

## **Educational Access/Disability Service**

### **Planning for College Accommodations**

#### **Academic Accommodation Responsibilities for Students and Faculty/Staff**

##### **Student Responsibilities**

- Initiate a meeting with the Director of Disability Access to request accommodations.
- Present supporting documentation of a disability.
- Meet with the Director of Disability Access to develop an appropriate accommodation plan. The initial meeting will take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. Returning students should schedule a meeting each semester to review and update their accommodation plan.
- Provide a copy of the accommodation plan to faculty and staff members of the student's choice in a timely manner. Accommodations cannot be provided without a plan and are not retroactive.
- Meet with each faculty/staff member of your choice to review accommodations and plan for implementation.
- Be part of the implementation plan, such as audio recording in class, self-seating, requesting clarification and review, if needed.

When using Testing Services, notify the course instructor and the Director of Disability Access, preferably with 1 week's notice; minimum of 24 hours. Please see procedures for using testing services for more information. Please see procedures for using testing services for more information.

##### **Faculty/ Staff Responsibilities**

- Provide an accommodation state of course syllabus (mandatory).
- Meet with student to review/plan for implementation of requested accommodation(s).
- Contact the Director of Disability Access as soon as possible with any questions or concerns regarding approved accommodations or for assistance with implementation.
- Assist the student with implementation of accommodations, i.e., help with identifying a student note-taker, identifying appropriate seating, etc.
- Remind students of their responsibilities when making use of testing accommodations, especially during busy testing weeks (mid-term, mid-semester, end of term/semester).
- When notified by a student of use of Testing Services, assist with testing accommodations by completing a Testing Services Request Form and submitting the quiz/test and form to the Director of Disability Access in advance of the testing date. Please see procedures for using testing services for more information.

## **Functional Impact**

### **What is the Functional Impact?**

The accommodation review process in college focuses on the functional impact of a student's disability, not the diagnostic label. Having a certain disability does not automatically entitle the student to specific accommodations. For an accommodation to be appropriate, the impact of the disability must significantly interfere with participation, communication or accurate evaluation.

For example, a student who is visually impaired or has severe dyslexia may not need accommodations for oral presentations, but since both are effectively "print blind" they might reasonably have assistance with note-taking, adaptive testing, or audio text. Another example would be a student with a reduced writing speed due to a physical impairment impacting fine motor control or as the result of a learning disability's impact on sensory motor integration might need no accommodations in the classroom but may need extended time on tests and access to a computer for essay tests.

### **Thinking About Fundamental Goals**

Working with college instructors will be important so that students can decide how to implement possible accommodation strategies that will provide them with the maximum opportunity for both learning and demonstrating mastery. Faculty members have the right to reject accommodations only if they will change a course's fundamental goals or requirements. Many faculty members use universal design and effective classroom strategies to help all students achieve their goals and requirements.

Accommodations are decided on an individual basis and can change each semester. If in a particular situation, an accommodation infringes on a course's fundamental goals, then the student is not entitled to the accommodation in that situation. For example, a student with muscular dystrophy (affecting fine motor control) or a student with a learning disability (affecting speed of information processing) might be entitled to time and  $\frac{1}{2}$  testing time in most classes (i.e. an introductory psychology course, where it is the knowledge and not the speed that is critical). If either of these students were to take an emergency medical triage course, where the speed and accuracy of determining who should be given medical care first is a primary goal of the course, extending the test time would be unreasonable. The student would not be entitled to the accommodation of extended test time in this context as it would change a fundamental requirement of the course.

### **Think About It**

Being able to clearly describe a condition or disability, its functional impact, and the student's needs is important. Practicing this skill will help students to work with their college coaches and

advisors and other faculty and staff members to identify needed equipment and services, establish appropriate accommodations, and develop compensatory strategies. The following questions will help students to describe their conditions, the impacts of the condition, and their needs. Students should review the questions with their parents, former educators, medical providers, and others who can help to anticipate the accommodations and services they might need in college.

- **How Do You Describe Your Condition?**

How do you describe your condition and how do you want it described to others? You may choose to keep information about your disability confidential. The Director of Disability Access will need to have enough information to evaluate the need for accommodations and services. Instructors need considerably less information and may be told as little as what accommodations are appropriate. Even if your disability is not visible or obvious it is likely that at some point a few of your new friends and other students will notice an accommodation; how will you describe your situation to them?

- **What is the Impact of Your Condition?**

It is helpful to think about how your condition has impacted you in various situations in the past; then to consider how it is likely to impact the typical activities you can expect to encounter at college. You may want to pay attention to the following contexts:

- Classes (lectures, laboratory, physical activity, web-based activities);
- Assignments (syllabi, reading, writing, calculating, keyboarding, library work);
- Communication (speaking, listening, using phones, using e-mail, using Moodle);
- Evaluation (tests, quizzes, papers, oral reports, group presentations/projects);
- Time Constraints (timed tests, college deadlines, assignment due dates);
- Attendance (class, work, required activities out of class, residential requirements);
- Campus (mobility; orientation/navigation, transportation);
- Residence Halls (roommates, food and dietary issues, climate control);
- Co-Curricular (clubs, organizations, events, athletics)

Please note that the above questions should also be considered regarding your work assignment and community engagement activities also.

- **What Have You Tried in the Past?**

What accommodations, auxiliary aids, adaptive equipment, modifications and services have been provided in the past? Which ones worked well? Which ones did not?

- **What Do You Anticipate Needing at College?**

What types of auxiliary aids, adaptive equipment, modifications and services will you need in college?