of his/her accommodations through individual discussions with faculty – that student will have no official history of being regarded or served as a person with a disability

and may have a much more difficult time establishing the claim to accommodations in the future. Taken from <https://www.indiana.edu>

*Bottom line: The policies and procedures were established for everyone's protection. Everyone needs to play by the rules!*

## Resources

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