

## **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FACULTY HANDBOOK**

This handbook is designed to provide faculty and staff a reference for information regarding the Access Program, which provides services for students with disabilities at Cuyahoga Community College so that they may compete equally with students without disabilities. Services for students with disabilities are individualized based on functional limitations and documentation provided.

If more detailed information is needed, please contact the Access Office at your campus for further assistance.

**Metro Campus**  
**Liberal Arts 103**  
**216 987-4344**  
**216 987-4048 TTY**

**West Campus**  
**Liberal Arts 102**  
**216 987-5079**  
**216 987-5117 TTY**

**East Campus**  
**Education Center 119**  
**216 987-2052**  
**216 987-2230 TTY**

**Westshore & CCW Campus**  
**Please contact**  
**216 987-5078**  
**216 987-5117 TTY**

**Brunswick University Center**  
**Please contact**  
**216 987-5078**  
**216 987-5117 TTY**

Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday: 8:30 am – 5:00 pm  
Evenings by appointment

Visit our website at:

<http://www.tri-c.edu/access>

Faculty and staff who need accommodations should contact:

**District Administration**  
**Office of Inclusion, Diversity, and Equal Employment Compliance**  
**700 Carnegie Avenue**  
**Cleveland, Ohio 44115**  
**216-987-4789**  
**216-987-4737 TTY**

The Access Program is funded by the U.S. Department of Education (Carl Perkins), the State of Ohio (OBOR), and Cuyahoga Community College.

This publication provided in alternate format upon request.

Dear Faculty:

Cuyahoga Community College serves over 1,700 students with disabilities. These individuals have chosen our institution for their education because of our continued commitment to serving their needs. As a result of our ongoing efforts to improve assistive technology and remove architectural barriers, we have developed a reputation of being an exemplary institution in the area of accessibility.

Our reputation has been favorable in large part because of you – our faculty. Over the years you have expanded your knowledge of various disabilities and broadened your willingness to be of assistance. You have worked with the Access Program to find and provide solutions when reasonable accommodations were required. This dedication to excellence has made all the difference in the world of our hundreds of graduates with disabilities.

As you continue to break new ground in the area of disabilities, I would recommend that you utilize this Faculty Handbook. This tool will assist you greatly in your efforts to improve your personal knowledge on the subject.

Thank you for your hard work and steadfast support of our students.

Sincerely,

Alex Johnson, Ph.D.  
President  
Cuyahoga Community College

**Cuyahoga Community College  
Mission Statement:**

To provide high quality, accessible and affordable educational opportunities and services—including university transfer, technical and lifelong learning programs—that promote individual development and improve the quality of life in a multicultural community.



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Introduction (P 6)

## Legislation (P 7-8)

- The Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- The Americans with Disabilities Act
- The Ohio Revised Code

## Shared Responsibilities (P 9-10)

- Student
- Access Program
- Faculty
- All College Employees

## Mandated Services (P 11-15)

- Testing Accommodations
- Classroom Accommodations
- Printed Materials
- Advising
- Information Technology Accessibility
- Assistive Technology

## Additional Information (P16-17)

- Campus Accessibility
- Parking
- Transportation
- TDD/TTY
- Emergency Evacuation Procedures
- Medical Emergencies
- Transfer to Other CCC Campuses
- Temporary Disabilities
- Service Animals

## Services Not Provided (P 18)

## Accommodations by Disability (P19-20)

- Blind/Visually Impaired
- Chronic Health
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- Mobility
- Psychiatric
- Specific Learning Disabilities

## Teaching Strategies (P21-24)

- Universal design

**Classroom tips**

**Common Issues Faculty and Staff Encounter (P25-27)**

**Confidentiality**

**Timeliness**

**Changing Accommodations**

**Seeking Assistance**

**Disruptive Behavior**

**Grievances**

**Additional Resources (P 28-30)**

## INTRODUCTION

All colleges and universities are required by law to have a procedure by which students with disabilities may request services. At Tri-C, that procedure is for students to be referred to the Access Office at the campus the student is attending. If the student is attending classes off campus, he may be referred to the Access Office at the campus most convenient for him.

Once a student contacts the Access Office, an appointment will be scheduled for the student to complete an intake with an Access Student Advisor. In order to qualify for services, the student will need to present documentation to establish that a disability exists which would have a major impact on the student's ability to participate in the educational process if reasonable accommodations are not made. Students are advised to schedule an intake appointment prior to the start of the semester (we recommend that they begin the process at least 8 weeks in advance).

If it is established that a disability does exist, the Student Advisor will conduct an assessment with the student to determine appropriate and reasonable accommodations. An accommodation letter for faculty is then issued to the student. It is the student's obligation to present this letter to faculty to begin the accommodation process.

At the postsecondary level students must self-identify their disability status. The obligation of the College to respond begins at the time the student discloses a disability to faculty or other College departments or staff. The appropriate response is to refer the student to the Access Office.

It is not mandatory for students with disabilities to register with the Access Office if they are not requesting accommodations. However, if a student has not registered with the Access Office, accommodations need not be provided.

The College has an obligation to provide physical accessibility, i.e. ramps and automatic doors, as well as program accessibility, i.e. testing proctoring, class room accommodations, and assistive technology. Services provided for all students, such as tutoring and use of computer labs, must be accessible for students with disabilities.

It is important to note that services provided at the high school level may differ from those available or required at the postsecondary level due to a difference in the laws which apply at each level. For example, provision of tutoring and homework assistance is required at the high school level but not the postsecondary level.

## LEGISLATION

### **The Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, specifically **Section 504**, provides protection of the rights of those with disabilities in education. It states that “no otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States...shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” A qualified person is defined as one who meets the academic and technical standards requisite to admission or participation in the institution’s programs and activities.

A person with a disability in the 1974 amendment to the Act is defined as “any person who...has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person’s major life activities,” including learning. Subpart E of Section 504 applies directly to postsecondary institutions, which must not discriminate in recruitment, admission, or treatment of students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations must be made by the college to insure optimal participation by such students. An accommodation is a reasonable adjustment in an academic program in order to allow a person with a disability to compete equally with people without disabilities.

Under the provisions of Section 504, Colleges and Universities may not:

- Limit the number of students with disabilities admitted.
- Make preadmission inquiries regarding whether or not an applicant has a disability.
- Use admission tests or criteria that inadequately measure the academic level of applicants with disabilities because special provisions were not made for them.
- Exclude a student from a course of study.
- Counsel a student with a disability toward a more restrictive career.
- Measure student achievement using modes that adversely discriminate against a student with a disability.
- Institute prohibitive rules that may adversely affect students with disabilities.

Colleges and Universities may be required to:

- Extend the time permitted for a student with a disability to earn a degree.
- Modify teaching methods and examinations to meet the needs of students with disabilities.
- Develop course substitutions or waivers for students with disabilities.
- Provide auxiliary aids, such as tape recorders, word processors, spell checkers, etc., for students with disabilities.

**Section 508** is a 1998 amendment to the Rehabilitation Act which requires federal departments and agencies to provide accessibility in the development, procurement, maintenance or use of electronic and information technology. Adherence to Section 508 requirements can be used by a college or university as a way of meeting Section 504 and ADA obligations.

### **The Americans with Disabilities Act**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act of 2008 provide civil rights protections for people with disabilities similar to those provided on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin and religion under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The ADA thus effectively broadened the scope of 504, while not replacing or invalidating it, allowing people with disabilities equal participation in mainstream American society.

Areas of society affected by the ADA include employment, public accommodations, government services, transportation, and telecommunications. Schools are considered to be public accommodations and are mandated to comply with the law. Specifically, the law states that “no individual shall be discriminated against on the basis of disability in the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations of any place of public accommodation.”

### **The Ohio Revised Code**

**Section 4112.022** of the Ohio Revised Code prohibits state-assisted institutions of higher education from discriminating against individuals with disabilities.

## SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

The provision of services under 504 and the ADA is a shared responsibility at postsecondary institutions. This responsibility is shared by the student, the Access Office, faculty, staff, and administration. The list below includes some, but not all, of the responsibilities.

### Student

- Pick up his accommodation letter in the Access Office and meet with his instructors in private at the beginning of each semester to discuss his requested accommodations.
- Students who test in the Access Office should make appointments for exams at least 3 days in advance. Students testing in the Testing Center do not need to schedule in advance for exams and quizzes.
- Read, sign, and adhere to the Student Testing Responsibilities form.
- Discuss any concerns regarding his accommodations with his instructors in private or with his Access Student Advisor.

### Access Office

- Review disability documentation and assess student accommodation needs.
- Help the student understand and articulate the need for appropriate accommodations.
- Provide an accommodation letter for the student to give to faculty.
- Assist in arranging appropriate accommodations, such as readers, scribes, interpreters, assistive technology, alternative testing.
- Facilitate communication between students and faculty.

### Faculty

- Include a statement in your syllabus encouraging students who need accommodations to identify themselves to you in private or to the Access Office, such as the following:

*If you need accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share, or if you will need assistance in the event of an evacuation, please discuss this with me in private or contact the Access Office.*

- Provide requested accommodations needed in the classroom. In the event of concerns or disagreement regarding recommended accommodations, provide the requested accommodations until the disagreement is resolved.
- Maintain the privacy of the student information. **All matters regarding disability are confidential.**
- Insure that all material used in the classroom and for online courses are accessible i.e. captioning for deaf, audio for blind. Etc. Please refer to E-Online Learning for detailed information on how to make materials accessible. Provide advanced copies of other printed materials to be used in the course. Request that audio-visual materials be captioned.
- Tests and exams to be proctored in the Access Office must be dropped off prior to exam time and an exam form completed. Test may also be submitted electronically. Contact the Access Office for details.
- Contact the Access Office if assistance is needed in understanding accommodations, providing services, or referring students who may have a disability

### **All College Employees**

- Refer any students who identify themselves to you as having a disability to the Access Office for determination of services.
- Provide assistance to students with disabilities in your area as needed, such as filling out forms.
- Maintain the privacy of the student information. All matters regarding disability are confidential.
- Assist with ensuring the accessibility of the College's programs, services and activities.

## MANDATED SERVICES

As stated above, the Access Office assists in providing reasonable accommodations as mandated by Section 504 and the ADA. "Reasonable accommodation" is a term borrowed from legislation that protects the rights of individuals with disabilities. In the college environment, it refers to any necessary modification or adjustment to a facility, course, program, service or activity that affords an otherwise qualified student with a disability equal opportunity to attain the same level of performance and benefits and/or privileges available to a student without a disability.

When determining reasonable accommodations, the Access Student Advisor takes into consideration information from College faculty and staff regarding essential standards for courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities. It is important to note that the College may not be obligated to modify an element of a course that is deemed essential to the curriculum.

Reasonable accommodations are determined by considering the following:

- Documentation of the disability and recommendations made by the diagnosing professional
- The student's request for a specific accommodation
- Barriers resulting from the interaction between the documented disability and the campus environment
- Possible accommodations that might remove the barriers
- Whether or not the student has access to the course, program, service, activity, or facility without accommodations (i.e. is he/she otherwise qualified for participation)
- Whether or not a fundamental alteration in the program would result from the provision of an accommodation

### **Testing Accommodations**

Below is a list of some of the available testing accommodations that are generally considered to be reasonable depending upon the disabling condition and the functional limitations of the student.

Please note that for Distance Learning exams, the testing location should be the same as for all students (online or on campus) as stated under Campus Requirements in the Distance Learning Course information page. For assistance in providing accommodations for online courses, please contact the Access Office or Distance Learning.

**Extended Time** is based on the time the class receives to complete the test and is adjusted to meet individual needs of the student with a disability. In the majority of cases, extended time is 1.5 times the amount

the class receives. More time may be required in the case of multiple disabilities or other functional limitations.

**Testing Location** for each student is indicated on the accommodation letter. For the majority of students this will be in the Testing Center at the campus of attendance. For student's with more specialized needs this will be in the Access Office. There may also be need at specific times for a test to be administered by the Academic Department (It will be stated on the accommodation letter). If you have questions about the testing location please confer with the Access Office. Procedures specific to each campus are available in the Access Office.

**Proctoring** All test in the Testing Center and the Access Office are administered in a monitored environment

**Reading** of exams is provided to students whose disability affects the ability to read printed materials. We may request electronic copies of exams so that reading software may be utilized. Exams which require a reader may be administered through the Testing Center, Access Office or in some cases by the Academic Department

**Scribes** write or type exam answers for students who are unable to do so because of their disability. Exams which require a scribe may be administered through the Access Office or the Academic Department.

**Distraction-Reduced Environments** are testing areas which are quiet and free of traffic. Both the Access Office and the Testing Center are considered to be distraction-reduced environments.

**Alternative Formats** for testing include enlarging, audio recording or Braille. Additional time is required to provide materials in an alternative format.

**Accommodation modifications** must be approved in advance the Access Office before they are provided

### **Classroom Accommodations**

The following are examples of classroom accommodations:

**Lecture Notes** may be needed in alternate format depending on the disability and the specific course. One option is for the student to audio record lectures. An audio recording agreement form is available in the Access Office upon request. Another option is for the instructor to request a volunteer note taker from the class. The note taker may bring their notes to the Access Office to have them copied for the student or may use Note taking paper which is available in the Access Office free of

charge for the note taker. A third option is for the instructor to provide a copy of his own notes to the student. All options are intended to augment the student's class attendance, not waive it.

**Interpreters** are provided for students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and require this service in order to participate in the classroom experience. Interpreters are also available for any events or activities on campus and should be requested at least one week in advance. Tips for faculty on working with interpreters are available in the Access Office.

**Lab Assistants** may be provided to students who require assistance in a classroom laboratory setting due to their disability. A lab assistant may be a classmate or staff provided by the academic department or the Access Office, depending on availability. Lab assistants do not provide personal attendant services.

**Extended time, proctoring, readers, scribes, and distraction-reduced environments** are also provided for in-class assignments. These assignments are treated as tests and arrangements for them should be made accordingly. These services are generally not provided for homework assignments.

## **Printed Materials**

### **Textbooks**

Textbooks may be provided in an alternate format, such as **audio, enlarged, or Braille**. This is a time-consuming process, as these services are often coordinated with outside agencies, such as Learning Ally, the Cleveland Sight Center, or the publisher. Therefore it is essential that faculty have their text selections available prior to the start of the semester. The student may need to provide a copy of the textbook to the Access Office in order to arrange these services.

### **Classroom Handouts**

The Access Office will record, enlarge, or Braille handouts used in class. The instructor will need to provide these handouts to the Access Office in advance. One week is requested for this service.

### **Other College Materials**

The Access Office can assist other departments with providing other College materials in an alternate format upon request.

## **Advising**

The Access Student Advisor is available to meet with students to discuss any concerns they may have regarding accommodations or accessibility. The Access Advisor may refer students to outside agencies for additional assistance.

## **Information Technology (IT) Accessibility**

Programmatic accessibility includes access to all computer programs, hardware and software, websites, multimedia products, printers and any electronic technology in use at the College. Faculty may request assistance from the Access Office in providing IT accessibility for students. Assistive technology (below) is available. The instructor's assistance may be required in requesting installation.

## **Assistive Technology**

Assistive technology provides programmatic accessibility and is available for student use in the classroom, during testing and for homework. Reserving the equipment may be necessary based on student demand.

Some equipment is available for use on campus. Other equipment may be loaned to students. All equipment purchased by the College remains the property of the College. Proper use and compliance with College computer use policies is required. Accessible software options, such as Jaws and Zoomtext, are available online on the student academic image. The Access Office can provide training on the College's assistive technology. The Access Office does not provide personal equipment, such as hearing aids.

The following are examples of assistive technology/equipment that may be available:

- Braille embosser
- Perkins Brailier
- Closed Circuit TV (CCTV)
- Text telephone (TTY)
- Franklin Spell Checker
- Hand magnifier
- JAWS for Windows (reading software for the blind)
- ZoomText
- Kurzweil 1000 (reading software for the blind)
- Kurzweil 3000 (reading software for student's with reading challenges)
- Wynne
- Dragon Naturally Speaking (voice recognition software)
- Manual wheelchair
- Assistive listening systems
- Natural Readers Software
- Talking calculator
- Large font calculator
- Specialized mouse and keyboard

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### **Campus Accessibility**

The College makes every effort to ensure that the campus is accessible. College employees will assist students with disabilities in every office and facility which serves students on campus. For some services, such as receiving assistance in the library, it may be necessary for the student to make an appointment in advance. Any difficulties with campus accessibility should be reported to the Access Office.

### **Parking**

Accessible parking (with permit) is provided in all parking lots. In order to park in designated lots, the student must display a state-issued disability placard on the car windshield as well as the Tri-C parking permit.

### **Transportation**

Accessible transportation is available through various private transportation companies or through RTA (Greater Cleveland Rapid Transit Authority). Students are responsible for their transportation costs and arrangements. The Access Advisor can provide information/referrals.

### **TTY's**

Text telephones (TTY's) are available in all campus Access Offices.

East 216-987-2230

Metro 216-987-4048

West 216-987-5117

### **Emergency Evacuation Procedures**

The College's *Emergency Procedure Guide* states the following:

During a fire or an emergency, disabled or injured persons should enter the nearest stairwell and wait for help. Firefighters and emergency safety personnel will check stairwells and make rescue of the injured and those in wheelchairs. Only under conditions of immediate danger should others attempt rescue of disabled or injured individuals.

At the beginning of each semester, all students have the responsibility of familiarizing themselves with the two most expeditious evacuation routes from each of their classrooms.

Students with disabilities who need assistance from emergency personnel will not be evacuated during practice drills; they should participate by moving to the nearest stairwell.

**Medical Emergencies – call ext. 4911 from a campus phone**

Some disabilities may result in a medical emergency on campus. The Access Office does advise students to wear medic alert bracelets and to self-disclose pertinent information to instructors, such as the existence of a seizure disorder. However, the student has the right not to reveal such information and may elect not to do so.

If a medical emergency should arise during class, dial 4911 from a campus extension or 216-987-4911 from a cell phone. Always bring the help to the person in distress; do not attempt to move the person.

**Access Locations**

Access services are available at all campuses and sites, including Corporate College, Off-Campus and Distance Learning. Access Offices are located at the Metropolitan, Western and Eastern Campuses and may be contacted to make arrangements for services at any location.

**Temporary Disabilities**

Services are available for students with temporary disabilities based on extent and duration of the disability. Students who are seeking assistance due to temporary disabilities must follow the same procedures to receive their accommodations as students who have permanent disabilities. Services will be provided only for the duration of the disability, as stated by the licensed service provider who is treating the disability.

**Service Animals**

Service animals are welcome at Cuyahoga Community College. The ADA defines service animals as any animal trained to provide assistance to a person with a disability. Service animals must be licensed according to the Ohio Revised Code and obey all local ordinances. The animal must be under the care and control of its owner at all times.

## **SERVICES NOT PROVIDED**

The following services are not mandated and are not generally provided by the College, although their use/ presence may be permitted:

- Personal attendants/aides
- Personal equipment
- Mobility aids (other than loan of manual wheel chair)
- Homework assistance (other than access to computer labs)

## ACCOMMODATIONS BY DISABILITY

Below is a list of some of the frequently occurring disabilities and examples of possible accommodations.

### **Blind/Visually Impaired**

(May have some limited vision, may have little or no vision)

- Need books, printed materials available in advance
- Books/printed materials in an alternate format
- Enlargement of printed materials—on computer, copier, CCTV or magnifier
- Braille materials
- Preferential seating in front of classroom
- May not be able to see board, overhead—instructor may need to read aloud or provide copies in advance for enlarging
- Audio record lectures
- Tactile aids
- Verbal description of films and visual aids
- Testing accommodations—enlarged, reader, extended time
- Assistive computer hardware/software—ZoomText, JAWS, Kurzweil 1000
- Web sites, discussion boards, etc., compatible with assistive technology

### **Chronic Health**

- Audio record lectures
- Flexibility in attendance
- Allow make-up work
- Use of telephone or email to communicate
- Testing accommodations—extended time, distraction-reduced

### **Deaf/Hard of Hearing**

(May have some residual hearing; may not hear voice ranges; may have no hearing)

- Preferential seating in front of classroom
- Use of an Assistive Listening Device
- Interpreter, real-time captioning
- Note taker—instructor requests volunteer
- Write important information on board
- Copies of overhead materials
- Provide instructions in writing
- Captioning of audio/visual materials – instructor can request this format from LRC
- Use email to communicate
- Testing accommodations

### **Mobility**

(May affect arms or legs, or both)

- Physical access to classroom, activities
- Adjustable table
- Audio record lectures
- Note taker—instructor requests volunteer
- Scribe for in-class written assignments
- Lab assistant
- Group work
- Testing accommodations—extended time, scribe
- Assistive computer hardware/software—Dragon Naturally Speaking
- Web sites, discussion boards, etc., compatible with assistive technology

### **Psychiatric**

- Preferential seating (may prefer to sit near exit)
- Audio record lectures
- Flexibility in attendance
- Allow make-up work
- Testing accommodations—out of class, extended time, distraction-reduced

### **Specific Learning Disabilities**

(May affect reading, writing, math, and/or other areas)

- Audio record lectures
- Note taker—instructor requests volunteer
- Revise written assignments
- Testing accommodations – reader, scribe, extended time, distraction-reduced
- Computer with spell check, grammar check
- Assistive computer hardware/software—Kurzweil 3000
- Web sites, discussion boards, etc., compatible with assistive technology

# TEACHING STRATEGIES

## Universal Design

Universal Design is a term that originated in architecture and referred to the fact that some changes made to assist people with disabilities helped others as well. For example, a ramp designed for wheel chair use is also useable by someone with a cart or stroller. The concept eventually moved into the information arena and now has a broader meaning. Software that enlarges a computer screen to provide access for people with visual impairments may also be useful for someone who misplaced their glasses.

Universal Design has also recently been applied to creating accessible classroom environments due to the fact that the use of effective teaching strategies benefits all students as well as those with disabilities. However, even when utilizing the principles of Universal Design in the classroom, accommodations will still be needed on an individual basis.

Below are some of the teaching strategies often included under Universal Design principles:

- Use an organized approach
- Use a multimodal approach—lecture, discussion, activities, technology
- Provide verbal and written instructions
- Face class when speaking
- Emphasize important information
- Summarize at beginning and end of lecture
- Use study guides/outlines
- Encourage student participation/interaction
- Incorporate collaborative learning
- Provide feedback to students
- Inform students of tutoring and other support services
- Encourage communication
- Be aware of objectives
- Use electronic format when possible
- Provide alternate ways for students to demonstrate knowledge

## Classroom Tips

The Access Student Advisor can provide you with teaching strategies specific to your classroom environment and student. Please contact the Access Office for assistance.

### **Suggestions for Working with Students who have Visual Impairments:**

- Your cooperation in allowing audio recording of lectures may be requested.
- Preferential seating may be requested. Since visual cues may not be available, the student will need to utilize auditory cues. If the student is using a guide dog, it would help if the student were given an assigned seat so that the dog can aid him in locating it.
- Provide enlarged materials if requested. Use larger font on your computer, or enlarge materials on a photocopier. The Access Office can assist in enlarging materials with advanced notice.
- Give students adequate notice for research assignments. The student may have to schedule assistance in locating and scanning materials. Deadlines may need to be extended for this student.
- When using a chalk or marker board, lessen the glare as much as possible and write in large letters. White marker boards and dark markers are usually preferred. It is helpful to read aloud what has been written.
- It may be necessary to make accommodations for test-taking for this student. This may be arranged through the Access Office.

**Suggestions for Working with Students Who Are Deaf/Hard of Hearing:**

- Allow preferential seating. The student may request to be seated near the front of the class so that she may utilize as much of her hearing as possible and is in a position to receive lip-reading cues.
- Speak clearly and at a normal pace. Do not talk with your back to the class when writing on the board, as this eliminates any chance for the student to receive facial or lip-reading cues.
- If you use slides, films or PowerPoint, provide a written transcript or outline of the materials to be covered. Request video materials and equipment in closed or open captioned format.
- When questions are asked from class, repeat the question before answering it since the student may not be able to see or hear the other class members.
- Refrain from giving procedural information while handing out papers. Check to ensure such information is clearly understood by the student.

- If the student is using a sign language interpreter, allow the student and interpreter to determine the best location in the classroom. Detailed information on working with interpreters is available in the Access Office.

### **Suggestions for Working with Students with Mobility Disabilities:**

- If the student is not able to take notes, have copies of your lecture outlines available. You may also need to solicit a note taker from your class if requested in the accommodation letter. Note takers may bring their notes to the Access Office to have them copied or may obtain carbonless paper from the Access Office. Allow audio recording of lectures.
- Lab experiences may need to be re-structured for a student using a wheelchair. If the student's arm/hand mobility is limited, she may be able to participate using a "buddy system" with another student performing the active portion of the exercise.
- A scribe or dictation software may be needed for exams. This may be arranged through the Access Office.
- A student who uses a wheelchair and has no upper body limitations may not need any academic accommodations. She will, of course, need physical access to classrooms, labs, and field trips.
- Do not allow removal of specialized chairs, tables, or other adaptive equipment from the room once arrangements have been made by the Access Office.

### **Suggestions for Working with Students with Psychiatric Disabilities:**

- Allow preferential seating. The student may feel more comfortable in a certain location in the classroom, such as near the door or at the back of the room.
- Allow beverages in class if possible since some medications may cause dehydration.
- Allow the student to take breaks during class as needed.
- Physical contact with students is not advised. Some students find it very uncomfortable.
- Speaking in front of the class may be difficult for some students.

- Some topics for discussion may trigger unpleasant recollection and reactions for some students. Announcing the topic in advance, allowing the student to step out of class, or changing the topic are suggested.
- Be flexible regarding deadlines for homework and exams in the event of hospitalization.

**Suggestions for Working with a Student with Specific Learning Disabilities:**

- Allow sufficient time for long reading assignments.
- Discuss with the student in private the accommodations that are needed.
- Reading software for exams may be required. This can be arranged through the Access Office.
- Permit audio recording of lectures.
- Students with dyslexia may have difficulty reading aloud in class.
- Extra time for outside writing assignments may be appropriate.
- Write vocabulary unique to a particular course on the board during lecture.

## **COMMON ISSUES FACULTY AND STAFF ENCOUNTER**

### **Confidentiality**

All matters related to a person's disability are confidential and should be discussed in private. Instructors sometimes assume that if a student begins discussing her disability in front of the class, it is then all right for the instructor to speak about the disability in front of others. It is not. There is no "implied consent" in disability law.

If a student initiates a conversation regarding her disability in the presence of others, the instructor should immediately move the discussion to a private area or inform the student that the matter will need to be discussed at a later time in private.

### **Timeliness**

Accommodations and disability services need to be handled in a timely manner. At times instructors have reported ongoing problems with accommodations at the end of the semester. Any problems or situations related to a student's disability need to be reported immediately to the Access Office. The Access Student Advisors will assist the instructor in resolving the issue.

### **Changing Accommodations**

The Accommodation Letter issued by the Access Office is the official statement of accommodation need which must be followed. For example, if the letter states that the student needs extended time on exams, the instructor cannot make the determination that extended time is not needed and insist that the student complete exams in the same time allowed the class.

If an instructor has a question or problem regarding an Accommodation, he should discuss the matter immediately with the Access Student Advisor who issued the letter. Another equally effective accommodation may be possible and the Accommodation Letter would then be revised by the Access Office. If another accommodation is not possible, the instructor would need to provide the original accommodation as requested.

Additionally, in the event of a disagreement with the provision of a listed accommodation, the listed accommodations must be provided until the concern has been addressed through the Access Office procedures.

### **Seeking Assistance**

The Access Office provides assistance to faculty and staff in working with students with disabilities. You may call or stop in for assistance. If an Advisor is not available to talk with you immediately, you may make an appointment or leave your number and the Advisor will contact you.

## **Disruptive Behavior**

Students with disabilities must abide by the Student Code of Conduct. Faculty and staff sometimes think they must endure a student with a disability acting out in class. This is not conducive to a good learning environment. A college may discipline a student with a disability for violation of a code which has been implemented to maintain a safe and orderly environment.

The Americans with Disabilities Act does not exempt students with disabilities from disciplinary action for disruptive behavior, even if the behavior is due to a disability. The institution must apply the same disciplinary actions to disabled students as those applied to non-disabled students.

The Office for Civil Rights stated that disabilities may be a factor in the disciplinary process involving the student's inability to comply with the Code of Conduct if:

- The student's inability to comply with the conduct code resulted from the college's failure to provide a reasonable academic adjustment or accommodation; and
- As part of its regular disciplinary process, a college takes into account mitigating situational factors.

*Disability Compliance for Higher Education.* Horsham, PA: LRP Publications, 2003.

## **Grievances**

Students with disabilities may file a grievance if they feel they have been discriminated against due to their disability, or if they feel they have not been provided access to the institution's services, programs, activities, or facilities. The Access Office makes every attempt to resolve issues before they reach the grievance level. However, a student does have the right to file a grievance and an attempt should not be made to prevent a filing.

If a student files such a complaint with the College or the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), the student has engaged in a "protected activity." Retaliation against a student for filing a grievance is illegal and may result in negative consequences for the College.

If a student does file a complaint against an instructor, the instructor should continue to treat the student the same as any other student and continue to provide accommodations if requested. Any difference in treatment after the filing of a grievance could result in additional charges of retaliation.

Most grievances are resolved within the College's grievance process. If a complaint is filed with OCR, that office will engage in an interactive process with the College in order to resolve the matter.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### Web Sites

The following websites contain useful information to assist faculty and staff in the provision of disability services:

### General ADA/Accessibility Information

ADA-Ohio/Great Lakes ADA Center

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

ADA Home Page

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

Archive ADA (ADA and ADAA information)

<http://www.law.georgetown.edu/archiveada/#ADAAA>

United States Access Board

<http://www.access-board.gov/>

Office for Civil Rights

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html>

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

<http://www.eeoc.gov/>

Job Accommodation Network

<http://www.jan.wvu.edu/>

Association on Higher Education and Disability

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

DAIS (Disability Access Information and Support)

<http://www.daisweb.com/>

DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Inter-networking, and Technology)

<http://www.washington.edu/doit/>

CAST Universal Design for Learning

<http://www.cast.org/index.html>

Academic Support Center, Clarion University

<http://www.clarion.edu/1014/>

The Educator's Reference Desk

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

Disability History Museum  
<http://www.disabilitymuseum.org/>

## **Accessible Technology**

Microsoft Accessibility  
<http://www.microsoft.com/enable/>

Section 508 (guidelines for IT accessibility for federal agencies)  
<http://www.section508.gov>

Tiresias: International Information on Visual Disability (information and communication technology)  
<http://www.tiresias.org/>

OnlineCollegesDatabase.org: Online Learning for Students with Disabilities  
<http://www.onlinecollegesdatabase.org/online-college-learning-for-students-with-disabilities/>

## **Specific Disabilities**

Attention Deficit Disorder Association  
<http://www.add.org/>

LD Online  
<http://www.ldonline.org/>

Learning Disabilities Association of America  
<http://www.ldanatl.org>

National Center for Blind in Science  
<http://www.blindscience.org>

National Institute of Mental Health  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/>

New York Institute for Special Education Blindness Resource Center  
<http://www.nyise.org/blind.htm>