



FACULTY GUIDE FOR ACCOMMODATING AND TEACHING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Disability Support Services
Montgomery College

Revised Fall 2017

Introduction.....	2
DSS Overview.....	2
Reasonable Accommodations	3
Accommodation Letter	3
General Strategies for Optimizing Learning.....	5
Notetaking Accommodation.....	6
Testing Accommodations	6
Alternate Format Materials for Testing	7
Flexibility with Attendance	7
Online Course Accommodations	8
Types of Disabilities	9
Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).....	10
Learning Disabilities	11
Autism Spectrum Disorder.....	13
Mental Health Disabilites	15
Blindness/Low Vision	17
Physical/Mobility Disabilities.....	19
Deaf/Hard of Hearing	21
Academic Advising for Students with Disabilities.....	25

INTRODUCTION

Montgomery College thrives in one of the most diverse communities in the country and is proud of the diverse student population which includes a generous and varying mix of age, gender, race/ethnicity, and disability. The number of students with disabilities who attend college has increased over the years. Montgomery College has also seen this increase as over 1,600 students with disabilities registered with the Disability Support Services (DSS) office in 2016 as compared to 1,200 students in 2010.

Every student brings unique strengths and experiences to higher education. While all students learn differently, the ways students with disabilities learn and respond may require reasonable accommodations in the ways materials are presented and testing and evaluation methods are used.

Providing accommodations ensures equal opportunities for success in mastery of course material; it does not mean compromising the content, quality or level of instruction. All students are required to meet a standard of competency in coursework and these standards also apply to students with disabilities.

This guide serves as a resource for faculty on accommodating, teaching, and advising students with disabilities. Students with disabilities must identify to DSS in order to initiate the process for services and accommodations. Each student is assigned a DSS counselor who serves as the point contact for the student and the faculty member. We look forward to collaborating with you in providing access and supporting student's success in your courses and programs.

DSS OVERVIEW

DSS works with students with disabilities in non-credit and credit programs to ensure access to the courses, programs, and activities offered by Montgomery College. The DSS faculty and staff are available to answer questions, consult on issues and concerns, and provide information about resources on and off campus for students with disabilities. DSS works with students who present with various disabilities including attention deficit disorder, learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, mental health conditions, brain injuries, physical/mobility and medical conditions, and vision and hearing impairments.

DSS works with each student individually and accommodations and services are based on the documentation of the disability, a personal intake with the student, and course standards and requirements. Students are encouraged to identify as close to admission as possible, maintain consistent contact with their DSS counselor, and provide each instructor with an Accommodation Letter as early as possible in the semester.

DSS is also a resource for faculty. Each student is assigned a DSS counselor and faculty are encouraged to contact the counselor to answer any questions or concerns regarding services and accommodations.

Services provided by DSS include:

- Academic, career, and short-term personal counseling
- Assistance with admission, course selection, and registration
- Authorization of accommodations based on student’s disability
- Classroom accommodations such as scribes, assistive listening devices, sign-language interpreters
- Assistive technology including computers with disability-specific software and hardware
- Document conversion to alternative formats
- Academic Support Centers
- Information and referral to on and off campus resources

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Reasonable accommodations are meant to allow qualified students with disabilities equal access to the College’s courses, programs, and activities. They provide an alternative way to accomplish the course requirements by eliminating or reducing disability-related barriers. Accommodations should not compromise the essential requirements of the course, weaken academic standards, nor should they cause an “undue burden” for the College or faculty member. Rather, they are meant to reduce disability-related barriers by leveling the playing field and allowing the student with a disability to demonstrate course requirements without disability related interference.

Examples of accommodations include extended time on testing, access to classroom notes, and assistive technology. Faculty should consult with the DSS counselor if they believe an accommodation is not reasonable or fundamentally alters a requirement of the course.

ACCOMMODATION LETTER

When a student is found eligible for DSS, an Accommodation Letter is generated which authorizes accommodations for each course. The student is instructed to provide the accommodation letter as soon as possible to each instructor (preferably during the first week of classes).

DSS recommends that faculty meet with students who choose to identify themselves as having a disability to discuss the specific accommodations they might need in the course. Due to the

confidential nature of these requests, it is important that meetings take place in a location that protects the student's right to privacy. Below are general guidelines to consider.

BEFORE THE MEETING

- ✓ **Identify the name of the counselor that is working with the student** (the counselor's name is highlighted in bold and signed). The DSS Counselor is available to answer questions, clarify accommodations, and address concerns.
- ✓ **Identify whether Emergency Evacuation/Medical information** may be needed. For students who have information listed in this section (mobility or seizure information for example) this typically means that Security has been notified of this student's needs and his/her location.
- ✓ **Review the listed accommodations.**

The Accommodations are divided into three sections: **Testing, Classroom, and Homework Accommodations**. Identify any questions or any clarifications prior to meeting with the student. For example, if the student has double time as a testing accommodation—discuss with the student if you use pop quizzes, how this might be set up beforehand. If a student has back to back classes, he/she may need to schedule with you when to take the test in the Assessment Center (for example taking the exam earlier or later in the day)

DURING THE MEETING

- ✓ **Welcome the student** to your class and affirm the College's commitment to equal access.
 - ✓ **Review the Accommodation letter with the student and the request being made.** This will give you an opportunity to ask questions and clarify how to implement the accommodations for your course. Depending upon the nature of the course, some accommodations may not apply. The conversation focus is on the course structure and needed accommodations, not the student's disability. However, be aware that some students may disclose the nature of their disability.
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AFTER THE MEETING

- ✓ **Document that you met and reviewed the accommodations** for the class with the student.
- ✓ **Re-visit accommodation needs** as appropriate

- ✓ **Contact the DSS counselor if you have any questions.** We are here to work with you and the student.
- ✓ **Maintain confidentiality-at no time should the class be informed that a student has a disability, unless the student makes a specific request to do so.**

GENERAL STRATEGIES FOR OPTIMIZING LEARNING

Many teaching strategies that assist students with disabilities are also known to benefit students without disabilities. Instruction provided in an array of approaches will reach more students than instruction using one method. DSS offers the following suggestions to assist instructors in meeting the growing diversity of student needs in the classroom, particularly those with disabilities. DSS welcomes any additional strategies instructors have found helpful. DSS will review these and include selected strategies in the next edition of this guide.

DURING REGISTRATION

- Make the class syllabus and list of required texts available by request to students; this allows time for students to obtain materials in alternative formats and to begin reading assignments.
- Be available to discuss class content and your teaching style.
- If available and appropriate, select a textbook with an accompanying study guide for optional student use.

EARLY IN THE SEMESTER/SYLLABUS STATEMENT

- Use a statement in your syllabus and make an announcement at the first meeting of the class.

Disability Sample Statement

If you are a student with a disability and believe you may need accommodations for this course, please contact the Disability Support Services office on your campus as soon as possible (R-CB122; G-SA250; or TP/SS-ST233). If you have an accommodation letter from DSS, please contact me to discuss arrangements for your accommodations. Since accommodations are not retroactive, it is strongly recommended that you provide me with notification as early as possible in the term. Any student who may need assistance in the event of an **emergency evacuation must identify to the Disability Support Services Office; guidelines for emergency evacuations are at:**

<https://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/EDU/Plain2.aspx?id=4162>

On-Line Courses/Sample Statement

If you are a student with a disability, please contact me to discuss your specific needs. An accommodation letter from Disability Support Services (DSS) authorizing your accommodations will be needed. Please note that accommodations needed for an online course may be different than those needed in a traditional classroom setting, so it is important that you work with DSS to determine appropriate accommodations for this course as early as possible. Since accommodations are not retroactive, it is strongly recommended that you provide me with notification as early as possible in the term.

NOTETAKING ACCOMMODATION

If the student needs an accommodation for classroom notes, this will be documented in the Accommodation Letter. If available, students may have a copy of the instructor's notes or PowerPoint slides, may use a digital recorder to audio-record lectures, or may need a volunteer notetaker to take notes. If a volunteer notetaker is needed, the instructor should assist the student in finding a volunteer notetaker as outlined in the directions provided with the Accommodation Letter. The U.S. Department of education Office for Civil Rights (OCR) indicates that notes should be provided to the student within 2 weeks of the initial request. Should any difficulties arise, the instructor should contact DSS for assistance.

In some instances, the student may be granted permission to use an audio-recording device. DSS can loan students these devices on a semester basis. Students must inform the instructor prior to recording as stipulated by Maryland Law. DSS erases all recordings as soon as the device is returned to office.

TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

The Assessment Centers on each campus provides testing accommodations for students registered with the DSS office. Testing accommodations provided by the centers include extended time on tests, reduced distractions testing environment, computers, reading and writing software, and other assistive technology.

The Accommodation Letter will indicate the specific testing accommodations needed. Students are instructed to discuss the letter with each faculty member as soon as possible to determine how accommodations will be implemented for the course.

For testing accommodations, the student should notify the instructor ahead of time, at least **3 (three) business days** prior to a test in order to allow time to process the accommodation. DSS

informs students that if they do not make their request in a timely manner, they may not be accommodated.

Faculty Responsibilities for Using the Assessment Center

- Review the testing accommodations noted in the Accommodation Letter
- Send the exam with a Test Request Form to the Assessment Center at least **48 hours** prior to the start of the exam.
- Encourage students to read the Student Guide for Using the Assessment Centers.
- Faculty may collect test materials in person or via an authorized designee. Send written notification of authorized designee in advance. Faculty and authorized designee will be asked to present a photo ID.

ALTERNATE FORMAT MATERIALS FOR TESTING

Some students may need written materials to be converted to an alternate format. This will be noted on the Accommodation Letter as follows: “Use of Kurzweil Reader, enlarged print required, or alternate format. DSS will need an electronic copy of the test to make sure the format is compatible with the technology the student uses. The test content will not be altered during this process; it will simply be converted to an accessible format. The instructor will need to send a copy of the exam to the Assistive Technology representative on their respective campus at least **3 days** prior to the test to allow sufficient time for conversion. The instructor will also provide a copy of the exam with the completed Test Request Form to the Assessment Center.

FLEXIBILITY WITH ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to follow the Montgomery College attendance policy (Academic Regulation 9.823), complete all assignments, and complete all exams as indicated on the instructor’s course syllabus. Flexibility with Attendance may be a reasonable accommodation when the disability has a direct impact on class attendance. Generally, these students have disabilities which are chronic or episodic in nature which may cause difficulties with regular class attendance. This might include, but is not limited to, students with diabetes, epilepsy, cancer, migraines and conditions requiring on-going or specialized medical treatment. Students with psychological disabilities who are experiencing an exacerbation of symptoms may also request modification of attendance policies.

Determining How Many Disability-Related Absences Are Reasonable

The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) provided the following guidelines to be used in considering whether attendance is an essential element of a course:

1. Is there classroom interaction between the instructor and students and among students?
2. Do student contributions constitute a significant component of the learning process?

3. Does the fundamental nature of the course rely on student participation as an essential method for learning?
4. To what degree does a student's failure to attend constitute a significant loss to the educational experience of other students in the class?
5. What do the course description and syllabus say?
6. Which method is used to calculate the final grade?
7. What are the classroom practices and policies regarding attendance?

The accommodation should be provided unless the accommodation would fundamentally alter the essential requirements of the course. It is important that the student and course instructor discuss the issue so that the student can then make an informed decision regarding alternatives. Requests for accommodations for absences due to a disability should be considered on an individual and course-by-course basis.

ONLINE COURSE ACCOMMODATIONS

Online course accommodations may differ from classroom accommodations. Most students will request extended time for testing in online course offerings. However, there may be times when additional accommodations may be needed. All technology/media tools required in an online course should be made available ahead of time to determine if the material used is accessible to the student. DSS is available for assistance and guidance in this area.

TYPES OF DISABILITIES

More than 1,600 students with disabilities identified at the College during the fall 2016 semester. Most of the students identify as having learning disabilities followed by attention deficit/hyperactivity disorders, mental health conditions, and autism spectrum disorders. There is also a smaller number of students with physical, visual or hearing impairments. Although some disabilities are more visible, often times, the disabilities are not obvious. Additionally, some students may have multiple disabilities. The following provides information on characteristics and strategies in accommodating students with various disabilities. As a faculty member, you should **NOT** ask the student about the nature of their disability; however, some students may choose to disclose their specific disability. This is general information meant to provide better understanding of the disabilities and possible impact in your course. Each person is unique and will experience a disability differently.

General Considerations:

- Do not assume a person with a disability needs help; ask before doing and follow the directions given by the individual. For example, say, “May I help you with that?” If they want help, they will accept it. If not, don’t take offense.
- If assistance is offered and the person declines, do not insist.
- Speak directly to a person with a disability, rather than to their companion or aid.
- Avoid actions and words that suggest the person should be treated differently. It is appropriate to ask a person in a wheelchair to go for a walk or to ask a blind person if he or she sees what you mean.
- Treat persons with disabilities with respect and consideration as you would other individuals without disabilities.

Disability Etiquette:

- Use person first language when referring to an individual with a disability. For example, say “person with a disability” rather than “disabled person.”
- Avoid saying the person has “special needs” or is “handicapped.”
- People are not “bound” or “confined” to a wheelchair. Wheelchairs increase mobility and enhance freedom. Instead say, “wheelchair user” or “person who uses a wheelchair.”
- Wheelchair, cane, or any other assistive device is considered part of the person’s personal space and should not be leaned on, picked up, or touched.

ATTENTION DEFICIT/HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER (ADHD)

ADHD is characterized by a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity and impulsivity that interferes with or reduces an individual's quality of social, academic or occupational functioning. The diagnosis is based on the current presentation of symptoms, which can be predominantly inattentive, predominantly hyperactive/impulsive or a combination of inattention and hyperactivity/impulsivity. Although some students take medication, symptoms may persist and interfere with learning and behavior.

CHARACTERISTICS

- Inability to sustain attention on task
- Lack of close attention to details resulting at times in avoidable errors
- Easily distracted, not seeming to listen when spoken to directly
- Poor time management and organizational skills
- Difficulty in being prepared for class, keeping appointments, and getting to class on time
- Reading comprehension difficulties
- Difficulty with math problems requiring changes in action, operation and order
- Inability to listen selectively during lectures, resulting in problems with note-taking
- Lack of organization in written work
- Difficulty following directions, listening and comprehending
- Blurting out answers or interrupting others
- Poor handwriting

CONSIDERATIONS/INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

- Students with ADHD often also have learning disabilities.
- These students benefit from structured classes and strategies that help with organization and time management.
- Use varied instructional methods (lecture with a visual outline, group activities, web based discussions).

ACCOMMODATIONS MAY INCLUDE:

- Preferential seating
- Copies of classmate's or instructor's notes and/or PowerPoints
- Audio-recording lectures
- Extended time on tests
- Reduced distraction testing environment

LEARNING DISABILITIES

Learning disability is a classification that includes several areas of functioning that interferes with the person's ability to learn. A person may have difficulty in language, reasoning, processing and integrating information and difficulty with academic skills (such as reading, writing, and mathematics). While there are significant differences in how a person may experience a learning disability, the impact can be mitigated with remediation, instructional interventions, compensatory strategies, and accommodations.

Specific Learning Disabilities:

Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability that is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition, decoding, spelling, writing and listening. These difficulties typically result from deficits in understanding, remembering and working with letter sounds (phonological awareness). Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede vocabulary and background knowledge.

Dysgraphia is a learning disability that affects the written formation of letters or words. Students with dysgraphia have difficulty with handwriting, copying and note-taking.

Dyscalculia is a learning disability that affects the student's ability to solve arithmetic problems and grasp math concepts. Students with dyscalculia can have difficulty with both simple and complex math functions and problem solving.

CHARACTERISTICS

- Difficulty with oral and/or written expression
- Challenges in reading comprehension and basic reading skills
- Mathematical calculation and reasoning difficulties
- Decreased processing speed
- Weakness in logic and reasoning skills
- Difficulty in following directions and concentrating
- Weakness in short term and/or long term memory skills
- Decreased organization, time management, and planning skills
- Problem solving difficulties

CONSIDERATIONS/INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

- Students benefit from structured classes and strategies that help with organization and time management.

- Use varied instructional methods (lecture with a visual outline, group activities, web based discussions)
- Provide the syllabus before the start of the semester
- Emphasize important terms or dates during the lecture
- Use handouts and visual aides
- Concise oral instructions

ACCOMMODATIONS MAY INCLUDE

- Preferential seating
- Copies of classmate's or instructor's notes and/or PowerPoints
- Audio-recording lectures
- Extended time on tests
- Reduced distraction testing environment
- Calculator
- Textbooks in electronic formats
- Use of assistive technology (smart pen, Kurzweil Reader, Dragon Dictate)

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a developmental disorder characterized by deficits in social behavior, the social use of language and executive functioning (which includes planning & organizing, prioritizing, goal-setting, controlling impulses, etc.). It is important to note that Autism Spectrum Disorder can vary greatly in individuals.

Students with ASD may have difficulty with understanding non-verbal cues. For instance, they can experience difficulty in understanding somebody else's thoughts, feelings and motivations. They may struggle with regulating their emotions and responding appropriately to others. Some students with Autism Spectrum Disorder can present as very quiet or even appear to be withdrawn. They may use sophisticated vocabulary but struggle to initiate and to maintain "small-talk" or to engage in goal-directed conversations. Students with ASD may have excellent rote memory but have difficulty with high-level thinking and problem-solving. Some students with ASD may be unusually sensitive to touch, sound and/or light and may experience "sensory overload" at times.

CHARACTERISTICS

Behavior: may exhibit unusual behavior such as rocking or twirling especially when stressed, may have intense or focused interests, may show inflexibility or strong desire for routines, may have sensory sensitivity.

Social/Communication Skills: comments/questions may be tangential, unusual speech intonation, poor eye contact, difficulty interpreting idioms, metaphors, sarcasm, may have difficulty understanding another's point of view, may have trouble regulating class participation- too much or too little.

Cognitive: Concrete thinker, may have trouble with abstract reasoning, difficulty with organization, planning, carrying out and completing tasks, difficulty transitioning between tasks.

CONSIDERATIONS/INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

- Provide clear, structured syllabus which outlines course expectations, specific assignment and exam dates, and course requirements.
- Provide advance notice of any changes when possible
- Use concrete language; or explain metaphors or idioms when they are used
- Be concise and direct when giving feedback; say what you mean
- Provide visual aids when possible to support the lectures
- Ask student to repeat back directions in his own words to check for comprehension
- If group work is required, student may need assistance in connecting with classmates and may benefit from you monitoring group progress

- Be concise and direct when giving feedback; say what you mean
- If a student's behavior is disruptive, meet with the student privately, provide feedback, and establish clear strategies to use or rules to follow in the classroom.

ACCOMMODATIONS MAY INCLUDE

- Audio-recording
- Breaks as needed
- Preferential seating
- Alternatives to group work
- Alternatives or modifications to oral presentations
- Note-taker/digital recorder
- Reduced-distraction testing environment
- Assistive technology
- Permission to bring a sensory object
- Reduced course load

MENTAL HEALTH DISABILITIES

Mental health condition is a broad term to describe a wide range of conditions that impact a person's thinking, feeling, or mood. Students with psychological/mental issues are a growing population on college campuses. There are many specific conditions within this category including but not limited to anxiety disorders, depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and posttraumatic stress disorder. Many of these conditions can be managed with treatment that can include medications, psychotherapy, and support.

CHARACTERISTICS (VARY)

- Difficulty with concentration and attention
- Extra time to process information
- Behavior or mood may cycle
- Increase in symptoms under stress
- Difficulty with attendance or completing assignments on time

CONSIDERATIONS/INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

- May have difficulty identifying and disclosing specifics of their disability
- If a student does disclose, be willing to discuss how the disability affects him or her academically and what accommodations would be helpful.
- With treatment and support, many students with psychiatric disabilities are able to manage their mental health and benefit from college classes.
- If student's performance is being impacted by psychological symptoms, encourage them to meet with their DSS counselor. Maintaining a clear, distinct separation of roles between instructor and counselor is important.
- Sequential memory tasks, such as spelling, math, and step-by-step instructions may be more easily understood by breaking up the tasks into smaller ones.
- Drowsiness, fatigue, memory loss, and decreased response time may result from the side effects of prescription medications.
- Some of these conditions may cause the student to exceed attendance policies and/or timelines for completing assignments. Please refer to section on "Flexibility with Attendance" for guidance or contact DSS for further assistance.

ACCOMMODATIONS MAY INCLUDE

- Copies of classmate's or instructor's notes and/or PowerPoints
- Audio-recording lectures

- Possible adjustments to attendance requirements and timelines for completion of assignments
- Extended time for tests
- Reduced distraction testing environment
- Classroom breaks

BLINDNESS/LOW VISION

Visual impairments vary and may impact the person's central vision acuity, field of vision, color perception or binocular visual function.

The following terms are used in an educational context to describe students with visual disabilities:

- "Totally blind" students learn via Braille or other nonvisual media.
- "Legally blind" indicates that the student has less than 20/200 vision in the more functional eye or a very limited field of vision (20 degrees at the widest point).
- "Low vision" generally refers to a severe vision loss in distance and near vision. These students use a combination of vision and other senses to learn. They may require adaptations in lighting or the print size, and in some cases, Braille.

CONSIDERATIONS/INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

- If needed, introduce yourself at the beginning of a conversation and notify the student when you exit the room.
- Nonverbal cues depend on good visual acuity. Verbally acknowledging key points in the conversation facilitates the communication process.
- A student may use a guide dog or cane for mobility assistance. A guide dog is a working animal and should not be petted.
- When giving directions, be clear: say "left" or "right," "step up," or "step down." Let the student know how many obstacles there are; for example, "the chair is to your left" or "the stairs start in about three steps."
- When guiding or walking with a student, verbally offer your elbow instead of grabbing his or hers.
- Discuss special needs for labs, field trips or out-of-class activities well in advance.
- Ask the student if he or she will need assistance during an emergency evacuation and assist in making a plan if necessary.

ACCOMMODATIONS MAY INCLUDE (*CLOSE COLLABORATION WITH DSS WILL BE NEEDED)

- Reading materials and syllabus in advance (to permit time to transfer to alternate formats)
- Read aloud what is written on the board or in printed materials
- Verbally describe visual cues or gestures used during class discussions or activities
- Preferential seating
- Copies of classmate's or instructor's notes and/or PowerPoints
- Audio-recording lectures

- Use of adapted computer with features such as voice output, large print and Braille
- Alternate formats for textbooks, classroom assignments and tests (e.g., taped, large print or Braille; use of readers, scribes, tape recorded responses, adapted computer for closed circuit TV)
- Raised-line drawings and tactile models of graphic materials
- Extended time on tests
- Accessible online course materials
- Reduced course load
- Assistance with emergency evacuation

PHYSICAL/MOBILITY DISABILITIES

A variety of physical disabilities result from congenital conditions, accidents, or progressive neuromuscular diseases. These disabilities may include conditions such as spinal cord injury (paraplegia or quadriplegia), cerebral palsy, spina bifida, amputation, and muscular dystrophy. Functional limitations and abilities will vary greatly; the same diagnosis can affect students very differently.

To assist with mobility, students may use canes, crutches, braces, prostheses, scooters or wheelchairs. Students with mobility disabilities may face difficulties getting to class on time due to symptoms associated with their disability, as well as transportation problems, inclement weather, elevator or equipment breakdown.

CONSIDERATIONS/INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

- Make sure the classroom layout is accessible and free from obstructions.
- Special seating arrangements may be necessary to meet student needs, such as special chairs, lowered tables, or spaces for wheelchairs or scooters.
- In lab courses students may need a physically accessible workstation. Consult with the student for specific requirements, then with DSS if additional assistance or equipment is needed.
- If a student also has a communication disability, take time to understand the person. Repeat what you understand, and when you don't understand, say so.
- Ask before giving assistance, and wait for a response. Listen to any instructions the student may offer; the student generally knows the safest and most efficient way to accomplish the task at hand.
- Saying "a person who uses a wheelchair" is more appropriate than "a person confined to a wheelchair" since a wheelchair provides mobility
- When talking with a person who uses a wheelchair or scooter, try to converse at eye level; sit down if a chair is available.
- A wheelchair is part of a student's personal space; do not touch or push the chair, unless asked.
- When field trips are a part of course requirements, make sure accessible transportation is available.
- Ask the student if he or she will need assistance during an emergency evacuation, and assist in making a plan if necessary

ACCOMMODATIONS MAY INCLUDE

- Classrooms, labs, field trips, and places to meet with faculty in accessible locations

- Adaptive seating and tables in classrooms/labs
- Lab assistant
- Textbooks in electronic format
- Copies of classmate's or instructor's notes and/or PowerPoints
- Audio-recording lectures
- Use of lap top for note taking
- Possible adjustments to attendance requirements and timelines for completion of assignments
- Assistive computer equipment/software
- Extended time for tests
- Use of computer or scribe for written tests
- Reduced course load

DEAF/HARD OF HEARING

A student with a hearing loss may be considered deaf or hard of hearing. A student who is deaf has profound hearing loss (90 decibels or greater). A student with hearing loss may be able to use some residual hearing to communicate. Students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing require different accommodations depending on several factors including the degree of hearing loss, the age of onset, and the type of language or communication system they use. Some use lip reading, cued speech, signed English and/or American Sign Language. In the classroom, depending on the individual, some deaf or hard-of-hearing students will use a sign language interpreter, transcriber who provides a written transcript of the lecture, or in some cases an assistive listening device that may require the instructor to use a microphone.

CHARACTERISTICS

Some deaf/hard-of-hearing students may:

- Be skilled at lip reading (also known as speech reading), but many are not; only 30 to 40 percent of spoken English is distinguishable on the mouth and lips under the best of conditions.
- Also have difficulties with speech, reading and writing skills, given the close relationship between language development and hearing.
- Use speech, lip reading, hearing aids and/or amplification systems to enhance oral communication.
- Be members of a distinct linguistic and cultural group; as a cultural group, they may have their own values, social norms and traditions.
- Use American Sign Language (ASL) as their first language, with English as their second language. ASL is not equivalent to English; it is a visual-spatial language having its own syntax and grammatical structure

ACCOMMODATIONS MAY INCLUDE

- Preferential seating
- Copies of classmate's or instructor's notes and/or PowerPoints
- Interpreter, transcriber, and/or assistive listening device (arranged by DSS)
- Visual aids whenever possible, including captioned videos and films
- Extended time on tests
- Use of computer for written exams
- Use of interpreter for exam directions
- Accessible online course materials

- Assistance with emergency evacuation

COMMUNICATING WITH STUDENTS WHO ARE DEAF

One-to-one Situation

- Make sure you have the student's attention before speaking.
- A light touch on the shoulder, wave or other visual signal will help.
- Speak in natural tones; do not yell, exaggerate, or over enunciate.
- If necessary, communicate by paper and pencil or by typing to each other on the computer.

Group Situation

- Seat the student to his or her best advantage. This usually means a seat opposite the speaker so that he or she may see the person's lips and body language. The interpreter should be next to the speaker and both should be illuminated clearly.
- Provide new vocabulary in advance. It is difficult if not impossible to speech read or to read finger spelling of unfamiliar vocabulary.
- If a lecture or film is presented, a brief outline or script given to the student and interpreter in advance helps them follow the presentation.
- Avoid unnecessary pacing and speaking when writing on a blackboard. It is difficult to speech read when a person is in motion and impossible to speech read when his back is turned. Write or draw on the blackboard first, then face the group and explain the work. If you use PowerPoints or an overhead projector, don't look down or away while speaking.
- Make sure the student does not miss vital information. Provide in writing any changes in meeting times, special assignments or additional instructions. Allow extra time when referring to the textbook since the student who is deaf must look at what is written and then return attention to the speaker or interpreter
- Slow down the pace of communication slightly to facilitate understanding. Repeat questions or statements made from the back of the room. Remember that students who are deaf are cut off from whatever happens outside of their visual area.
- Use hands-on experience whenever possible in training situations. Students who are deaf often learn quickly by doing. A concept which may be difficult to explain verbally may be explained more easily by demonstration.

Working with an Interpreter

- Speak clearly and in a normal tone, facing the person using the interpreter (do not face the interpreter). Speak directly to the deaf or hard of hearing person rather than to the interpreter, and avoid using phrases such as “tell him” or “ask her.”
- Do not rush through a lecture or presentation. The interpreter or the deaf student may ask the speaker to slow down or repeat a sentence for clarification. Allow time to study handouts, charts or overheads. A deaf student cannot watch the interpreter and study written information at the same time.
- Permit only one person at a time to speak during group discussions. It is difficult for an interpreter to follow several people speaking at once. Since the interpreter needs to be a few words behind the conversation, give the interpreter time to finish before the next person begins speaking so the deaf student can contribute to the discussion.
- If a class session is more than an hour and a half, two interpreters will usually be scheduled and work on a rotating basis.
- Provide good lighting for the interpreter. If the situation requires darkening the room to view to a screen, appropriate lighting is required so that the deaf student can see the interpreter.
- Any videos that are used should be closed captioned; or request a DVD player with a closed captioning decoder.
- You may ask the student to arrange for an interpreter for meetings during office hours.
- Advance notice should be given for field trips and outside activities so that the student may request an interpreter in a timely fashion.
- If a course requires frequent use of a textbook during class time, DSS or the instructor may provide a desk copy to the interpreter.
- Bound by a professional code of ethics, interpreters are hired by the University to interpret what occurs in the classroom.
- Interpreters are not permitted to join in conversations, voice personal opinions, or serve as general classroom aids. Do not make comments to an interpreter that are not intended to be interpreted to the deaf student.

Adapted from: Communicating with a Student who is Deaf, Seattle Community College; Regional Education Center for Deaf Students.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Technological Education Center for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing students (DeafTEC) provides resources on best practices for teaching students who are Deaf or hard-of-hearing at:

<https://www.deaftec.org/classact>

Pepnet.org provides a Guide to Working with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students at:

<http://www.pepnet.org/sites/default/files/37Guideto%20Working%20with%20Deaf%20HH%20Students.pdf>

ACADEMIC ADVISING FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The same principals and guidelines for advising students without disabilities should be followed when advising a student with a disability. Meet the student where they are in the advising process and learn about their interests, goals, strengths, and weaknesses as an individual. The following are additional considerations in advising students with disabilities:

- Be familiar with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). These civil rights laws protect against discrimination of individuals on the basis of a disability. As such, you may not advise students to enter or dismiss a specific major or career because of their disability. You may reference skills or abilities necessary to be successful in the major or field. A person with a disability may be able to perform the essential functions of a job with reasonable accommodations. Some programs may have technical standards to which all students must comply. A student with a disability may be able to meet the standard with reasonable accommodations.
- Help students understand course load. Depending on the nature of the disability, it is sometimes advisable for a student with a disability to take less than a full load.
- Helps students consider scheduling of courses. For instance, it may be advisable for a student to take a class that meets more frequently during the week rather than take a class that meets for a longer period. Additionally, help the student consider if they have enough time to get to classes. Is it realistic for the student to have an 8:00am class if they experience medical issues?
- Assist the student in understanding the differences between in person and online classes.
- Encourage students with disabilities who have not identified to DSS to do so. A student may choose not to use services immediately, but if they register with the office, services can be provided in a timely manner if the student needs them later.
- Refer students to DSS who suspect they have a disability but do not have documentation. DSS can assist the student with information and referrals.