



# Disability Services Office Faculty/Staff Handbook

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## **MISSION/VISION**

The Richland College Disability Services Office (DSO) partners with students with disabilities to identify, reduce, or eliminate educational barriers.

## **DSO PURPOSE**

The DSO exists to provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations for qualified students with disabilities, to assist students in self-advocacy, to educate the Richland community about disabilities, and to ensure compliance with the ADA, the ADAADA, and Section 504.

## **DSO GOALS**

1. Provide reasonable accommodations to assist the student in obtaining a successful classroom and testing experience
2. Promote the use of assistive technology throughout the learning process
3. Provide accessible, adaptive resources for diverse learners
4. Promote the spirit of community through academic and civic engagement
5. Promote faculty collaboration
6. To actively support and clarify institutional, state, and federal laws, policies, and procedures applicable to the delivery of services for students with disabilities

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The Disability Services Office keeps all disability information confidential in accordance with state and federal laws and in compliance with the Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. Students have specific, protected rights regarding the release of such records.

The DSO can only disclose disability information to faculty and staff if there is an educational need-to-know.

The DSO strives to collaborate with faculty to ensure optimal access for each student with a disability; we invite faculty to contact the DSO if you have information or concerns about a student with a disability.

At the post-secondary level, disclosure of disability is a voluntary process. Therefore, a student may choose to share information regarding his/her disability. If a student does share this information with you, please remember that it is confidential information, should be discussed with the student in private, and should be discussed with other college faculty or staff only for educational purposes on a need-to-know basis. At no time should the class be informed that a student has a disability.

When in doubt as to what to do to protect the student's right to confidentiality, ask the student how they would prefer something to be handled, or call the Disability Services Office at 972-238-6180.

## THE LAW AND ITS IMPACT

Richland College is committed to compliance with all applicable laws regarding people with disabilities.

When any student is denied access to any college program for which they are otherwise qualified, then justice is threatened. The Americans with Disabilities Act and the ADA Amendments Act as well as the Rehabilitation Act are substantial, hard-won civil rights legislation. The goal of these laws is to prohibit discrimination on the basis of disabilities and to require institutions to provide reasonable accommodations, modifications, and auxiliary aids to assist students with disabilities to be able to fully participate in any program Richland College offers. DSO exists to assist the college in complying with that law.

**The federal laws applicable to post-secondary students with disabilities are:**

- The ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA)
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)
- The Rehabilitation Act of 1973/Section 504

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

Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs, public and private, that receive federal financial assistance. Section 504 includes institutions regardless of whether they have open door, selective, or competitive admissions practices.

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

**A qualified person with a disability is:**

“Any person who (1) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities; (2) has a record of such impairment; or (3) is regarded as having such impairment” and who meets the academic and technical standards requisite to admission or participation in the education program or activity.

### **The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990/The ADA Amendments Acts of 2008**

According to the ADA, an individual with a disability is defined as a person who:

(1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more life activities; (2) has a record of such impairment; or (3) is regarded as having such impairment. Major life activities include but are not limited to walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, caring for oneself, and performing manual tasks.

The ADA prohibits discrimination solely on the basis of disability in employment, public services, and accommodations. The person in consideration must be otherwise qualified for the job, program, or service.

The ADA details administrative requirements, complaint procedures, and the consequences for non-compliance related to both services and employment. The ADA requires provision of reasonable, effective accommodations for eligible students across educational activities and settings.

### **How these Laws Apply to Higher Education**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 were designed to ensure that colleges and universities are free from discrimination in their recruitment, admission, and treatment of students.

In the application of both laws, students with disabilities must be qualified to participate in college activities. A qualified student with a disability is one who meets the admission and essential eligibility requirements of a program or service, with or without:

- Modifications of rules, policies, or procedures
- Removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers
- Provision of auxiliary aids and services

Individuals who pose a direct threat to their own health or safety or the health or safety of others will not be considered qualified.

The law requires higher education institutions to ensure that all programs, services, or facilities are accessible to or usable by persons with disabilities. The law does NOT require:

- making each facility accessible if alternatives are effective
- a fundamental alteration of programs or services
- undue financial or administrative burden

The college is under no obligation to change academic requirements for that which the college, programs, or majors “can demonstrate are essential to the program of instruction...or to any direct licensing requirement.”

**The College does not have to provide personal attendants, individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or other devices or services of a personal nature, such as tutoring or typing (United States Office of Civil Rights, July, 2002).**

The college must provide auxiliary aids to ensure the participation of students in college classes and activities, and must accommodate the academic participation of qualified students with disabilities. The college must NOT:

- limit the number of students with disabilities admitted
- make pre-admission inquiries as to whether or not an applicant has a disability
- use admission tests or criteria that inadequately measure the academic level of visually impaired, hearing impaired, or otherwise disabled applicants because special provisions were not made for them
- exclude students with disabilities from any course of study solely on the basis of their disability
- counsel students with disabilities towards a more restrictive career than non-disabled students, unless such counsel is based on strict licensing or certification requirements in a profession
- measure student achievement using modes that adversely discriminate against students with disabilities
- institute prohibitive rules (such as the barring of tape recorders or other auxiliary aids) that may adversely affect the performance of students with disabilities
- select a site or a facility that would exclude participation of persons with disabilities

**The law does not require special treatment of students with disabilities, but does require that students be given the opportunity for equal participation in the college's programs. This is done by providing eligible and qualified students appropriate academic adjustments, and auxiliary aids necessary to facilitate the students' fullest possible participation in the college's academic programs.**

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Universal design (UD) principles, which call for barrier-free design and architectural accessibility, are the result of changing demographics in America and the Civil Rights Movement of the last half of the twentieth century. With a greater population of people with disabilities and federal disability rights legislation, architecture and product design that could be universally used and accessed became increasingly important. The concept of universal access and use has now spread in the area of education, and is known as Universal Design for Learning.

In 2008, the Higher Education Opportunity Act stated that postsecondary institutions should design curricula with universal design principles for learning in mind. UD for learning principles are intended to reach the widest audience possible. While UD may not eliminate every request for accommodation, it should reduce numbers of requests. It is important to remember that subtle changes to course organization lessen the barriers faced by many students with disabilities. Students with visual impairments that once had to wait a day or more to receive their syllabus now have the opportunity to gain instant access to an electronic version. Hard of hearing or deaf students that either received minimal information or none at all now have immediate access to captioned videos. Student with learning disabilities, who may find it difficult to listen to lectures and take relevant notes at the same time, will now benefit from lecture notes being stored on Blackboard or through some other accessible means.

Remember that providing an accessible campus and learning environment is the responsibility of all Richland faculty and staff. Using universal design principles in the classroom and keeping accessibility a priority are vital to our success as a Community College.

The promise of UD development in the classroom will replace much of the need to retrofit barriers that may limit a student's access to information. In 1997, the Center for Universal Design developed seven principles to consider when developing any product or environment. More information about the principles can be found at <http://disabilities.temple.edu/programs/ds/hEd3udl.shtml>

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*The Principles of Universal Design were conceived and developed by The Center for Universal Design at North Carolina State University. Use or application of the Principles in any form by an individual or organization is separate and distinct from the Principles and does not constitute or imply acceptance or endorsement by The Center for Universal Design of the use or application.*

## ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES

Students with a documented physical, psychiatric, or learning disability that affects his or her academic performance may be eligible for services. Current documentation of the disability from a qualified professional is required. It is the student's responsibility to provide adequate documentation of his or her disability and any limitations resulting from it. The Disability Services Office reviews the documentation and makes recommendations for accommodations based upon the identified disability and resulting impairments. Students with disabilities cannot be required to register with DSO. If students choose to withhold information about their disabilities, and thereby forfeit any accommodations that may have been available, they have that right. However, students are encouraged to disclose their disability, and avail themselves of services to enhance their academic success. Accommodations cannot be made retroactively. For example, a student with a learning disability may choose not to disclose the disability and take his or her exams without extended time. If the exam grades are then poor, however, the student cannot expect any type of remediation. Future exams may be taken with extended time, but past grades still stand.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

The DSO, the students, and the faculty all share a role in the success of students by partnering with one another to achieve our mission and objectives.

The DSO has the responsibility to:

- evaluate students based on their abilities and not their disabilities
- determine the appropriateness of disability documentation and to assist the student in procuring that documentation
- determine eligibility for accommodations on a case-by-case basis
- provide or arrange reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services for students with disabilities in courses, programs, activities and facilities
- provide the Instructor Memo (IM) to the student upon request
- maintain the college's academic, conduct, and technical standards
- maintain appropriate confidentiality of records and communication
- communicate and liaison (when needed) with faculty, staff, and students
- collaborate with the faculty member and the student to provide appropriate advising and support

Students have the responsibility to:

- identify as an individual with a disability when an accommodation is necessary
- provide appropriate documentation of the disability and how it limits participation in courses, programs, services, activities and facilities
- follow the DSO procedures to request accommodations in a timely manner
- present an Instructor Memo (IM) form each term to professors



- meet and discuss accommodation needs with faculty
- reserve a reduced distraction testing room (if eligible)
- notify DSO if accommodations are not effective
- meet qualifications and maintain essential institutional standards for courses, programs, services, activities and facilities
- meet and abide by the college's academic, conduct, and technical standards

Faculty has the responsibility to:

- use a syllabus statement to ensure all students are aware of DSO services
- consider incorporating principles of Universal Design for Learning in your teaching, meaning to ensure that learning is accessible to all
- provide accommodations listed on the IM; meet with the student to further discuss the accommodations; contact the DSO if unsure about request or if there are issues with accommodations
- provide all course materials requiring conversion to alternate format as soon as possible to the DSO; students with disabilities should receive their handouts at the same time it is provided to other students
- respect the student's right to privacy and do not identify him/her to the class, or discuss disability matters in public settings
- consider the student's disability and their access to the class materials, method of exams, and on-line learning materials

## FACULTY GUIDELINES

If a student requests accommodations, but does not have an Instructor Memo from our office, you are not required to provide accommodations. Instead, please refer the student to our office to submit documentation and determine if he/she is eligible for accommodations.

When a student presents the faculty member an Instructor Memo it is important that the faculty does not:

- Ask the student to disclose the nature of his/her disability. Many disabilities are invisible, and while the student has been instructed to self-advocate and clearly state his/her needs, he/she does not have to discuss the disability. Please understand that it is a violation of the student's rights to ask his/her disability.
- Deny a student's accommodation request. Accommodations cannot interfere with academic standards; if there is concern that an accommodation jeopardizes the academic integrity of a course, contact DSO immediately. We request that you provide the accommodation until the concern has been resolved. An accommodation cannot be denied without due process; therefore, all cases will be reviewed individually.
- Tell the student that he/she requested the accommodations too late in the semester. While students with disabilities are encouraged to meet with faculty during the first week of class, there are many legitimate reasons why this may not be possible. Accommodations must be provided at any point in the semester (up until one week remaining in the course); however, they do not need to be provided retroactively.
- Provide a requested accommodation that is not indicated on the student's Instructor Memo. A student who requests additional accommodations should be referred to the DSO in order to ensure that the student's request is supported by his/her documentation.

*Students with disabilities are just like their non-disabled peers; they are a diverse population with diverse needs and no two students are alike. Students with disabilities may receive straight A's or they may not, regardless of their accommodations. Do not think that a student who receives A's on all assignments does not need accommodations; conversely, do not feel that a student who receives F's on all assignments should be graded differently because he/she has a disability. It is important to remember that access does not always equal success.*

Many issues regarding students with disabilities and accommodations are related to the timeliness of the accommodations. Therefore, we ask that faculty communicate with us in a timely manner, especially for accommodations involving alternate formats or material conversions, to prevent complaints from occurring.

# ACCESSIBILITY CONCERNS

## Syllabus Statement

It is important faculty include in each syllabus the following or a similar statement informing students that they must request accommodations through the proper channels in a timely manner:

"Students with disabilities who qualify for academic accommodations must provide an Instructor Memo (IM) from the Disability Services Office (DSO) and discuss specific needs with the professor, preferably during the first two weeks of class. The Disability Services Office determines accommodations based on appropriate documentation of disabilities."

Include contact information: Thunderduck Hall 120, 972-238-6180 fax 972-238-6324

A further recommendation is that the statement be read aloud by the faculty member when reviewing the syllabus with the class. This approach demonstrates to students that the professor is sensitive to and concerned about meeting the needs of all students. Furthermore, it affords students the opportunity to make their accommodation needs known to the professor early in the semester.

## Suspected Disability

If there is a suspicion of a disability or if a student approaches you regarding a non-documented disability, students should be referred to the DSO. Our office staff can help determine if there is an ADA qualifying disability. We can also refer students to community resources to assist them in getting the documentation necessary to access services. We often meet with students to help them establish services with appropriate documentation.

## Textbooks, Course-packs, and Syllabi

Please make your textbook selections, compiled course packs, and syllabi available early to facilitate the provision of alternate format materials. Students who are blind, have low vision, or have learning disabilities affecting their reading rates and comprehension, require printed materials that are converted to alternate formats. The conversion process is time consuming. Your syllabus is required to determine the extent to which each text will be used and the order in which reading assignments will be completed. If you are collating various journal articles and portions of books into course packs for distribution, please use original copies or a copy that is as clean as possible to optimize the quality of the converted materials.

**Multimedia**

Please consider the accessibility of multimedia options when planning your activities and assignments. Students with disabilities must have equal access to course material. When using technology or Alternative Delivery of course materials, please ensure that all aspects of the content are accessible to all students. Examples of such materials are:

- Videos
- Power Points
- YouTube
- On-line materials

**IMPORTANT!** When requesting materials from publisher representatives, it is extremely important that you request “accessible” materials. The Department of Education; Office of Civil Rights has issued warnings to colleges that all materials, including “emerging technologies” must be accessible to all students or that it should not be utilized. This includes DVDs and videos; they must be closed/opened captioned. Please contact DSO if you have any questions.

## REASONABLE ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a course, program, service, activity or facility that enables a qualified student with a documented disability to have an equal opportunity. An equal opportunity means an opportunity to attain the same level of performance or to enjoy equal benefits and privileges as are available to a similarly-situated student without a disability. The college is obligated to make a reasonable accommodation only to the known limitations of an otherwise qualified student with a disability and such that essential components are not compromised.

### Receiving a Request for Accommodations

The student will present a formal request for accommodations in an Instructor Memo (IM) form. If you have any questions or concerns about the stated accommodations, please contact the authorizing DSO advisor whose name appears on the form or the Director of DSO. You are not required to provide accommodations for a student who does not present an Instructor Memo. A student requesting an accommodation without an IM should be referred to DSO.

Accommodations for students with disabilities are not automatic and must be requested by the student and supported by appropriate documentation. They are determined on a case-by-case basis depending on valid documentation and individual needs. Accommodations may include the following:

*Testing Accommodations for Face-to-Face and Hybrid classes:* Extended time on exams is a typical accommodation given to students who, for disability related reasons, need more time to complete their tests and exams. Typically, students who have extended time as an approved accommodation should take their tests in the Testing Center. However, if you allow all other students to take a test on line or as a take-home test, you should also allow the student with disability to do this as well. We cannot single out a student due to a disability. Some students may need to take tests in a distraction-reduced testing room for a variety of reasons. This may be necessary for students who have conditions which cause them to be easily distracted, or who may need special technology or accommodations such as an interpreter or scribe. Students who use this accommodation must contact the Testing Center to reserve the room.

*Reduced Distraction Testing Environment:* Students should meet personally with their instructors to discuss accommodation needs and must give each instructor a copy of their Instructor Memo (IM). The instructor may either provide accommodations within his or her academic department, or through the Testing Center. The instructor is not required to send students to test with the Testing Center, but may do so if he or she wishes.

*Testing Accommodations for On-Line classes:* Students with disabilities cannot be required to take tests in a manner that is discriminatory. If all students take the test on campus, the student with disabilities can be required to take the test (with reasonable, approved accommodations) on campus in the Testing Center. If, however, all students take the test online, students with disabilities must be permitted to do this as well, with reasonable accommodations. Blackboard tests can be adjusted to allow the extended

time. The email below was provided from an instructor here at Richland on how they honored extended time for an online class. (Read below):

*You have been approved for the following course accommodation (s) for my class: Extended testing time (twice the time is allowed).*

*You can continue working after the regular time has expired. The system will keep running and notify me in the end by placing an exclamation mark indicating "needs grading". After the regular time has expired, on every question a dialogue box will appear alerting you that time has expired on the exam and offering two choices; end the test and submit or continue to the next question. Please, continue to the next question. It is a bit annoying but it is a system necessity as part of the accommodation.*

**Note Taker:** A student who qualifies for Copies of Notes as an accommodation may request assistance recruiting a note taker. A student using this accommodation can pick up note taking paper from Disability Services. Please make a general announcement to the class asking for someone to take notes, or ask a specific student that you feel might be a good note taker. Do not indicate which student needs the note taker; this information is confidential. Please contact the DSO advisor listed on the IM if you are having difficulty in obtaining a note taker for the student.

Instructors, when a student fails to attend class or otherwise behaves inappropriately in class because he or she has a note taker (e.g., sleeps in class), that student IS NOT eligible to receive the note taker's notes that day. If you experience any such problems, please call our office immediately. Disability Services staff may be reached at 972-238-6180. Please remember that notes must be made available to the student within 24 hours of the class period.

**Interpreter/ CART provider:** If the student is approved for interpreters or CART provider, the DSO will assign interpreters or CART providers for classes as well as some out-of-class activities such as tutoring, lab time, and special events. It is the student's responsibility to request interpreters and CART through the Disability Services Office. With these accommodations in place the student can be expected to meet the objectives of the course.

Sign language interpreters are trained professionals who provide a culturally appropriate communication link between Deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing individuals.

It is a conflict of interest to be both an active participant and a neutral communicator between Deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing persons. For this reason, it is not the interpreter's role to advise, edit, advocate, teach, participate or have conversations with students while in the interpreting situation. The interpreter must faithfully convey the spirit and content of the speaker. Interpreters do not interject personal opinions. Deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing persons using interpreter services have the right to control the communication interaction and make their own decisions. Interpreters will not answer questions of clarification or explanation; students should direct questions toward the professor. The professor can give a better explanation as to how it may relate to the class material.

In the unlikely event that a student shows up for the first day of class without an interpreter, the student should be referred to DSO. Disability Services will then attempt to schedule an interpreter or work with the student to rearrange his/her schedule into classes where an interpreter is already provided.

Communication Access Real-time Translation (CART) is designed to provide the Deaf, hard of hearing or low vision student with real-time captioning of the lecture within the classroom. The captioner (a version of the general profession known as court reporting) uses the stenographic technique to covert what is being said to shorthand code. This code is then processed by the CART software on the laptop and displayed as readable English text.

*Reader:* When a student is identified as a person with print impairment (visual, dyslexia, etc.), it may be reasonable to provide a reader for that student; this often takes the form of assistive technology. The college has procured many pieces of assistive technology that will mitigate the impact of a print impairment by reading electronic books, tests, files, and websites. This technology affords students the autonomy of being able to read the material themselves.

*Recording of Lectures:* Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, institutions of higher education must provide auxiliary aids and services to students with documented disabilities and not deny equal access to the institution's programs, courses, and activities. For a variety of reasons, some students are not able to take adequate notes during class. Audio recorders are a legitimate auxiliary aid to supplement or substitute note taking for some students with disabilities.

Students receiving this accommodation sign an agreement stating that recordings, nor any form of copies of transcripts of the recordings, may be used for any other purpose than as a replacement for notes taken in class.

*Attendance Accommodation:* Students most likely to request modified attendance policies are those with health-related disabilities that flare up episodically. This might include students with lupus or fibromyalgia, sickle cell anemia, seizure disorders, cancer, migraines, and conditions requiring dialysis. Students with psychological disabilities who are experiencing an exacerbation of symptoms may also request modification of attendance policies.

Federal law requires colleges and universities to consider reasonable modification of attendance policies if required to accommodate a student's disability. In making this determination, two questions must be answered:

***Does the student have a documented disability that directly affects his/her ability to attend class on a regular basis?*** Disability Services will make this determination based on a review of documentation from the student's physician or psychologist and provide verification in a letter the student presents to the instructor.

***Is attendance an essential part of the class? Would modification of attendance policies result in a fundamental alteration of the curriculum?*** Faculty members make this determination in consultation with Disability Services.

The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) has provided the following guidelines to assess if attendance is an essential part of a class:

- Is there classroom interaction between the instructor and students?
- Do student contributions constitute a significant component of the learning process?
- Does the fundamental nature of the course rely on student participation as an essential method for learning?
- To what degree does a student's failure to attend constitute a significant loss to the educational experience of other students in the class?
- What does the course description and syllabus say?
- Which method is used to calculate the final grade?
- What are the classroom practices and policies regarding attendance?

Disability Services recommends that students with a disability-related need for flexibility in attendance meet with their instructors to discuss the extent to which modification in attendance policies may be reasonable for a particular class. The student and instructor should have a clear understanding of what accommodation can be made for disability-related absences. In cases where attendance is an essential part of the class, a medical or mental health withdrawal may be considered a reasonable accommodation if absences become excessive. Disability Services is available to consult with faculty on issues concerning disability and attendance. For more information, contact 972-238-6180.



# ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Technology that may be used as an accommodation in the classroom setting includes the following.

\*As Assistive Technologies are always changing, this is not a static or exhaustive list.\*

## Assistive Software

Assistive software, also called adaptive software, refers to computer programs designed for use by individuals with disabilities. Several of our Assistive Software applications are networked or site licensed, and can be installed on an unlimited number of computers anywhere on campus. JAWS and Zoom Text are installed on the images made for the computers in most labs. If the student requests it and there are computer stations in your class, we will also install these applications on one of those stations. Some of our Assistive Software applications are individually licensed. In addition, some students have personal laptops that assist in providing access to the course content. Some examples of Assistive Software used at Richland are:

## Screenreaders

A screenreader is software that reads the content of a computer screen by converting the text to speech. Content displayed on a computer screen can be in the form of a digital file such as a Microsoft Word or PDF document, a web page, or any other text-based content. Screenreaders cannot read images and graphics, including scanned materials that have not gone through the Optical Character Recognition process. Most screenreaders enable users to choose among a variety of options such as reading speed and voice. Screenreaders that are designed for both blind and sighted users also offer magnification and color preferences. Screenreader users often use headsets in order to minimize ambient noise and disruption to those in the vicinity. Examples of screenreaders used at Richland are:

- **JAWS** is typically used by students who are blind with little or no functional vision. JAWS offers the user many preferences but since its users are blind, it does not incorporate magnification or color preferences. The college has a network JAWS license. The student may also bring his/her own laptop with JAWS installed.
- **DAISY** player software is used by students with every type of disability that impacts access to print. DAISY is an acronym for Digital Accessible Information System. DAISY books are coded according to strict accessibility standards and are highly navigable. The college has a site license of Easy Reader which is also used for DAISY books.
- **Kurzweil 1000** is typically used by students who are blind with little or no functional vision. Kurzweil 1000 is similar to Kurzweil 3000 but does not incorporate language learning and study skills tools, or magnification and color preferences.
- **Kurzweil 3000** is typically used by students with learning disabilities, but is also frequently requested by students who have low vision. Because Kurzweil 3000 is designed for individuals with Learning Disabilities, it incorporates language learning and study skills tools such as highlighting, bookmarks, dictionary, pronunciation, spell-check, etc. Kurzweil 3000 is accepted in

many states as a testing accommodation. Many of its features can be disabled and password-protected for secure testing.

- **Zoom Text** is typically used by students who are legally blind with limited functional vision (low vision). Although Zoom Text is primarily screen magnification software, it incorporates a speech engine that, if enabled, reads what is displayed on the computer screen. The college has a network Zoom Text license.

### Screen Magnification

Screen magnification software enlarges the content displayed on the computer screen. Screen magnification is typically used by students who are legally blind, but have some functional vision.

Examples of screen magnification software used at Valencia are:

- **Zoom Text.** Described above.
- **MAGic.** is similar to Zoom Text but as it is created by the same company that is the creator of JAWS, it interfaces better with JAWS. It is therefore preferred by students who also use JAWS.

### Speech-to-Text Software

- **Dragon Naturally Speaking** is speech recognition software that enables students to dictate what needs to be printed instead of typing or manually handwriting. Some Dragon versions also enable students to perform all computer tasks through dictation, totally eliminating the use of the mouse and keyboard. Dragon requires students to train the software to recognize their speech patterns. Once trained, Dragon is very accurate and reliable. Dragon is typically used by students with mobility impairments or writing disorders.
- **CART (Computer Assisted Real-time Translation)** is a word-for-word speech-to-text system that provides real time access for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. The CART provider uses a steno machine linked to a laptop to type text of spoken information. The equipment is provided by the CART provider.

### Assistive Materials

- **The Braille system** consists of raised dots that represent letters and numbers. Braille is used for reading and writing by students who are blind with no functional vision.
- **Large Print** is typically used for an oversized print and/or graphics. If the student requests it, we will convert your materials to large print.

### Assistive Equipment

- **CCTV** (Closed-circuit Television) magnifies hard copies of text (textbook pages, handouts, flyers, etc.) We have several CCTV's on campus. There are also CCTV's available in the Testing Center, library and Tutoring Center. CCTV's are typically used by legally blind students with limited functional vision.
- **Kurzweil Reader** is also a self-contained device that scans hard copies of text and translates it to spoken text.

**Alternate Format**

- **Materials:** Alternate formats can take various forms. For example, digital files can be formatted to be read by screenreaders or viewed with screen magnification. Other options are large print, tactile materials, or books on CD such as that from the Learning Ally formerly, Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D). If the student is eligible and request Alternate format materials, we will procure or produce the alternate format that is an effective accommodation for that particular student. Please note that as alternate format production is a complex, time-consuming process, we have a 20-30 business day turnaround time. If the student does not have his/her materials by the start of classes, it is most often because the request was not made with enough lead time. In that case, we will do our best to provide the materials as quickly as possible, and may have to provide installments according to dates listed on your syllabus.
- **Exams:** If the student is eligible for and requests it, we will convert your exams to alternate format.

# **SPECIFIC DISABILITIES AND TIPS FOR THE CLASSROOM**

## **Learning Disabilities**

A learning disability is a permanent disorder affecting how students with average or above-average intelligence process information, and/or categorization of information in memory. It is typically characterized by a significant discrepancy between a student's aptitude and achievement test scores, and is accompanied by evidence of a processing disorder. The diagnosis is typically made by a neuropsychologist, psychologist, or psychiatrist.

### **May impact the following:**

- Reading
- Auditory processing
- Visual processing
- Writing
- Speaking
- Retrieving information
- Performing mathematical calculations
- Time management and organizational skills (i.e. projects, budgeting time)

### **Tips for working with students with learning disabilities:**

- Pause and ask questions throughout lesson to check for understanding
- Access students' prior knowledge. This helps them relate similar concepts
- Give examples of key concepts
- If possible, provide presentations or lecture materials online; guided notes are helpful as well
- Provide examples of good projects/papers
- Provide a study guide or practice exams that familiarize students with the format of the test
- Provide a list of all of the learning objectives that the student is expected to master for the test
- Allow time for an early draft of a paper or projects to be turned in for feedback
- Use multiple formats: Visual aids, three-dimensional models, charts or graphics, group projects, visual stimuli, audio and video content to accommodate different learning styles
- Allow audio recording of lectures
- Consider that students with reading disabilities may not wish to read out loud in class
- Encourage the student to visit during office hours for clarification of content

## Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders (ADD/ADHD)

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is characterized by a persistence of inattention and/or hyperactivity that is more frequent and severe than is typically observed in individuals at a comparable level of development (DSM-IV).

### May impact the following:

- Concentration
- Distractibility
- Organization
- Time management
- Impulse control (I.e. inappropriate comments, fidgeting)
- Ability to stay focused (I.e. lectures, projects, exams)

### Tips for working with students with ADD/ADHD:

- Clearly define course requirements (I.e. syllabus with clearly delineated expectations and due dates).
- Clearly communicate classroom management and behavioral expectations, such as punctuality cell phone use, etc.
- Stress organization and time management
- Vary classroom activities and teaching methods
- Provide examples of good projects/papers
- Provide instructions for exams and assignments in print as well as orally; keep instructions as brief as possible
- Use a variety of media when presenting lessons: hands-on objects, group-work, visual stimuli, audio and video content to accommodate different learning styles
- Provide copies of lecture materials and class notes
- Allow audio recording of lectures
- Encourage the organization of study groups

## Psychological Disabilities

Some students have psychological disabilities that adversely affect their educational access, performance, and daily functioning. They may use medication that impacts their behavior or performance. Psychological disorders include but are not limited to: depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and social disorders (e.g. autism spectrum disorders). Symptoms may vary during the semester.

**May impact the following:**

- Concentration, fatigue, memory and recall
- Cognition (verbal/visual perception or expression)
- Distractibility
- The ability to deal with social situations and interpret social cues
- Ability to handle stress
- Difficulty dealing with new situations
- Attendance
- Academic performance
- Class participation

**Tips for working with students with psychological disabilities:**

- Allow early access to the syllabus and reading assignments
- Support preference of seating arrangements
- Allow audio tape recording of lectures
- Provide regular feedback on academic work
- Provide advance notice of changes
- Discuss with student if he or she will need breaks from class
- Consider allowing students to make up work as appropriate

**Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

There are several factors that contribute to diversity among people who are deaf or hard of hearing such as age of onset of hearing loss, degree of hearing loss, and cultural self-identification. These factors may affect mastery of spoken languages such as English and other oral languages. The student's preference of communication method, use or non-use of hearing aids, or other assistive listening devices, and the student's perspective on being culturally Deaf or not, can also contribute to the heterogeneity of this student population. However, it is important to remember that students who are deaf or hard of hearing are individuals, and may not be described in a specific category.

**Age of onset**

Birth/pre-lingual: students who are born deaf or become deaf before they acquire language tend to have more struggles with the structure and pronunciation of spoken languages. Depending on upbringing and education, their sign language may range from American Sign Language (ASL), to a variety of sign systems. These are not languages in their own right, but are manual representations of English, such as SEE (Signing Exact English). They usually use interpreters for access. They may or may not use amplification and may or may not consider themselves culturally Deaf.

Post-lingual: students who are deafened at a young age but after they acquire language tend to have a better grasp of the structure of spoken languages. They may use ASL or a system like SEE. They usually use interpreters for access. They may or may not use amplification and may or may not consider themselves culturally Deaf.

Late deafened: Students who have spent the majority of their lives as Hearing, and suddenly or progressively lost their hearing later in life, are considered “late deafened.” These students tend to use a system such as Signing Exact English (SEE) or do not sign at all. They may use C-Print Captioning or CART for access. They usually wear hearing aids and rarely consider themselves culturally Deaf.

### **Degree of hearing loss**

Softest intensity at which sound is perceived, measured in decibels - normal hearing is from -10-15 db. Students who have been profoundly or severely deaf since birth or a young age, tend to have the same characteristics described above under Birth/pre-lingual and Post-lingual onset. Students who have slight to moderate hearing loss are considered hard of hearing. They tend to have characteristics similar to those described above under Late deafened.

- Profound (91+ db)
- Severe (71-90 db)
- Moderate (41-55 db)
- Mild/Slight (16-40 db)

### **Cultural self-identification - the Deaf community**

- linguistic minority
- functions in many ways like other minority groups but is not defined by racial or ethnic boundaries
- members share common values, norms, traditions, and a common language (ASL)
- members do not define themselves based on degree of hearing loss but on how they feel about their identity, their preferred communication method, and behavioral and cultural values and norms
- members use the term Deaf (capital D) to refer to themselves as opposed to the term deaf (lower case d), a generic term that refers to all people with a hearing loss regardless of which language they use to communicate and/or their cultural identity

### **May Impact the following:**

- Proficiency with English language comprehension and usage
- Verbal communication/interaction
- Social integration
- Ability to conceptualize and understand instructions given in English

### **Tips for working with students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing:**

- Speak directly to the student and not the interpreter or captionist
- Face the class when speaking
- Give the student time to look back and forth between any materials he/she needs to view, the interpreter or the captionist's screen, and you
- When students make comments in class or ask questions, repeat the questions before answering, or phrase your answers in such a way that the questions are obvious
- Use visual aids and reference whenever possible
- Provide videos and slides with captioning (if captioning is not available, supply a transcript of the content)
- If possible, make any PowerPoint presentations or lecture materials available for student access
- Provide a written supplement to oral instructions, assignments, and directions
- Encourage students in class to speak one at a time
- Consider the impact of lighting on the student's ability to see your face (lips, expressions and gestures)
- For many students who are Deaf, English is the second language. When grading written assignments and/or essay tests, look for accurate and comprehensive content rather than the writing style. Students should be encouraged to go to the Writing Center for assistance if necessary.

### **Speech Disorders**

Impairments range from problems with articulation or voice strength to being totally non-vocal. They include stuttering (repetition, blocks, and/or prolongations occasionally accompanied by distorted movements and facial expressions) chronic hoarseness (dysphonia), difficulty in evoking an appropriate word or term (nominal aphasia), and esophageal speech (resulting from a laryngectomy). Many students with speech impairments will be hesitant about participating in activities that require speaking.

#### **May impact the following:**

- Communication
- Presentation Skills
- Social integration

#### **Tips for working with students with speech disorders:**

- Modify assignments such as one-to-one presentations
- Allow substitutions for oral class reports
- Support inclusiveness in classroom
- Be patient; allow the student time to complete statements



## **Blind and Low Vision**

The definition of legal blindness covers a broad spectrum of visual impairments. The extent of visual disability depends upon the physical sensory impairment of the student's eyes, the age of the student at the onset of vision impairment, and the way in which that impairment occurred. Vision also may fluctuate or may be influenced by factors such as inappropriate lighting, light glare, or fatigue. The major challenge facing visually impaired students in the educational environment is the overwhelming mass of visual material to which they are continually exposed in textbooks, class outlines, class schedules, board writings, etc. In addition, the increase in the use of films, videotapes, computers, laser disks, and television adds to the volume of visual material to which they have limited access. Removing a student's visual barriers often requires unique and individual strategies based on that student's particular visual impairment, and his/her communication skill (e.g. Braille, speed listening, etc.)

### **May impact the following:**

- Mobility and orientation (e.g. may use a guide dog or walking stick)
- Access to printed materials
- Use of technology
- Ability to understand visual, spatial, and tactile concepts

### **Tips for working with students who are blind or have low vision:**

- If possible, have textbook info and syllabus available early for conversion into alternate format
- Consult with DSO staff on any lecture materials, assignments, or tests that can be converted for the student
- Consider obstacles in the classroom that might present a problem; the student may need information about the physical layout of the classroom
- Consider the impact of lighting on the student's ability to see
- Give clear verbal descriptions of visual materials
- Allow audio recording of lectures

## **Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)**

Traumatic brain injuries (TBIs) are head injuries typically caused by accidents (e.g., motor vehicle accidents or falls) which result in physical, cognitive, and/or psychosocial impairments. Individuals with TBIs face various difficulties and functional limitations based on the nature and location of the head injury. Some common consequences of head injuries include physical, sensory, and perceptual impairments, as well as social, behavioral, and personality changes. Students with TBIs may eventually regain function, or must cope with permanent loss of function. Any one or a combination of these problems can impact learning and academic performance.

**May impact the following:**

- Balance and coordination
- Writing, reading and visual spatial skills
- Attention
- Hearing and communication skills
- Cognition (verbal/visual perception or expression)
- Memory
- Behavior
- Organizational and reasoning skills
- Class attendance

**Tips for working with students who have TBI: Keep instructions as brief and uncomplicated as possible.**

- Clearly define course requirements, the dates of exams, and when assignments are due.
- Use more than one way to demonstrate or explain information.
- When teaching, state objectives, review previous lessons and summarize periodically.
- Allow time for clarification of directions and essential information.

**Disabilities that Limit Mobility and Dexterity**

Mobility and dexterity disabilities may make walking, sitting, bending, carrying, or using fingers, hands or arms difficult or impossible. Mobility impairments result from many causes, including amputation, polio, club foot, scoliosis, muscular dystrophy, spinal cord injury, and cerebral palsy. Remember that mobility limitation may be consistent, or may fluctuate depending on the cause.

**May impact the following:**

- Speech
- Physical stamina
- Muscle control, coordination, balance and speed
- Walking, sitting, standing, climbing
- Hand/finger dexterity (I.e. writing; turning pages; handling items)

**May require use of:**

- Service animal
- Personal attendant
- Wheelchair, walker or crutches
- Special seating in classroom (e.g. accessible desk, seat location near exit)

**Tips for working with students who have mobility or dexterity related disabilities:**

- Make sure the classroom entrance, layout, and paths between desks are accessible
- Make sure wheelchair desk is available, if needed
- If reasonable, allow student to make presentations from his/her desk rather than at front of classroom
- Plan in advance for field trips to ensure accessibility
- In case of emergency, be aware of evacuation plan from your classroom

**Health Related Disabilities**

Health related disabilities are often hidden disabilities caused by such conditions as lupus, cancer, rheumatoid arthritis, cystic fibrosis, heart disease, hemophilia, asthma, blood disorders, chronic fatigue, immune deficiency disorders, chemical sensitivities, or seizure disorders (see info below for what to do during and after a seizure).

**May impact the following:**

- Energy level
- Focus
- Attendance or participation
- Ability to perform (caused by illness or medications)
- Standing or sitting for long periods of time

**Tips for working with students who have health related disabilities:**

- Allow early access to textbook information and syllabi.
- If possible, provide any PowerPoint or lecture materials for student access.
- Allow students to have beverages/food in class and to leave the classroom for breaks, as necessary.
- Consider allowing students to make up missed work, as appropriate.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What is a disability?**

An individual with a disability is defined as any person who:

"has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities (including walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, caring for oneself, or performing manual tasks), has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment."

### **What is meant by "is regarded as having such an impairment" in the definition of disability?**

For example, a person with a facial disfigurement may not have an impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, but others may regard him or her as having one due to how he or she appears.

### **Isn't "disability" and "handicap" the same thing?**

A "disability" is a condition caused by accident, trauma, genetics or disease that may limit a person's mobility, hearing, vision, speech, or mental function. A person may have more than one disability. A "handicap" is a physical or attitudinal constraint imposed upon a person; for example, stairs, narrow doorways, and curbs are handicaps imposed upon people with disabilities who use wheelchairs.

### **Am I being asked to compromise academic standards or give the student with a disability an advantage?**

Definitely not. The accommodation should have the purpose of providing an equal opportunity to the student, in effect starting the student on equal footing with others. To compromise standards or requirements would not assist the student to acquire a competitive degree. The student with a disability should fulfill all the essential course-related requirements; however, altering the format, substituting an equivalent requirement, or changing the method of meeting requirements may provide the student a more equitable chance at success.

### **By making certain accommodations for students with disabilities, am I not discriminating against the other student who would probably prefer such things as extended time for tests, etc.?**

It may appear that preferential treatment is being given to students with disabilities; however, the objective of the legal requirement is to help the student compensate for a life function that is not the same as that of other students in the class. Through the accommodation, we attempt to provide the student with the same opportunity that other class members have without special measures. The law allows, and in fact requires, that special needs be met.

### **How will I know if there are students with disabilities needing accommodation in my class?**

Our office will provide the student with a letter stating their association with the Disability Services

Office and any accommodations to which the student is entitled. It is the student's responsibility to notify his/her professors. Faculty members are encouraged to request that individuals requiring special accommodation contact them after class or during office hours. This information can be printed in the course syllabus. In this way, students are given permission to approach faculty with their needs.

### **How do I know that the accommodation the student has requested is appropriate and legitimate?**

If the student presents to you an Instructor Memo, prepared by Richland College Disability Service Office, you can be assured the student has provided the College with proof of a disability under the legal definition of the word. The accommodations listed on the letter will be those that have legitimacy in relation to the student's disability.

### **How is extra time justified for students with learning disabilities?**

*Other students could improve test scores if they were allowed additional time as well.*

Research (at UC Berkeley, 1991 and the University of Toronto, 1993) on the effects of extended time on exams has shown dramatic improvements for students with learning disabilities, but only marginal improvement for students without learning disabilities. Rather than providing an unfair advantage in the class, extended time for exams allows these students to demonstrate their level of mastery of the course objectives, rather than reflecting the deficits innate to their learning disabilities. In other words, it 'levels the playing field.'

### **Should I refer a student to Disability Services?**

Faculty members are encouraged to refer students to Disability Services if the student has disclosed that they have a disability. Do not refer a student because you suspect they have a disability. Although teachers in high schools are active participants in the process of identifying and referring students to special services, there is no comparable requirement in higher education. If a student is requesting accommodations but has not presented you with an IM, you may ask the student to contact DSO. Furthermore, the College does not provide testing for specific learning disabilities or other disabilities. Students who are concerned about the possibility of learning disability can meet with DSO staff for information about pursuing testing in the community.

### **How do I verify the eligibility of a student who simply tells me that he or she is disabled and requires accommodations?**

At Richland College, the Disability Services Office is regarded as the authority to verify disabilities and determine whether a student qualifies for academic accommodations. All students eligible for accommodations have presented the necessary documentation, and been verified by the DSO staff.

### **How are accommodations determined for a student with a disability?**

Reasonable accommodations are determined on an individual basis after considering the specific disability and documentation of functional limitations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. See Richland College Disability Services website

([www.richlandcollege.edu/dso/guidelines.php](http://www.richlandcollege.edu/dso/guidelines.php)) for more information regarding documentation guidelines. Accommodations are designed to provide an equal educational opportunity not to give the student a competitive edge.

### **Do I have the right to know the nature of a student's disability?**

The information regarding a student's disability should be shared only when there is a compelling reason for disclosure. The U. S. Department of Justice has indicated that a faculty member generally does not have a need to know this information, only that it has been appropriately verified by the office assigned this responsibility on behalf of the institution. Students may submit their verification to the Disability Services Office without disclosing to their instructors the specific nature of their disability. While students are not required to share their specific disability information, students are encouraged to discuss their specific needs with their instructors.

### **What is a reasonable accommodation?**

A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a course, program, service, job, activity, or facility that enables a qualified individual with a disability to have an equal opportunity to attain the same level of performance or to enjoy equal benefits and privileges as are available to an individual without a disability.

### **How does a person become eligible to receive accommodations?**

To become eligible, a person must have a documented disability and inform the College that he or she is requesting accommodations based on that disability.

#### ***A student must:***

1. Contact Disability Services
2. Provide specific documentation of the disability from a qualified professional
3. Consult with an advisor in Disability Services to determine appropriate accommodations

#### **The determination of reasonable accommodations considers the following:**

- Classroom or physical barriers
- The array of accommodations that might remove the barriers
- Whether or not the person has access to the course, program, service, job, activity; or facility without accommodations
- Whether essential elements of the course, program, service, job, activity, or facility are not compromised by the accommodations

### **What do I do when a student discloses a disability?**

Ask for the Instructor Memo from the student; this letter describes the accommodations that faculty are legally mandated to provide. During office hours or at another convenient time, discuss the letter and the accommodations with the student. Students **MUST** present a letter from Disability Services to receive accommodations. If the student does not have a letter, he or she should be referred to Disability

Services to request services. Disability Services staff will determine the appropriate accommodations after reviewing documentation of the disability provided by the student.

### **What if a student doesn't tell me about a disability until late in the semester?**

Once a student has identified to the instructor and requests disability-related accommodations authorized by Disability Services, the College has a legal responsibility to make reasonable attempts to accommodate the need, even late in the semester. There is no responsibility to provide accommodations prior to identification; for example, allowing the student to re-take exams with extended time. All Disability Services staff encourages students to identify early in the semester. Instructors can help by extending an invitation in class and in the syllabus, "Any student who may need an accommodations due to a disability, please make an appointment to see me during my office hours. A letter from Disability Services authorizing your accommodations will be needed."

### **What if I suspect that a student has a disability?**

Talk with the student about your concerns regarding his or her performance. If the concern seems disability-related, ask if he or she has ever received assistance for a disability. If it seems appropriate, refer the student to Disability Services to apply for services. Whether to self-identify to Disability Services is the decision of the student; however, to receive accommodations, disclosure to Disability Services with proper documentation is required. If the student has never been evaluated for a learning disability and/or Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Disability Services will provide a list of local resources where the student may be screened or tested. Some of the resources offer a sliding fee schedule.

### **What if a student with a disability is failing?**

Treat the student as you would any student who is not performing well in your class. Invite the student to your office hours to discuss reasons for the failing performance and what resources the student may use to improve. Encourage the student to see Disability Services staff to discuss some additional strategies to improve his/her grades. Contact the Disability Services staff member who signed the Instructor Memo to discuss any additional concerns.

### **What if a student with a disability is often absent?**

Talk with the student to discuss your concerns that absences are affecting class performance. Remind him or her of your policy on class absences. Determine with the student whether the missed work can be made up and make arrangements with the student to do so. Refer the student to Disability Services if too much class work has been missed.

### **What is a note taker?**

A note taker is usually another student in class who agrees to provide copies of lecture notes taken during class. The note taker may make copies of notes at Disability Services or use carbonless note taker paper available at no charge from Disability Services.

The request for note-taking assistance requires students to attend class as scheduled. If a student with a disability regularly skips class, then he or she 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, handle the situation as you would with all other students.

**What should I do if a student who is deaf or hard of hearing shows up in my class without an interpreter?**

In the unlikely event that a student shows up for the first day of class without an interpreter, the student should be referred to Disability Services. Disability Services will then attempt to schedule an interpreter or note taker for the student.

**Who is responsible for requesting an interpreter?**

Students requiring an interpreter for class must make the request to the Disability Services Office. For outside class requirements, such as field trips or other assigned activities, as well as office hours, students should request an interpreter from Disability Services at least two weeks ahead of time or more, depending on the event. Disability Services cannot guarantee an interpreter when requests are made less than two weeks before the event.

**What should I do if my class needs to evacuate the building due to an emergency?**

Students should let you know at the beginning of the semester if they will need assistance during an emergency. Students who are blind or have low vision may need a "buddy" to assist them exit the building. Some students with head injuries or psychiatric disabilities may become confused or disoriented during an emergency and may also need a "buddy." Students who use wheelchairs should NOT use the elevator but should wait for Police to safely assist them to exit the building. To prevent injuries, instructors or other untrained personnel should NOT attempt to evacuate a student who uses a wheelchair. Please wait for trained emergency personnel.



## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

There may be an occasion when a situation arises in the classroom involving a student with a disability that requires immediate intervention. The most likely examples are seizures, diabetic shock (insulin reaction), and heart attacks. Should such a situation arise, immediately phone the Campus Police at 972-860-4290 from a campus phone, or 911 from a cellular phone. Give the building name, room number, and description of the emergency. Although an ambulance is usually not needed for most seizure incidents and insulin reactions, the individual may be transported for additional treatment and observation until the situation is under control.

### Students with Seizure Disorders

In the event that a student does experience a seizure in the classroom, the following actions are suggested:

- Keep calm. Ease the person to the floor and open the collar of the shirt. You cannot stop the seizure. Let it run its course and do not try to revive the person.
- Remove hard, sharp, or hot objects which may injure the person, but do not interfere with the person's movements.
- Do not force anything between the person's teeth.
- Turn the person's head to one side for release of saliva. Place something soft under the head.
- Make sure that breathing is unobstructed but do not be concerned if breathing is irregular.
- When the person regains consciousness, let her/him rest as long as desired.
- If the seizure lasts beyond a few minutes, or if the person seems to pass from one seizure to another without regaining consciousness, contact emergency medical technicians. This rarely happens, but when it does, it should be treated immediately.

### Evacuation

For students with disabilities, special considerations must be made for emergency situations such as fire or tornadoes. Ultimately, the person with a disability is responsible for his/her own safety in emergency situations. However, it is wise to plan ahead for emergencies. Instructors should be prepared with an evacuation plan when they have a student with a visual, mobility, or hearing disability in their classroom.

### Students with Visual Disabilities

- In case of emergencies, alert the student to the nature of the situation. Offer assistance to the student and guide him or her to the nearest emergency exit and away from the building to safety. Some types of emergencies require safety within a building. Depending upon the nature of the emergency, during crisis periods, there may be a lot of commotion and noise. A student who is blind may not be able to orient 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 or she is and inform him or her of any obstacles, debris, doorways, or narrow passages.
- Once safe, orient the student to his or her surroundings and determine if further assistance is needed.

### **Students with Mobility Disabilities**

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

### **Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing**

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing may not hear alarms or other audible warnings. Therefore, the instructors should inform the Deaf student of the emergency. There are three ways to get this person's attention:

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

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

# APPENDIX A

## U.S. Department of Justice

Civil Rights Division

*Disability Rights Section*

[www.ada.gov/qasrvc.htm](http://www.ada.gov/qasrvc.htm)

## COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT SERVICE ANIMALS IN PLACES OF BUSINESS

### 1. Q: What are the laws that apply to my business?

**A:** Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), privately owned businesses that serve the public such as restaurants, hotels, retail stores, taxicabs, theaters, concert halls, and sports facilities, are prohibited from discriminating against individuals with disabilities. The ADA requires these businesses to allow people with disabilities to bring their service animals onto business premises in whatever areas customers are generally allowed.

### 2. Q: What is a service animal?

**A:** The ADA defines a service animal as any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. If they meet this definition, animals are considered service animals under the ADA regardless of whether they have been licensed or certified by a state or local government.

Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that the individual with a disability cannot perform for him or her. Guide dogs are one type of service animal, used by some individuals who are blind. This is the type of service animal with which most people are familiar. But there are service animals that assist persons with other kinds of disabilities in their day-to-day activities. Some examples include:

- Alerting persons with hearing impairments to sounds
- Pulling wheelchairs or carrying and picking up things for persons with mobility impairments
- Assisting persons with mobility impairments with balance

A service animal is not a pet.

### 3. Q: How can I tell if an animal is really a service animal and not just a pet?

**A:** Some, but not all, service animals wear special collars and harnesses. Some, but not all, are licensed or certified and have identification papers. If you are not certain that an animal is a service animal, you may ask the person who has the animal if it is a service animal required because of a disability. However, an individual who is going to a restaurant or theater is not likely to be carrying documentation of his or her medical condition or disability. Therefore, such documentation generally may not be required as a condition for providing service to an individual accompanied by a service animal. Although a number of

states have programs to certify service animals, you may not insist on proof of state certification before permitting the service animal to accompany the person with a disability.

**4. Q: What must I do when an individual with a service animal comes to my business?**

**A:** The service animal must be permitted to accompany the individual with a disability to all areas of the facility where customers are normally allowed to go. An individual with a service animal may not be segregated from other customers.

**5. Q: I have always had a clearly posted "no pets" policy at my establishment. Do I still have to allow service animals in?**

**A:** Yes. A service animal is not a pet. The ADA requires you to modify your "no pets" policy to allow the use of a service animal by a person with a disability. This does not mean you must abandon your "no pets" policy altogether but simply that you must make an exception to your general rule for service animals.

**6. Q: My county health department has told me that only a guide dog has to be admitted. If I follow those regulations, am I violating the ADA?**

**A:** Yes, if you refuse to admit any other type of service animal on the basis of local health department regulations or other state or local laws. The ADA provides greater protection for individuals with disabilities and so it takes priority over the local or state laws or regulations.

**7. Q: Can I charge maintenance or cleaning fee for customers who bring service animals into my business?**

**A:** No. Neither a deposit nor a surcharge may be imposed on an individual with a disability as a condition to allowing a service animal to accompany the individual with a disability, even if deposits are routinely required for pets. However, a public accommodation may charge its customers with disabilities if a service animal causes damage so long as it is the regular practice of the entity to charge non-disabled customers for the same types of damages. For example, a hotel can charge a guest with a disability for the cost of repairing or cleaning furniture damaged by a service animal if it is the hotel's policy to charge when non-disabled guests cause such damage.

**8. Q: I operate a private taxicab and I don't want animals in my taxi; they smell, shed hair and sometimes have "accidents." Am I violating the ADA if I refuse to pick up someone with a service animal?**

**A:** Yes. Taxicab companies may not refuse to provide services to individuals with disabilities. Private taxicab companies are also prohibited from charging higher fares or fees for transporting individuals with disabilities and their service animals than they charge to other persons for the same or equivalent service.

**9. Q: Am I responsible for the animal while the person with a disability is in my business?**

**A:** No. The care or supervision of a service animal is solely the responsibility of his or her owner. You are not required to provide care or food or a special location for the animal.

**10. Q: What if a service animal barks or growls at other people, or otherwise acts out of control?**

**A:** You may exclude any animal, including a service animal, from your facility when that animal's behavior poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others. For example, any service animal that displays vicious behavior towards other guests or customers may be excluded. You may not make assumptions, however, about how a particular animal is likely to behave based on your past experience with other animals. Each situation must be considered individually.

Although a public accommodation may exclude any service animal that is out of control, it should give the individual with a disability who uses the service animal the option of continuing to enjoy its goods and services without having the service animal on the premises.

**11. Q: Can I exclude an animal that doesn't really seem dangerous but is disruptive to my business?**

**A:** There may be a few circumstances when a public accommodation is not required to accommodate a service animal--that is, when doing so would result in a fundamental alteration to the nature of the business. Generally, this is not likely to occur in restaurants, hotels, retail stores, theaters, concert halls, and sports facilities. But when it does, for example, when a dog barks during a movie, the animal can be excluded.

If you have further questions about service animals or other requirements of the ADA, you may call the U.S. Department of Justice's toll-free ADA Information Line at 800-514-0301 (voice) or 800-514-0383 (TDD).

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## APPENDIX B

# UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF INSTRUCTION (UDI)

### Definition:

The design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without adaptation or specialized design.

### Seven Principles of Universal Design:

**1. EQUITABLE USE**

The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.

**2. FLEXIBILITY IN USE**

The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

**3. 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.

**4. PERCEPTIBLE INFORMATION**

The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.

**5. TOLERANCE FOR ERROR**

The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

**6. LOW PHYSICAL EFFORT**

The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

**7. SIZE AND SPACE FOR APPROACH AND USE**

Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.

### Note:

The Principles of Universal Design are not intended to constitute all criteria for good design, only universally usable design. Certainly, other factors are important, such as aesthetics, cost, safety, gender and cultural appropriateness, and these aspects must also be taken into consideration when designing.

Source: [http://www.ncsu.edu/www/ncsu/design/sod5/cud/pubs\\_p/docs/poster.pdf](http://www.ncsu.edu/www/ncsu/design/sod5/cud/pubs_p/docs/poster.pdf)

## Universal Design of Instruction Guidelines and Examples

### EQUITABLE USE

The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.

#### Guidelines

- Provide the same means of use for all users: identical whenever possible; equivalent when not.
- Avoid segregating or stigmatizing any users.
- Make provisions for privacy, security, and safety equally available to all users.
- Make the design appealing to all users.

#### Examples

- Integrated, dispersed, and adaptable seating in classrooms, and assembly areas such as auditoriums and theaters
- Assistive technologies integrated into all student stations college-wide
- Power doors with sensors at entrances that are convenient for all users

### FLEXIBILITY IN USE

The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

#### Guidelines

- Provide choice and methods of use.
- Accommodate right - or left - handed access and use.
- Facilitate the user's accuracy and precision.
- Provide adaptability to the user's pace.

#### Examples

- Multiple testing methods that allow students to demonstrate mastery via a preferred modality (written, typed, oral, signed, etc.)
- An answer center counter that is low enough for individuals of short stature or who use a wheelchair; a table where staff can sit with students who cannot access a counter
- Desks designed for right - or left - handed users

### 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.

#### Guidelines

- Eliminate unnecessary complexity.
- Be consistent with user expectation and intuition.

- Accommodate a wide range of literacy and language skills.
- Arrange information consistent with its importance.
- Provide effective prompting and feedback during and after task completion.

### Examples

- An exam with clear and user-friendly navigation points
- A course packet with a simple text layout and images that have alt tags or captions
- A digital syllabus that incorporates headings and styles that facilitate navigation for all users

## PERCEPTIBLE INFORMATION

The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.

### Guidelines

- Use different modes (pictorial, verbal, tactile) for redundant presentation of essential information.
- Maximize "legibility" of essential information.
- Differentiate elements in ways that can be described (i.e. make it easy to give instructions or directions).
- Provide compatibility with a variety of techniques or devices used by people with sensory limitations.

### Examples

- Use of the docucamera to display text that is being read out loud
- Redundant cueing (e.g. recorded and text instructions) in Blackboard and on-line classes
- A font style and size (e.g. Arial 16) that is legible for all students

## TOLERANCE FOR ERROR

The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

### Guidelines

- Arrange elements to minimize hazards and errors: most used elements, most accessible; hazardous elements eliminated, isolated, or shielded.
- Provide warnings of hazards and errors.
- Provide fail safe features.
- Discourage unconscious action in tasks that require vigilance.

### Examples

- On-line writing tools that include word prediction when that feature does not fundamentally alter the course requirements



- Permission for all students to use the "undo" feature in computer software to correct mistakes without penalty
- Exams that limit multiple choices to 3

### **LOW PHYSICAL EFFORT**

The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

#### **Guidelines**

- Allow user to maintain a neutral body position.
- Use Reasonable operating forces.
- Minimize repetitive actions.
- Minimize sustained physical effort.

#### **Examples**

- Pens, pencils, and mice that can be manipulated by users with varied degrees of strength and fine motor coordination
- Screens (for viewing videos, on-line materials, etc.) located in glare - and distraction - free spaces
- Testing spaces with carrels, no windows, or with blinds to reduce distraction and glare

### **SIZE AND SPACE FOR APPROACH AND USE**

Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.

#### **Guidelines**

- Provide a clear line of sight to important elements for any seated or standing user.
- Make reach to all components comfortable for any seated or standing user.
- Accommodate variations in hand and grip size.
- Provide adequate space for the use of assistive devices or personal assistance.

#### **Examples**

- Theater-in-the-round style classroom layout to replace row seating
- Universally accessible desks that eliminate the need for special seating/special furniture for wheelchair users
- Classroom, library, and lab design with clear floor space around student stations, instructor's desk, and staff counters

Compiled by Bettye Rose Connell, Mike Jones, Ron Mace, Jim Mueller, Abier Mullick, Elaine Ostroff, Jon Sanford, Ed Steinfeld, Molly Story, Gregg Vanderheiden

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Adapted by Julie K Balassa April 2011

## **Universal Design of Instruction Tips**

Universal design principles can be applied to many products and environments. Using the CUD [*Center for Universal Design, North Carolina State University*] format, UDI can be defined as the design of instruction to be usable by all students, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

When designing classroom instruction or a distance learning class, strive to create a learning environment that allows all students, including a person who happens to have a characteristic that is termed "disability" to access the content of the course, and fully participate in class activities. Universal design principles can apply to lectures, classroom discussions, group work, handouts, web-based instruction, fieldwork, and other academic activities.

Below are examples of instructional methods that employ principles of universal design. They are organized under eight performance indicator categories, with a goal statement for each. Applying these strategies can make your course content accessible to people with a wide range of abilities and disabilities, ethnic backgrounds, language skills, and learning styles.

### **Class Climate**

Adopt practices that reflect high values with respect to both diversity and inclusiveness. Example: Put a statement on your syllabus inviting students to meet with you to discuss disability-related accommodations and other special learning needs.

### **Interaction**

Encourage regular and effective interactions between students and the instructor and ensure that communication methods are accessible to all participants. Example: Assign group work for which learners must support each other and that places a high value on different skills and roles.

### **Physical environments and products**

Ensure that facilities, activities, materials, and equipment are physically accessible and usable by all students, and that all potential student characteristics are addressed in safety considerations. Example: Develop safety procedures for all students, including those who are blind, deaf, or wheelchair users.

### **Delivery methods**

Use multiple, accessible instructional methods that are accessible to all learners. Example: Use multiple modes to deliver content; when possible allow students to choose from multiple options for learning, and motivate and engage students-consider lectures, collaborative learning options, hands-on activities, Internet-based communications, education software, field work, and so forth.

### **Information resources and technology**

Ensure that course materials, notes, and other information resources are engaging, flexible, and accessible for all students. Example: Choose printed materials and prepare a syllabus early to allow

students the option of beginning to read materials and work on assignments before the course begins. Allow adequate time to arrange for alternate formats, such as books in audio format.

**Feedback**

Provide specific feedback on a regular basis. Example: Allow students to turn in parts of large projects for feedback before the final project is due.

**Assessment**

Regularly assess student progress using multiple accessible methods and tools, and adjust instruction accordingly. Example: Assess group and cooperative performance as well as individual achievement.

**Accommodation**

For students whose needs are not met by instructional design, plan for accommodations. For example, know campus protocols for getting materials in alternate formats, rescheduling classroom locations, and arranging for other accommodations for students with disabilities.

Employing UDI principles does not eliminate the need for specific accommodations for students with disabilities. However, applying universal design concepts in course planning will assure full access to the content for most students, and minimize the need for specific accommodations. For example, designing web resources in accessible format as they are developed means that no re-development is necessary if a student who is blind enrolls in the class; planning ahead can be less time-consuming in the long run. Letting all students have access to your class notes and assignments on an accessible website can eliminate the need for providing materials in alternate formats.

Source: <http://www.washington.edu/doi/Faculty/Strategies/>

# APPENDIX C

## USEFUL RESOURCES

### **The DO-IT Faculty Room**

<http://www.washington.edu/doi/Faculty>

An on-line resource for faculty and administrators at postsecondary institutions, which provides information on providing academic accommodations that maximize the learning of all students, including those with disabilities.

### **Tools for Teaching: Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

University of California, Berkeley

<http://dsp.berkeley.edu/teachstudentswithdisab.html>

### **PEPNet (Postsecondary Education Programs Network)**

[www.pepnet.org](http://www.pepnet.org)

On-line training resource for education professionals who are serving students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

### **Learning Disabilities Association of America**

<http://www.ldanatl.org/aboutld/teachers/index.asp>

Specific strategies apply to specific learning disabilities, and many are outlined here. You will also find tips for working with students who have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

### **Universal Design for Instruction - Fact Sheet**

[http://www.facultyware.uconn.edu/files/udi2\\_fact\\_sheet.pdf](http://www.facultyware.uconn.edu/files/udi2_fact_sheet.pdf)

### **Universal Design: Applications in Postsecondary Education**

<http://ualr.edu/pace/index.php/home/hot-topics/ud>

Project PACE is a program of Disability Support Services at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. The primary objective of this project is to improve the quality of education for students with disabilities through the development and provision of resources, technical assistance and professional development opportunities to faculty, staff and administrators in postsecondary settings.

### **Laws**

<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/civilrights/resources/factsheets/504.pdf>

<http://www.ada.gov/cguide.htm>

### **AHEAD – Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD)**

<http://www.ahead.org/>