

Seven Points to Guide Instructors

1. The Services for Students with Disabilities Office (SSD) is the designated campus office to determine appropriate accommodations and auxiliary aids for students with disabilities.

The determination is based on the documentation provided by an appropriate licensed and/or certified professional who must attest to the nature of the disability and the functional limitations presented by the disability. They must also provide recommendations on the necessary accommodations and academic adjustments necessary for the student. Students must provide the SSD office this documentation *before* services are initiated. The purpose of the accommodations and auxiliary aids is to give the student an equal opportunity to participate in the academic environment.

2. Students with disabilities have a right to confidentiality.

All disability-related information is confidential medical information. It is protected by FERPA and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) requirements for confidentiality. Discussions about a student's need for accommodations must be conducted in a private location. No reference to the student's disability or need for accommodation should be made to others without the student's expressed written permission. This includes discussion with other faculty, staff or students or reference to the student's needs in the classroom.

3. Students with disabilities need access to course materials and information presented in your classroom at the same time as all other students.

All material presented in the classroom must be accessible to the students with disabilities. This includes auditory material for students with hearing impairment. This may necessitate the use of amplification in the classroom for students with hearing impairments. Printed material must also be accessible to students with visual impairments. It may be necessary to provide large print copies of all materials distributed in class for use in the classroom, including examinations and class hand-outs. Most conversions to larger print can be accomplished by enlarging the font on materials produced by word processing or through enlargement on a copier. Converting print materials to other alternate formats, such as Braille, may be both labor and time intensive.

Students with visual impairments or dyslexic students may need textbooks presented in auditory format such as books-on-tape or other formats so they can be accessible to students who use text readers. Acquiring books-on-tape can take several weeks. Therefore, it is critical that you inform the SSD office about the textbooks you plan to use well in advance so that the materials can be provided to the student at the same time as it is provided to other students.

Some student use text readers to access print material. Accessing text material through text readers is considerably slower than reading silently. Students who require this accommodation can be expected to take up to three or four times longer to read text material than those who are able to read the same material silently. It is important that the stu-

dents be provided text materials well in advance so that they have adequate time to have read the materials at the same time as other students.

4. Students have the responsibility for making their disability-related needs known to faculty.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to make their needs known to you in a timely fashion so that the appropriate arrangements can be made (They are not, however, required to discuss their disability). You can facilitate this process by including a statement on your syllabus that invites students with disabilities to meet with you to discuss their needs. Here is an example of a syllabus statement:

"Any student with a disability who feels he or she may need an accommodation to meet the requirements of this course because of the disability should contact me privately or the Services for Students with Disabilities Office to discuss his/her specific needs."

5. If a student with a disability does not request accommodations, you are under no obligation to provide academic assistance.

In other words, you are not asked to guess or predetermine what a student may need. You should not ask students whether or not they have a disability. Students may choose not to use accommodations nor to identify themselves as a student with a disability.

6. Accommodations should not be provided to a student who has not provided appropriate documentation to the SSD office.

The SSD office is the only office designated to review documentation of a disability and determine whether the student is eligible for specific accommodations. The SSD office coordinates the provision of reasonable accommodations, auxiliary aids, and support services that are individualized and based upon disability documentation, functional limitations, and an assessment of the student's needs. If you chose to provide accommodations without making arrangements through the SSD office, you may be making accommodations that are not necessary or supported by the student's documentation. Contact the SSD office if you are uncertain about what is appropriate for the particular student.

7. Individual accommodation needs vary from student to student and from course to course. Even the same disability, may result in different functional limitations for different students and in different courses.

Compensation skills and strategies vary from one student to another, just as instructional methods vary from one instructor to another. Therefore, it is necessary for you and the student to discuss the specific auxiliary aids and services for the particular needs of that student for that course. Each course has different requirements and different instructional formats that may impact on the student in different ways. For example, a lecture class may require services that are different from a seminar or for an internship.