

Student Disability Services

Texas Tech University



Faculty Guide

Working with Students with Disabilities

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TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
Office of the Provost: Student Affairs

Student Disability Services™

Dear Faculty,

Thank you for your interest and support of students with disabilities at Texas Tech University. The staff of the Student Disability Services office have put together a manual of information and forms that we hope will be useful and informative for you. Our goal is to assist you when working with this population of students by providing you with information that will help you be more effective in your classroom, as well as helping the university maintain compliance with federal disability guidelines.

Please take a few moments to look through the handbook and familiarize yourself with the contents. We are hopeful this handbook will cover most of the questions and needs you will have as a faculty member. However, in the event you cannot find what you are looking for in this publication, please do not hesitate to contact the Student Disability Services office at 806-742-2405. You may also drop by anytime and visit our office in room 335 of West Hall.

Thank you again for your assistance and support of these students. We appreciate you!

Dr. Larry K. Phillippe
Managing Director, Student Disability Services
Texas Tech University

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<http://www.depts.ttu.edu/students/sds/>

An EEO/Affirmative Action Institution

Mission Statement

MISSION

Student Disability Services promotes each student's learning experience by providing programs and services for students with disabilities and education of the campus community on issues related to students' disabilities.

VISION

The Department of Student Disability Services will become nationally recognized as the leader in enhancing student learning and development for students with disabilities through the provision of direct academic services such as classroom accommodations, tutoring, training, academic counseling, and ongoing campus training and education.

COMPLIANCE

Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act

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

People with disabilities have the same legal remedies that are available under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1991. Thus, individuals who are discriminated against may file a complaint with the relevant federal agency or sue in federal court. Enforcement agencies encourage informal mediation and voluntary compliance.

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act

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

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

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

ADA Amendments of 2008

“Major life activities include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual task, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working.”

Office for Civil Rights (OCR)

Academic adjustments may include auxiliary aids and modifications to academic requirements as are necessary to ensure equal educational opportunity.

“Examples of such adjustments are arranging for priority registration; reducing a course load; substituting one course for another; providing note takers, recording devices, sign language interpreters, extended time for testing and, if telephones are provided in dorm rooms, a TTY in your dorm room; and equipping school computers with screen-reading, voice recognition or other adaptive software or hardware.”

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>

For more information concerning OCR you may visit the website:
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/howto.html>

How these Laws Apply to Higher Education

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

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

- modifications of rules, policies, or procedures
- removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers
- provision of auxiliary aids and services.

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

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

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

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

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

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

- limit the number of students with disabilities admitted
- make pre-admission inquiries as to whether or not an applicant has a disability
- use admission tests or criteria that inadequately measure the academic level of visually impaired, hearing impaired, or otherwise disabled applicants because special provisions were not made for them
- exclude students with disabilities from any course of study solely on the basis of their disability
- counsel students with disabilities towards a more restrictive career than non-disabled students, unless such counsel is based on strict licensing or certification requirements in a profession

- measure student achievement using modes that adversely discriminate against students with disabilities
- **institute prohibitive rules (such as the barring of tape recorders or other auxiliary aids) that may adversely affect the performance of students with disabilities**
- select a site or a facility that would exclude participation of persons with disabilities.

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

COLLABORATION

Student Disabilities Services

Texas Tech University has one of the most comprehensive departments for students with disabilities in the state, where the student disability services (SDS) staff provides a variety of accommodations and services for individuals with disabilities. Accommodations will be made in response to the student's specific disability.

With over 1,500 students registered for services, we encourage students to overcome challenges and attain personal and academic success while the SDS staff functions as a student advocate. Through active involvement with all areas of the University, SDS is able to monitor conditions relevant to student with disabilities and offer support in decisions affecting their quality of life.

At the Texas Tech Student Disability Services Office, our mission is to enhance each student's learning through the provision of programs and services for students with a disability. Our goal is to assist students in attaining their academic, career, and personal goals – regardless of any physical, learning, psychological, psychiatric, or other documented disability they may have.

Within the SDS Office we provide reasonable in-class accommodations based on the documented needs of each of our students. We also offer skill-building workshops designed to enhance students' in-class learning. These topics are focused on the skills necessary to be successful both in the classroom and in in life, and include areas such as organization, time management, note taking, tips for test taking, and many others.

Various services offered by the Student Disability Service Office include:

- Assistance in arranging course, classroom, and testing accommodations
- Assistance in working with instructors
- Campus accessibility and service/resource information
- Campus disability awareness education
- Sign Language Interpreter services
- Coordination of support programs and services with other campus departments
- Consultation, counseling, and assistance in resolving problems
- Information regarding and referral to a variety of campus and community resources
- Leadership and interpersonal skills development opportunities
- Loaning of some assistive devices
- Information regarding student organizations, activities, and support groups
- Information on study skills, test taking strategies, time management, etc.

TECHniques Center

In addition to the services offered by our main Student Disability Services office, SDS also offers a supplemental academic enhancement program for students with Learning

Disabilities and Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders. The TECHniques Center is a fee for service program that provides one-on-one, regularly scheduled content and study skills tutoring, as well as weekly meetings with an academic counselor. The TECHniques Center supports students in maintaining their focus, accomplishing their educational goals, and making education accessible to those who learn differently.

Services of the TECHniques Center include:

- One-on-one, regularly scheduled content and study skills tutoring for enrolled courses by College Reading and Learning Association certified tutors
- Individual support from staff members to build self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-advocacy
- Academic performance monitoring through use of grade checks sent to the faculty in which the student is enrolled
- Supplemental assistance with academic major and career decision-making, course scheduling and registration

AIM System

The Student Disability Services (SDS) staff has been working diligently to transition from paper files to an online system to keep track of student applications and documentation for learning accommodations. We have partnered with Accessible Information Management, LLC, or AIM, to use their system. This new system will allow students to request classroom accommodations online as well as update their information as needed. We had a live launch Summer II, 2015.

For you as a faculty member, this means that you will receive Letters of Accommodation (LOAs) electronically at your TTU email address. This approach will maintain student confidentiality while providing you a record of accommodation for each student that requested a letter be sent to you.

In order for students to receive classroom accommodations, they are still required to meet with you to discuss how accommodations will be implemented. Furthermore, if you decide to use TTU Academic Testing Services (ATS) to fulfill testing accommodations, you and the student must still complete an ATS testing contract. If you have questions about whether a student should take tests in SDS instead of ATS, please contact Tamara Mancini in our office.

There are many advantages to this new electronic Letter of Accommodation (LOA) system for you as a faculty member. Besides the dramatic reduction in the use of paper and being much more environmentally friendly, the new process prevents students from attempting to hand you a paper LOA just prior to or at the end of a class period. It also prevents students from altering or adding addendums to their LOA. You can accept an LOA only electronically via email from SDS, so you need not accept any other documentation from students about their accommodations. Further, you are no longer required to sign and date LOAs since they cannot be implemented until the student meets with you individually.

Likewise, should you have any questions regarding the student's accommodations, you can simply reply to the email containing the LOA and the SDS office can respond immediately, as the sending of the electronic LOA is the student's consent for us to discuss any issues with you.

When you receive the LOA in your inbox, the subject line will contain the student's name, the course number and course section, and the semester the accommodation is being requested. The following is an example of the email subject line:

[SDS] *STUDENT NAME* - ESS 1301.003 - INTRO TO EXERCISE SCIENCE (CRN: 9761588) - Notification of Academic Support Services Summer 2015.

Summer 2015 - CE 3303.002 - MECHANICS OF SOLIDS (CRN: 9768364)

STUDENT NAME is registered with Student Disability Services and has the right to receive the following in-class accommodations, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Letter of Accommodation (LOA) becomes effective the date received by the faculty member. Accommodations must be implemented within one week of receiving this letter.

Please read carefully the information pertaining to specific accommodations for the student listed below. If requested, your prompt response will ensure that Texas Tech University is in compliance with Federal Statutes.

Important Notice: The information in this letter is strictly confidential!

STUDENT NAME has supplied Student Disability Services (SDS) with documentation that qualifies the student for the services indicated below.

It is the student's responsibility to contact you to discuss accommodations. Please respect the student's right to confidentiality and limit your discussion of student's disability or accommodations to private conversations with him/her. It is the student's decision whether to share specifics about their disability.

Specific accommodations the student is eligible to receive:

If you have further questions about our new AIM online system, please contact Student Disability Services at 806-742-2405.

Faculty Guidelines

When a student presents the faculty member a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) it is important that the faculty do **not**:

- Ask the student to disclose the nature of his/her disability. Most disabilities are invisible, and while the student has been instructed to self-advocate and clearly state his/her needs, he/she does not have to discuss the disability. Please understand that it is a violation of the student's rights to ask his/her disability.
- Deny a student's accommodation request. Accommodations cannot interfere with academic standards; if there is concern that an accommodation jeopardizes the academic integrity of a course, contact SDS immediately. We request that you provide the accommodation until the concern has been resolved. An

accommodation cannot be denied without due process; therefore, all cases will be reviewed individually.

- Tell the student that he/she requested the accommodations too late in the semester. While students with disabilities are encouraged to meet with faculty during the first week of class, there are many legitimate reasons why this may not be possible. Accommodations must be provided at any point in the semester (up until one week remaining in the course); however, they do not need to be provided retroactively.
- Provide a requested accommodation that is not indicated on the student's accommodation memo, unless you feel it is justified and reasonable. A student who requests additional accommodations should be referred to the SDS office in order to ensure that the student's request is supported by his/her documentation.
- If a student requests accommodations, but does not have a letter of accommodation from our office, you are not required to provide accommodations. Instead, please refer the student to our office to submit documentation and determine if he/she is eligible for accommodations.
- Students with disabilities are just like their non-disabled peers; they are a diverse population with diverse needs and no two students are alike. Students with disabilities may receive straight A's or they may not, regardless of their accommodations. Do not think that a student who receives A's on all assignments does not need accommodations; conversely, do not feel that a student who receives F's on all assignments should be graded differently because he/she has a disability. It is important to remember that access does not always equal success.
- Many issues regarding student with disabilities and accommodations are related to the timeliness of the accommodations. Therefore, we ask that faculty communicate with us in a timely manner, especially for accommodations involving alternate formats or material conversion, to prevent unnecessary complaints from occurring.
- Remember that providing an accessible campus and learning environment is the responsibility of all University faculty and staff. Using universal design principles in the classroom and keeping accessibility a priority are vital to our success as a University.

Universal Design

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

In 2008, the Higher Education Opportunity Act stated that postsecondary institutions should design curricula with universal design principles for learning in mind. UD for learning principles are intended to reach the widest audience possible. While UD may not eliminate every request for accommodation, it should reduce numbers of requests. It is important to remember that subtle changes to course organization lessen the barriers

faced by many students with disabilities. Students with visual impairments that once had to wait a day or more to receive their syllabus now have the opportunity to gain instant access to an electronic version. Hard of hearing or deaf students that either received minimal information or none at all now have immediate access to captioned videos. Student with learning disabilities, who may find it difficult to listen to lectures and take relevant notes at the same time, will now benefit from lecture notes being stored on Blackboard or through some other accessible means.

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

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

Universal Design for Instruction

Fact Sheet



What is Universal Design for Instruction?

Universal Design for Instruction (UDI) is an approach to teaching that consists of the proactive design and use of inclusive instructional strategies that benefit a broad range of learners including students with disabilities. The nine Principles of UDI® provide a framework for college faculty to use when designing or revising instruction to be responsive to diverse student learners and to minimize the need for "special" accommodations and retrofitted changes to the learning environment. UDI operates on the premise that the planning and delivery of instruction as well as the evaluation of learning can incorporate inclusive attributes that embrace diversity in learners without compromising academic standards.

Where did the idea of Universal Design for Instruction originate?

UDI is based on the concept of Universal Design (UD), an idea that originated in the field of architecture to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse public. When a UD approach is applied to the creation of products and environments, consumer access is broadened because inclusive features are incorporated into the design from the outset. By anticipating a variety of needs, ages, abilities and disabilities, planners embrace the notion of diversity as an essential element of their work. Examples of universally designed environments and products are increasingly present in our daily lives: curb cuts on sidewalks, closed caption text on television screens, electronic doors for entryways to buildings. One of the important aspects of UD is that its inclusive elements benefit all users, not just those with disabilities.

Today's college student population is increasingly diverse in educational background, age, gender, culture, ability, disability, and primary language. Faculty who are designing instructional experiences and supportive learning environments have an opportunity to enhance instructional accessibility. Universal Design for Instruction integrates the "usability" features of Universal Design with research on effective instructional practices. An important feature of Universal Design for Instruction is that its inclusive instructional design elements benefit a broad range of learners.

Why should faculty implement Universal Design for Instruction?

Traditional means of meeting the learning needs of students with disabilities have significant limitations. Classroom accommodations, such as extra time on tests or the provision of a notetaker, are typically changes that are retrofitted to a course in order to minimize the impact of the disability. While nondiscriminatory in intent, accommodations are rarely based on pedagogical decisions by faculty concerning the best way to promote student learning. UDI offers a proactive alternative for ensuring access to higher education for college students with disabilities. By providing faculty with a framework and tools for designing inclusive college instruction, the dialogue surrounding college students with disabilities changes from a focus on compliance, accommodations, and nondiscrimination to an emphasis on teaching and learning. Learning environments can never be entirely

accessible to all students' needs since some students will continue to need individualized accommodations. But all learning environments can be made more accessible and inclusive.

How do instructors apply Universal Design for Instruction in their classrooms?

The nine Principles of UDI® (available at www.facultyware.uconn.edu) are based on the literature and research on UD and effective instruction. They provide a framework for faculty reflection that can be used in a number of ways. Depending on faculty needs, the Principles can be applied to the design of a new course or used to reflect upon practices in an existing class. They can inform a variety of teaching issues and approaches ranging from assessing student learning, to broadening learning experiences, to considering how an inclusive classroom climate can be established. All nine principles will not apply to all aspects of instruction.

However, when viewing a classroom as a whole, each of the principles will come into play. Although the Principles of UDI® can serve as a useful reference point for experienced faculty from diverse academic disciplines, they have particular relevance for junior faculty and graduate teaching assistants seeking support and direction as emerging teachers.

Does Universal Design for Instruction mean that there is only one “universal” way to design a learning experience?

No, UDI is not a synonym for "one-size-fits-all" instruction. The Principles of UDI® are designed to support faculty in creating courses that accommodate a wide spectrum of student needs. College classrooms of today are enriched by the presence of students with differing abilities, goals, experiences, and backgrounds. Higher education itself is characterized by diversity. College instruction varies with respect to the format, style, pace, and expectations for learning. Faculty benefit from support for responding to student diversity while maintaining their academic standards and autonomy as the designers of their courses. The word “universal” refers to a flexible design that is specifically created to be used in diverse ways.

Is Universal Design for Instruction another term for using technology in instruction?

Technology can be a critical tool for creating inclusive classrooms. Certainly, digital media provide for great flexibility in instructional format and expand access to resources that benefit many learners. However, UDI focuses on many elements of pedagogy and encourages examination of teaching including the daily tasks of planning and delivering instruction as well as assessing student learning.

How is the construct of Universal Design for Instruction being developed?

As part of a three-year federal grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education, the University of Connecticut's Center on Postsecondary Education and Disability began development of the construct of UDI through an extensive review of the literature and research in the areas of effective teaching, universal design,

and diversity in higher education. As a result, nine Principles of UDI® have been proposed for informing college instruction. The Principles are undergoing rigorous construct validation through a series of procedures involving students with disabilities, college faculty recognized as outstanding teachers, and college administrators. Through critical practice, dialogue, and student and faculty feedback, the Principles continue to be refined and validated.

In addition, instructional products and methods are being submitted by faculty from many disciplines across the country for possible publication on the Center's UDI web site located at www.facultyware.uconn.edu. Exemplary instructional products are accepted for publication based upon a two-tiered juried review process. Two distinct Review Boards, one consisting of experts in UDI and one comprised of faculty and administrators from colleges across the country, provide ratings and feedback on each instructional product. Visitors to the Facultyware web site can use these products as examples of how the Principles of Universal Design for Instruction® can be applied to the task of designing inclusive learning environments and experiences for today's diverse college classrooms.

How can I find out more about UDI?

More information about UDI and the UDI Project at the University of Connecticut's Center on Postsecondary Education and Disability is available at: www.facultyware.uconn.edu.

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www.cped.uconn.edu

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Retrieved from: http://www.facultyware.uconn.edu/files/udi2_fact_sheet.pdf

Universal Design Tips for Instruction

- Provide textbooks, handouts, and other documents in electronic forms. Electronic forms improve access for students with diverse needs. Visually impaired students could use various technology options to listen to or enlarge the text for easier reading. English as a second language learner could take advantage of online dictionaries and thesauruses.
- Provide class notes online to improve access to information. Most students, regardless of their ability to take notes or effectively listen, will benefit from this UD approach. Students utilizing assistive technology benefit by having immediate access to the notes.
- Clearly repeat and clarify student's questions and comments; this will benefit students with hearing impairments and students whose first language is not English.
- Describe audibly what you are drawing, when using a board or other technology. When drawing on a board or some other technology, be sure to describe audibly what is being drawn. Students who are blind and have low vision rely heavily on audible descriptions of drawings. Providing written descriptions in advance of the lecture will improve a student's ability to follow the lecture effectively.
- Provide a rubric that clearly addresses course expectations and grading for exams, projects and assignments.
- Ensure videos are captioned and turned on during class viewings.



Equal Access: Universal Design of Instruction

A Checklist for Inclusive Teaching

by Sheryl Burgstahler, Ph.D.

UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF INSTRUCTION

The universal design of instruction (UDI) is gaining increased attention and application by educational researchers and practitioners at K-12 and postsecondary levels. UDI means that, rather than designing for the average student, you design instruction for students who potentially have broad ranges with respect to ability, disability, age, reading level, learning style, native language, race, ethnicity, and other characteristics. UDI can be applied to all aspects of instruction, including class climate, interaction, physical environments and products, delivery methods, information resources and technology, feedback, and assessment.

UDI can be discussed as a goal, process, or set of practices.

UDI GOAL

The goal of UDI is to maximize the learning of students with a wide range of characteristics by applying UD principles to all aspects of instruction (e.g., delivery methods, physical spaces, information resources, technology, personal interactions, and assessments).

A UDI PROCESS

To apply UDI, an instructor should consider the potential variation in individual skills, learning styles and preferences, age, gender, culture, abilities, and disabilities as they select appropriate strategies for the delivery of instruction and then apply universal design to all course activities and resources. Specifically, the instructor needs to

1. *Identify the course.* Describe the course, its learning objectives, and its overall content.
2. *Define the universe.* Describe the overall population of students eligible to enroll in the course and then consider their potential diverse characteristics (e.g., with respect to gender; age; ethnicity and race; native language; learning style; and abilities to see, hear, manipulate objects, read, and communicate).
3. *Involve students.* Consider perspectives of students with diverse characteristics, as identified in Step 2, in the development of the course. If they are not available directly from students, gain student perspectives through diversity programs such as the campus disability services office.
4. *Adopt instructional strategies.* Adopt overall learning and teaching philosophies and methods. Integrate these practices with universal design guidelines or strategies for learning or instruction.

5. *Apply instructional strategies.* Apply universal design strategies in concert with good instructional practices (both identified in Step 4) to the overall choice of course teaching methods, curricula, and assessments. Then apply universal design to all lectures, classroom discussions, group work, handouts, web-based content, labs, fieldwork, assessment instruments, and other academic activities and materials to maximize the learning of students with the wide variety of characteristics identified in Step 2.
6. *Plan for accommodations.* Learn campus procedures for addressing accommodation requests (e.g., arrangement of sign language interpreters) from specific students for whom the course design does not automatically provide full access.
7. *Evaluate.* Monitor the effectiveness of instruction through observation and feedback from students with the diverse set of characteristics identified in Step 2, assess learning, and modify the course as appropriate.

UDI PRACTICES

The Principles of UD⁴, developed by the Center for Universal Design, encourage the development of products and environments that promote (1) equitable use, (2) flexibility in use, (3) simple and intuitive use, (4) perceptible information, (5) tolerance for error, (6) low physical effort, (7) size and space for approach and use.

A related, but more specific concept, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) provides "a framework for designing curricula that enable all individuals to gain knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm for learning. UDL provides rich supports for learning and reduces barriers to the curriculum while maintaining high achievement standards for all."³ UDL guidelines⁹, developed by CAST, promote the development of curriculum that includes options for (1) perception; (2) language, expressions, and symbolism; (3) comprehension; (4) physical action; (5) expressive skills and fluency; (6) executive functions; (7) recruiting interest; (8) sustaining effort and persistence; and (9) self-regulation.

UDI applies UD to all aspects of instruction. The following checklist provides examples of UDI practices. Numbers in brackets at the end of items in the checklist refer to UD principles and UDL guidelines to which the example is most relevant. This content does not provide legal advice. To clarify legal issues, consult your institution's legal counsel, ADA/504 compliance officer, or disability services office, or call the regional Office for Civil Rights (OCR).

CLASS CLIMATE

Adopt practices that reflect high values with respect to both diversity and inclusiveness.

- *Welcome everyone.* Create a welcoming environment for all students. Encourage the sharing of multiple perspectives. Demonstrate and demand mutual respect.[UD 1;UDL 8]
- *Avoid stereotyping.* Offer instruction and support based on student performance and requests, not simply on assumptions that members of certain groups (e.g., students

with certain types of disabilities or from a specific racial or ethnic group) will automatically do well or poorly or require certain types of assistance. [UD 1; UDL 7]

- *Be approachable and available.* Learn students' names. Welcome questions in and outside of class, seek out a student's point of view, and respond patiently. Maintain regular office hours, encourage students to meet with you, and offer alternatives when student schedules conflict with those hours; consider making a student-instructor meeting a course requirement. Be available for online communication as well. [UD 1, 5; UDL 8]
- *Motivate all students.* Use teaching methods and materials that are motivating and relevant to students with diverse characteristics, such as age, gender, and culture. [UD 1; UDL 7]
- *Address individual needs in an inclusive manner.* Both on the syllabus and in class, invite students to meet with you to discuss disability-related accommodations and other learning needs. Avoid segregating or stigmatizing any student by drawing undue attention to a difference (e.g., disability) or sharing private information (e.g., a specific student's need for an accommodation) unless the student brings up the topic in front of others. Remind students of their role in making requests early and contributing to a positive relationship. Communicate effectively with teaching assistants (TAs) about student accommodations. [UD 1; UDL 6, 8]

INTERACTION

Encourage regular and effective interactions between students and the instructor and ensure that communication methods are accessible to all participants.

- *Promote effective communication.* Employ interactive teaching techniques. Face the class, speak clearly, consider using a microphone, and make eye contact with students. Supplement in-person contact with online communication. Use straightforward language, avoid unnecessary jargon and complexity, and use student names in electronic, written, and in-person communications. [UD 1, 2, 4, 5; UDL 8]
- *Make interactions accessible to all participants.* For example, use a telephone conference only if all students can participate, given their abilities to hear, speak, and meet, and their schedule constraints. Also, require that small groups communicate in ways that are accessible to all group members. [UD 1, 2, 4; UDL 5]
- *Encourage cooperative learning.* Assign group work for which learners must support each other and employ different skills and roles. Encourage different ways for students to interact with each other (e.g., in-class discussion, group work, and Internet-based communications). Insist that all students participate; facilitate their participation as needed. [UD 1, 2, 4, 5; UDL 8]

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS AND PRODUCTS

Ensure that facilities, activities, materials, and equipment are physically accessible to and usable by all students, and that all potential student characteristics are addressed in safety considerations.

- *Ensure physical access to facilities.* Use classrooms, labs, workspaces, and fieldwork sites that are accessible to individuals with a wide range of physical abilities. [UD 6, 7; UDL 1, 7]
- *Arrange instructional spaces to maximize inclusion and comfort.* Arrange seating to encourage participation, giving each student a clear line of sight to the instructor and visual aids and allowing room for wheelchairs, personal assistants, sign language interpreters, captionists, and assistive technology. Minimize distractions for students with a range of attention abilities (e.g., put small groups in quiet work areas). Work within constraints to make the environment as inclusive as possible. Encourage administrators to apply UD principles in facility design and renovation. [UD 2, 6, 7; UDL 1, 7]
- *Ensure that everyone can use equipment and materials.* Minimize nonessential physical effort and provide options for operation of equipment, handles, locks, cabinets, and drawers from different heights, with different physical abilities, with one hand, and by right- and left-handed students. Use large print to clearly label controls on lab equipment and other educational aids, using symbols as well as words. Provide straightforward, simple oral and printed directions for operation and use. [UD 3, 4, 6, 7; UDL 4]
- *Ensure safety.* Consider the impact of specific disabilities in emergency situations. Develop procedures for all potential students, including those who are blind, deaf, or wheelchair users. Label safety equipment in simple terms, in large print, and in a location viewable from a variety of angles. Provide written and oral safety instructions. [UD 3, 4, 6, 7]

DELIVERY METHODS

Use multiple, accessible instructional methods that are accessible to all learners.

- *Select flexible curriculum.* Choose textbooks and other curriculum materials that address the needs of students with diverse abilities, interests, learning styles, preferences, and other characteristics. Use curriculum materials that are well organized, emphasize important points, provide references for gaining background knowledge, include indices and glossaries, and have chapter outlines, study questions, and practice exercises. Consider technology-based materials that provide feedback, background information, vocabulary, and other supports based on student responses. [UD 2, 3, 4, 5; UDL 1, 2, 3, 7, 8]
- *Make content relevant.* Put learning in context. Incorporate multiple examples and perspectives to make specific concepts relevant to individuals with diverse characteristics such as age, ability, gender, ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, and interests. [UD 1; UDL 3, 7]
- *Provide cognitive supports.* Summarize major points, give background and contextual information, and prompt students. Provide scaffolding tools (e.g., outlines, class notes, summaries, study guides, copies of projected materials with room for note-taking) and other cognitive supports in both printed and text-based electronic formats. Provide options for gaining background information, vocabulary, and practice. [UD 2, 3, 4, 5; UDL 2, 3, 5, 6, 8]

- *Provide multiple ways to gain knowledge.* Use multiple modes to deliver content and, when possible, allow students to choose from multiple options for learning content. Options to consider include lectures, collaborative learning, small group discussions, hands-on activities, Internet based resources, educational software, and fieldwork. [UD 2, 3, 4; UDL 1, 2, 3, 4]
- *Deliver instructions clearly and in multiple ways.* Provide instructions both orally and in printed form. Have students summarize instructions to ensure understanding. [UD 2, 3, 4; UDL 1, 2, 3]
- *Make each teaching method accessible to all students.* Consider a wide range of abilities, interests, learning styles, and previous experiences when implementing each instructional method to ensure the participation of all students. For example, speak content presented visually. Provide the same means of participation to all students. [UD 2, 4, 5; UDL 1, 5]
- *Use large visual and tactile aids.* Use manipulatives to demonstrate content. Make visual aids as large as reasonable (e.g., use large, bold fonts on uncluttered overhead displays and use a computer to enlarge microscope images) [UD 3, 4; UDL 1].

INFORMATION RESOURCES AND TECHNOLOGY

Ensure that course materials, notes, and other information resources are engaging, flexible, and accessible for all students.

- *Select materials early.* Choose printed materials and prepare a syllabus early to allow students the option of beginning to read materials and work on assignments before the course begins. Allow adequate time to arrange for electronic and other alternative formats to be obtained. [UD 4; UDL 1]
- *Provide all materials in accessible formats.* Select or create materials that are universally designed. Use textbooks that are available in an accessible electronic format. Provide the syllabus and other teacher-created materials in a text-based, electronic format. Use captioned videos and provide transcriptions for audio presentations. Apply accessibility standards to websites. [UD 4; UDL 1, 2]
- *Accommodate a variety of reading levels and language skills, when appropriate, given the goals of the course.* Present content in a logical, straightforward manner and in an order that reflects its importance. Avoid unnecessary jargon and complexity and define new terms when they are presented. Create materials in simple, intuitive formats. [UD 3, 4; UDL 2, 3]
- *Ensure the availability of appropriate assistive technology.* If computer or science labs are used, ensure that assistive technology for students with disabilities is available or can be readily acquired. [UD 2, 4, 6, 7; UDL 1, 4, 5]

For specific guidelines for online content, consult the video and publication *Real Connections: Making Distance Learning Accessible to Everyone*² and the publication *Equal Access: Universal Design of Distance Learning*.¹

FEEDBACK

Provide specific feedback on a regular basis.

- *Provide regular feedback and corrective opportunities.* Allow students to turn in parts of large projects for feedback before the final project is due. Give students resubmission options to correct errors in assignments or exams. Arrange for peer feedback when appropriate. Solicit feedback from students regarding course effectiveness. [UDL 6, 9]

ASSESSMENT

Regularly assess student progress using multiple accessible methods and tools, and adjust instruction accordingly.

- *Set clear expectations.* Keep academic standards consistent for all students, including those who require accommodations. Provide a syllabus with clear statements of course expectations, assignment descriptions, and deadlines, as well as assessment methods and dates. Include a straightforward grading rubric. [UD 3; UDL 8]
- *Provide multiple ways to demonstrate knowledge.* Assess group and cooperative performance, as well as individual achievement. Consider using traditional tests with a variety of formats (e.g., multiple choice, essay, short answer), papers, group work, demonstrations, portfolios, and presentations as options for demonstrating knowledge. Provide students choices in assessment methods when appropriate. Allow students to use information technology to complete exams. [UD 2, 4; UDL 7]
- *Monitor and adjust.* Regularly assess students' background knowledge and current learning informally (e.g., through class discussion) and formally (e.g., through frequent, short exams), and adjust instructional content and methods accordingly. [UD 5]
- *Test in the same manner in which you teach.* Ensure that a test measures what students have learned and not their ability to adapt to a new format or style of presentation. [UD 3]
- *Minimize time constraints when appropriate.* Plan for variety in students' ability to complete work by announcing assignments well in advance of due dates. Allow extended time on tests and projects, unless speed is an essential outcome of instruction. [UD 2, 3]

ACCOMMODATION

Plan for accommodations for students whose needs are not met by the instructional design.

- *Know how to arrange for accommodations.* Know campus protocols for getting materials in alternate formats, rescheduling classroom locations, and arranging for other accommodations for students with disabilities. Make sure that assistive technology can be made available in a computer or science lab in a timely manner. Ensure the course experience is equivalent for students with accommodations. [UD 1, 2, 4, 6, 7]

CHECKLIST UPDATES AND RESOURCES

This checklist was applied by and field tested at more than twenty postsecondary institutions nationwide.⁶ A nationwide survey to test face-validity of checklist items led to further refinement of the checklist.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

A video presentation titled *Equal Access: Universal Design of Instruction*.⁷ To increase the usefulness of this working document, send suggestions to sheryl@uw.edu. For more information and resources regarding applications of UD to education, and checklists for making a tutoring and learning center or other student service accessible to students with disabilities, consult The Center for Universal Design in Education website⁵. The book *Universal Design in Higher Education: From Principles to Practice* published by Harvard Education Press; offers perspectives from UD leaders nationwide. To receive a 20% discount visit the website.⁸

CITED RESOURCES

1. http://www.uw.edu/doit/Brochures/Technology/equal_access_uddl.html
2. http://www.uw.edu/doit/Video/real_con.html
3. <http://www.cast.org/udl/>
4. http://www.ncsu.edu/www/ncsu/design/sod5/cud/about_ud/udprinciples.htm
5. <http://www.uw.edu/doit/CUDE/>
6. <http://www.uw.edu/doit/Brochures/Academics/admin.html>
7. http://www.uw.edu/doit/Video/ea_uudi.html
8. <http://www.uw.edu/doit/UDHE/coupon.html>
9. <http://www.udlcenter.org/aboutudl/udlguidelines>

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Retrieved from: https://www.washington.edu/doit/Brochures/PDF/equal_access_udi.pdf



Helpful Communication Hints

Treat people with disabilities with the same respect and consideration with which you treat others. There are no strict rules when it comes to relating to people with disabilities. However, here are some helpful hints.

GENERAL

- Ask a person with a disability if he/she needs help before providing assistance.
- Talk directly to the person with a disability, not through the person's companion or interpreter.
- Refer to a person's disability only if it is relevant to the conversation. If so, mention the person first and then the disability. "A man who is blind" is better than "a blind man" because it puts the person first.
- Avoid negative descriptions of a person's disability. For example, "a person who uses a wheelchair" is more appropriate than "a person confined to a wheelchair." A wheelchair is not confining- it's liberating!
- Ask for permission before you interact with a person's guide dog or service dog.

BLIND OR LOW VISION

- Be descriptive. Say, "The computer is about three feet to your left," rather than "The computer is over there."
- Speak all of the content presented with overhead projections and other visuals.
- When guiding people with visual impairments, offer them your arm rather than grabbing or pushing them.

LEARNING DISABILITIES

- Offer directions/instruction both orally and in writing. If asked, read instructions to individuals who have specific learning disabilities.

MOBILITY IMPAIRMENTS

- Sit or otherwise position yourself at the approximate height of people sitting in wheelchairs when you interact.

SPEECH IMPAIRMENTS

- Listen carefully. Repeat what you think you understand and then ask the person with a speech impairment to clarify and/or repeat the portion that you did not understand.

DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

- Face people with hearing impairments so they can see your lips. Avoid talking while chewing gum or eating.
- Speak clearly at a normal volume. Speak louder only if requested.
- Use paper and pencil if the person who is deaf does not read lips or if more accurate communication is needed.
- In groups raise hands to be recognized, so the person who is deaf knows who is speaking. Repeat questions from audience members.

- When using an interpreter, speak directly to the person who is deaf; when an interpreter voices what a person who is deaf signs, look at the person who is deaf, not the interpreter.

PSYCHIATRIC IMPAIRMENTS

- Provide information in clear, calm, respectful tones.
- Allow opportunities for addressing specific questions.

Retrieved from: http://www.washington.edu/doi/Conf/helpful_hints.html



DO-IT

Equal Access: Universal Design of Distance Learning

A checklist for making distance learning programs welcoming and accessible to all students

by Sheryl Burgstahler, Ph.D.

Represented by students in distance learning courses are a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds, ages, native languages, and learning styles. In addition, increasing numbers of students with disabilities participate in regular precollege and postsecondary courses. Their disabilities include blindness, low vision, hearing impairments, mobility impairments, learning disabilities, and health impairments.

Students are in school to learn and instructors share this goal. How can distance learning educators design instruction to maximize the learning of all students? The field of universal design (UD) can provide a starting point for developing a model for instruction.

LEGAL ISSUES AND STANDARDS

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 mandate that qualified people with disabilities have access to public programs and services, including those offered on the Internet. Specifically, if qualified individuals with disabilities enroll in distance learning courses, these courses should be made accessible to them.

Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires that electronic and information technologies procured, developed, maintained, and used by federal agencies meet the accessibility standards of the U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board), unless it would be an undue burden to do so. The standards include criteria for making web pages and other Internet tools accessible. Although this law applies directly to federal agencies, many states and other organizations have adopted Section 508 standards as one effort to meet their obligations under Section 504 and the ADA. The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) develops comprehensive *Web Content Accessibility Guidelines* (www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT/) that explain how to design websites that are accessible to people with disabilities.

Distance learning programs can benefit from following the leadership of the federal government by through actions that are proactive (applying UD principles) and reactive (providing accommodations) when it comes to making distance learning programs fully accessible to individuals with disabilities. This dual approach will result in more inclusive programs and minimize the need for accommodations for specific students.

UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Designing any product or environment involves the consideration of many factors, including aesthetics, engineering options, environmental issues, industry standards, safety concerns, and cost. Often, products and environments are designed for the average user. In contrast, UD is "the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the

greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design" (www.ncsu.edu/project/design-projects/udi/center-for-universal-design/the-principles-of-universal-design/). For example, a standard door is not accessible to everyone. If a large switch is installed, the door becomes accessible to more people, including some people who use wheelchairs. However, applying UD principles when a facility is being designed could lead to the installation of sensors that signal the door to open when anyone approaches, making the building accessible to everyone—a small child, a man carrying a large box, an elderly woman, and a person using a walker or wheelchair.

Many distance learning programs deal with accessibility issues only when a student with a disability enrolls in a course; in other words, they provide accommodations. The process of making accessibility decisions while a distance learning course is being developed to ensure that it is accessible to potential students with a range of abilities, disabilities, learning styles and preferences, native languages, and other characteristics is an application of UD. Applying UD as distance-learning courses are being developed can be easier and therefore less expensive than quickly developing accommodation strategies each time a student with a disability enrolls in a course. UD can also make courses more flexible, thereby maximizing the learning of all students.

When architects design buildings to be used by those who walk independently or with crutches, push baby strollers, and use wheelchairs, they are more accessible to everyone else. Similarly, distance learning courses that incorporate universal design features can be accessed by students with diverse characteristics, such as age; race; ethnicity; gender; native language; and ability to hear, see, move, and speak.

TEN INDICATORS OF DISTANCE LEARNING

The ten indicators of accessible distance learning programs shared in this publication were identified through a review of the literature and engagement with distance learning administrators. The Distance Learning Program Accessibility Indicators (DLP Accessibility Indicators) can be used as a checklist for documenting changes that lead to improved accessibility of any distance-learning program.

In an iterative process, the Indicators were shared with and refined through substantive feedback from disabled student service and distance learning staff at sixteen postsecondary institutions as part of the *DO-IT Admin* (see <http://www.uw.edu/doit/Brochures/Academics/admin.html>) project which was funded by the U.S. Department of Education and directed by the DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology) Center at the University of Washington. Participating schools possess a wide range of institutional characteristics such as large and small schools; two-year and four-year institutions; and schools from rural, suburban, and urban areas. Each Indicator relates to one of the four key stakeholders in the delivery of distance learning courses:

1. students and potential students
2. distance learning designers
3. distance learning instructors

4. distance learning program evaluators

On many campuses, particularly those with small distance learning programs, one person may perform two or more of the last three roles. The DLP Accessibility Indicators in this ongoing project are described in the four sections that follow. They were also published along with examples of their use and a case study of the distance learning program at the University of Washington in the journal *Research in Learning Technology* (Burgstahler, Vol. 14, No. 1, 2006).

FOR STUDENTS AND POTENTIAL STUDENTS

Distance learning programs committed to accessibility ensure that students and potential students know of the programs' commitment to accessible design, how to report inaccessible design features they discover, how to request accommodations, and how to obtain alternate formats of printed materials. Additionally, the distance learning home page and online course materials are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

- *DLP Accessibility Indicator 1.* The distance learning home page is accessible to individuals with disabilities (e.g., it adheres to Section 508, World Wide Web Consortium or institutional accessible-design guidelines or standards).
- *DLP Accessibility Indicator 2.* A statement about the distance learning program's commitment to accessible design for all students, including those with disabilities, is included prominently in appropriate publications and websites along with contact information for reporting inaccessible design features.
- *DLP Accessibility Indicator 3.* A statement about how distance learning students with disabilities can request accommodations is included in appropriate publications and web pages.
- *DLP Accessibility Indicator 4.* A statement about how people can obtain alternate formats of printed materials is included in publications.
- *DLP Accessibility Indicator 5.* The online and other course materials of distance learning courses are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

FOR COURSE DESIGNERS

Distance learning programs that are committed to accessibility ensure that course designers understand the program's commitment to accessibility, have access to guidelines and resources, and learn about accessibility in training provided to course designers.

- *DLP Accessibility Indicator 6.* Publications and web pages include a statement of the program's commitment to accessibility, guidelines or standards regarding accessibility, and resources.
- *DLP Accessibility Indicator 7.* Accessibility issues are covered in course designer training.

FOR INSTRUCTORS

Distance learning programs committed to accessibility, publications, and web pages for distance learning instructors include a statement of the distance learning program's

commitment to accessibility, guidelines regarding accessibility, and resources, as well as training for instructors includes accessibility content.

- *DLP Accessibility Indicator 8.* Publications and web pages for distance learning instructors include a statement of the distance learning program's commitment to accessibility, guidelines or standards regarding accessibility, and resources.
- *DLP Accessibility Indicator 9.* Accessibility issues are covered in training sessions for instructors.

FOR PROGRAM EVALUATORS

Distance learning programs committed to accessibility have systems in place to monitor accessibility efforts and make adjustments based on evaluation results.

- *DLP Accessibility Indicator 10.* A system is in place to monitor the accessibility of courses and, based on this evaluation, the program takes actions to improve the accessibility of specific courses as well as update information and training given to potential students, actual students, course designers, and instructors.

EXAMPLES AND NEXT STEPS

Employing UD principles as Internet-based distance learning courses are created brings us closer to making these opportunities accessible to anyone, anywhere, at any time. Distance learning programs are encouraged to test these Indicators and send suggestions for improvements to this work in progress to sherylb@uw.edu. Distance learning professional organizations are also encouraged to take a leadership role in promoting the development of accessible courses by all programs.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For an overview of access barriers, strategies for making distance learning instructional tools (e.g., web pages, Internet-based communication, printed materials, videos, telephone conferences) accessible to all students, and resources, consult the publication *Real Connections: Making Distance Learning Accessible to Everyone* at www.uw.edu/doit/Brochures/Technology/distance.learn.html.

For more information about applications of universal design consult www.uw.edu/doit/Resources/udesign.html or *The Center for Universal Design in Education* at www.uw.edu/doit/CUDE/. The book *Universal Design in Higher Education: From Principles to Practice* published by Harvard Education Press shares perspectives of UD leaders nationwide. To receive a 20% discount, visit www.uw.edu/doit/UDHE/coupon.html

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Retrieved from: http://www.washington.edu/doit/Brochures/PDF/equal_access_uddl.pdf

Assistive Technology

Assistive Technology is any tool that helps people with disabilities communicate better, become more active in their learning community, and live more independently. In higher education, Assistive Technology is used to mitigate barriers faced by students with disabilities. In order to create more equitable learning environments for all students SDS provides some assistive technology for students. Additionally, many students own and will provide their own assistive technology devices.

Alternative Media

Student disability services converts textbooks, exams, and other documents into a more usable version for students unable to access print in more traditional forms. Students with print disabilities are usually blind or have low vision, have learning disabilities in reading, or have mobility limitations.

The conversion of a document, PowerPoint, or textbook is labor intensive; an early notification to our office is crucial to ensure timely access to the material. We therefore request that students submit requests for alternative textbooks immediately following their registration. Timely request to help ensure that student will have materials ready by the beginning of the next semester. Please assist our office and the student with textbook(s) titles and information if requested. All requests will be processed in the order received. Additionally, timely submittal of textbook orders to the University Bookstore (Barnes & Noble) also assist in smooth conversion of materials for students.

Training

The Student Disability Staff is always available to conduct individual and/or departmental training relating to classroom accommodations and legal requirements for students with disabilities. Please feel free to contact our office at 806-742-2405 at any time to arrange training.

TEACHING, LEARNING, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER (TLPDC)

The Teaching, Learning, and Professional Development Center (TLPDC) is committed to ensuring accessibility in online courses. They offer educational sessions and consultations on ADA compliance. In addition, the TLPDC Instructional Design team has participated in a campus-wide effort to emphasize and support ADA compliance with online resources for faculty.

DISTANCE LEARNING & ADA COMPLIANCE

Planning to develop or teach an online or hybrid course? The TLPDC can support you with:

- Three options for helping you create online courses with Instructional Design services
- Blackboard training
- Classes on course design, best practices, and online pedagogy
- Support for using multimedia technologies in your course

Learn more about [TLPDC Resources for Online Instructors](#) and [Blackboard Support](#).

Locate the TLPDC's *Accessibility 101: ADA Compliance* session on their Events Registration page for upcoming session details. (<http://linser.ttu.edu/webapps/EventRegistration/>)

A great resource with valuable information on web developing with accessibility in mind is the WebAIM: Web Accessibility in Mind website. (<http://webaim.org/>)

Contact the TLPDC:

E-mail: tlpdc.id@ttu.edu

Website: www.depts.ttu.edu/tlpdc/

Phone: 806-742-0133

Location: TLPDC Room 155 in the University Library

Tours and Presentation

The Student Disability Services office is open from 8am-5pm, Monday – Friday. Faculty are welcome at any time to stop in the office for a tour of our equipment, assistance with designing accessibility within a course, or for help with questions regarding students with disabilities.

Additionally, SDS staff are available to present to classes, faculty/department meetings regarding in-class accommodations, accessible learning environments, and other disability related topics. Please feel free to contact our office at 806-742-2405 to request a presentation.

Disability Awareness Education

APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE

- People with disabilities are people first. The correct wording is to state the person first and then the disability; thus, you would say "the person who is visually impaired" rather than "the blind man/women." This places the emphasis upon the person, not the disability.
- Do not use the word handicapped.
- Avoid labeling individuals as victims.
- Avoid terms such as wheelchair bound. Wheelchairs provide access and enable a person to get around independently. People are not bound to wheelchairs; they use a wheelchair to assist them.
- When it is appropriate to refer to an individual's disability, choose the correct terminology for the specific disability.
- Avoid stereotyping persons with disabilities into the same category. Disabilities vary greatly from one to another and even two people with the same disability may have greatly different experiences and capabilities.

CONFIDENTIALITY STRATEGIES

- Always speak to a student privately about their disability or accommodation(s). Avoid allowing other students or faculty to hear these conversations. This includes conversations regarding testing accommodations, class absences related to the disability, etc.
- When helping to facilitate note-taking services, refer to the note-taking memo that has accompanied the student's Letter of Accommodations. Be sure not to announce the student's actual name.
- Arrange for students to pick up copies of notes or class materials that have been put into an accessible format in a time and manner that protects their confidentiality.
- When in doubt as to what to do to protect the student's right to confidentially ask the student how they would prefer something to be handled or call the Student Disability Services.

CLASSROOM

Faculty Responsibilities

Once a Letter of Accommodation has been received:

Faculty/Staff have the responsibility to comply with the provision of authorized reasonable accommodations in a reasonable and timely manner. Faculty/Staff members should meet individually with the student to discuss the details.

If a Letter of Accommodation has not been received:

If a student requests accommodations for a disability, but you have not received the supporting documentation in the form of a letter of accommodation, please refer the student to Student Disability Services. If an accommodation request is something that you would feel comfortable providing for any student (for example, closing the door to reduce distractions or providing seating near a window for natural light) the accommodation may be provided without consulting with Student Disability Services. However, it is advisable to refer any accommodation request that is questionable to Student Disability Services.

When the appropriateness of the accommodation is in question:

Please consult an academic counselor in Student Disability Services, 742-2405 if you have any questions regarding the appropriateness of or the proper way to facilitate a particular accommodation.

ADA Syllabus Statement

Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary arrangements. Students should present appropriate verification from Student Disability Services during the instructor's office hours. Please note instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from Student Disability Services has been provided. For additional information, you may contact the Student Disability Services office in 335 West Hall or 806-742-2405.

Student Responsibilities

The following verbiage comes directly from the document that students must read and sign in order to receive accommodations through SDS:

After being approved and granted accommodations for your disability, you need to be aware of the rights you have regarding these accommodations. Likewise, you also need to understand your responsibilities that go with the accommodations.

RIGHTS

It is your right to have your letter of accommodation (referred to hereafter as LOA) sent to any and all instructors via the Student Disability Services (secure) online system. You may

not need all accommodations for every class, but any professor that you will need an accommodation from must receive the LOA, so you must choose to have it sent.

It is your right not to use your LOA (or choose to have it sent to your faculty members) for any class during a semester. This does not affect your right to have accommodations again for any subsequent semester.

It is your right to request adjustments to your LOA regarding the accommodations for which you are eligible. Additions to your LOA must be supported by appropriate documentation.

It is your right to have your disability kept confidential. Student Disability Services will not share information regarding your disability with any faculty, staff, parent, or other entities unless you have given written permission to do so.

It is your right to have your approved accommodations provided for you free of charge, as mandated in the Americans with Disabilities Act. Student Disability Services will never charge you for your classroom accommodations.

RESPONSIBILITIES

It is your responsibility to request your electronic LOA be sent to your faculty members each semester. Once this is complete, it is also your responsibility to meet with each professor preferably during the first week of class, or within one week of receiving your Letter of Accommodation if it is during the semester, to review your LOA. The LOA becomes effective once the professor receives it and you have discussed the accommodations needed, and the LOA is not retroactive.

Students' acceptance to Student Disability Services has no affect on class attendance. All students are required to follow class policy for attendance as outlined on the course syllabus.

It is your responsibility to report problems with professors who are not allowing accommodations to the Student Disability Services office by making an appointment with a counselor. This must be done during the semester the problem is occurring and not after grades have been given for the course. University policy states that instructors have one week as a reasonable amount of time to implement the accommodations. If this does not occur, the student should contact a counselor in the SDS office immediately.

It is your responsibility to request new LOAs on the AIM System for each semester that you are going to need accommodations. If you decide to add/delete approved accommodations from your LOA, you will be able to make that choice online, or speak to your SDS counselor.

If you have note-taking assistance as an accommodation, you must attend class and be attentive. You do not have the right to copies of notes from a class for which you were absent. Power Point slides and fill in the blank note packets are approved supplemental

note taking accommodations. Please remember, these are supplemental notes and you are required to still take your own notes. If you do not attempt to take notes, you are not eligible to receive the supplemental notes.

If you require an alternative test location or extra time on examinations, professors are able to choose to use the Academic Testing Services (ATS) office or to test you within the department. If the ATS office is chosen, then it is your responsibility to arrange for this accommodation through the Academic Testing Services office and follow their requirements. ATS is a separate department and has specific procedures that must be followed. Be sure to make note of their due date for Academic Testing Forms, and if you do not meet the deadline you will be ineligible to take your final in ATS. Additionally, remember that you must communicate with your faculty members in relation to coordination of testing. Be sure to double check with the ATS office to ensure that your test has been delivered prior to testing time. You will receive reminder emails from Academic Testing Services; it is your responsibility to check your email and respond to the ATS office in a timely and responsible manner.

Books and Other Materials in Electronic Format:

If you have textbooks or other documents that need converted into an electronic version, this material must be delivered to the SDS office at least one week prior to the date needed. Material brought in less than 7 days before needed cannot be guaranteed to meet the requested deadline. Students can have instructors email documents directly to sds@ttu.edu if necessary. If a textbook is being scanned, a receipt showing purchase of the book must be provided along with the scanning request. Student Disability Services will make a copy of the receipt and attach it to the request form. The original receipt will be returned to the student. It is also the student's responsibility to pick up textbooks and/or other materials from SDS upon completion.

For Interpreter Services:

Requests for interpreter services should be completed immediately following your registration for classes in order to assure this accommodation is provided on the first day of class. Students **MUST** also request LOAs (online) prior to interpreters accompanying the student to the classroom. Per the Interpreter Request Form, interpreters are available for student meetings with instructors to discuss accommodations.

Recruiting Notetakers

There may be a student in your class who requires the services of a notetaker. In an effort to accommodate the student's needs most efficiently, Student Disability Services is trying to enlist help from other students taking the same courses as students who require notetakers. ***To obtain a notetaker, please read the boxed announcement for at least the first week of class or until 2 note takers are found. In the case that it is later in the semester, please read until 2 note takers are found.***

Here is the announcement you may find helpful in identifying notetakers in your class:

Please Read:

"The following is an announcement from Student Disability Services. There is a student with a disability in this class who requires the services of a note taker. If you are willing to provide a copy of your notes to this student for the rest of the semester, you will be provided with a carbonless notepaper pad that will enable you to simply take your own notes, while an automatic double copy is made. If you are a good note taker and are interested, please talk to me after class so that I can arrange to get the carbonless notepads to you. At the end of the semester you will be eligible for a commendation letter from SDS which provides documentation for your volunteered service. In order to protect the student's confidentiality, please understand that as note takers you will not be aware of the student's identity. You will give me a copy of the notes after each class period and I will then share them with the student."

Students who are willing to volunteer for this service will gain valuable experience in working with a student with a disability. We have non-carbonless paper pads available in our office, which requires that the volunteer student simply take his or her own notes and the pads ensure that a double copy is automatically made. Alternately, they may choose to type their notes on a laptop or tablet which can then be emailed to you to forward to the student.

It is important to thank students for volunteering to take notes each semester, so Student Disability Services would like to recognize their efforts by providing them with a letter of commendation which could be considered for volunteer service hours and enhance their résumé. Before the end of the semester, please have them return the form from the front of the carbonless copy notepad to Student Disability Services in 335 West Hall. The form is also available on the website at: www.depts.ttu.edu/sds/notetaking.php

When a student fails to attend class or otherwise behaves inappropriately in class because she or he has a notetaker (e.g., sleeps in class), that student IS NOT eligible to receive the notetaker's notes that day. If you experience any such problems, please call our office immediately. Student Disability Services staff may be reached at 742-2405. Please remember that notes must be made available to the student within 24 hours of the class period.

Also, keep in mind that you have three options for assisting a student with note taking.

1. You can recruit a student who takes notes electronically (on laptop computers) and have them email you a copy of the notes after each class period. You will then forward the notes to the student requesting notes.
2. If you use lecture notes, you may give the student a copy of the lecture notes just prior to the lecture.
3. If you use power point presentations on a regular basis, you may give the students a copy of the power point presentation PRIOR to the lecture.

Any of the listed options will suffice for meeting the note-taking requirement that the University is required to provide. Thank you for your anticipated help and cooperation in this matter.

Exam Accommodations

Under the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, students with documented learning, mechanical, mobility, or visual disabilities may be eligible for various accommodations in classroom and testing situations. Such accommodations may include:

- extended test time on tests
- alternative test formats
- enlargement of testing materials
- the use of a reader or scribe

When discussing his/her accommodations with the instructor, the instructor may choose to provide the requested accommodations within the appropriate academic department or may allow the students to take tests in Academic Testing Services' West Hall facilities.

ELIGIBILITY

To receive testing accommodations through Academic Testing Services, a student must have a documented disability, be registered with Student Disability Services, and have a Letter of Accommodations (LOA) issued by that office. Students are only eligible for the accommodations specifically listed on the LOA.

DETERMINING TESTING LOCATION

Students should meet personally with their instructors to discuss accommodations needs and must give each instructor a copy of their LOA. The instructor may either provide accommodations within his or her academic department, or through Academic Testing Services. The instructor is not required to send students to test with ATS, but may do so if he or she wishes. Testing accommodations are available free of charge to all eligible TTU students.

SUBMITTING YOUR REQUEST

Students should submit a separate Accommodations Request form for each course. The bottom section should be completed by the instructor. This information enables ATS to administer tests in accordance with the instructor's wishes.

Completed forms should be returned to the ATS office, 214 West Hall. The student should not leave the form with you and expect you to return it—this is the student's responsibility and only way of knowing that Academic Testing Services has received your form.

SCHEDULING TESTS

Students should schedule their tests with ATS at least five business days ahead of time, either in person, by e-mail to testing.accommodations@ttu.edu, or by telephoning 742-

3671 (Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm). Students are encouraged to provide a syllabus or list of test dates in advance for the entire term whenever possible.

FINAL EXAMINATIONS

Because of space limitations during Finals Week, we ask students to submit their Accommodations Requests as soon as possible. Seating priority for final exams will be determined by the order in which the requests were received. When capacity is reached, it may be necessary for students to coordinate with the instructor an alternative test time or location.

Steven Martin - Assistant Director
Academic Testing Services
Mail Stop 5002
806-742-3671
steven.martin@ttu.edu

Notetaking Accommodation

To receive this accommodation, students must be present for class and be attentive.

Option 1: Instructors may locate two in-class note-takers for the course; one to serve as the primary note-taker and the other to serve in the primary note-takers absence. NCR carbonless paper should be used by the note-takers and are available through the Student Disability Services office. Guidelines for doing so are included in the Note-taking Memo that is attached to the NCR note pads. The instructor would then forward them to the student within 24 hours of class.

Option 2: Instructors may locate two in class note-takers who take notes on laptop computer. The note takers would e-mail the notes to the instructor at the conclusion of class. The instructor would then forward them to the student, either electronically or in print version within 24 hours of class.

Option 3: Instructors may give copies of classroom lecture notes, power point presentation, transparencies, or overheads that they use for daily lectures. Instructors may utilize Blackboard or by posting notes online. Power Point presentations, overheads and transparencies must be provided to the student prior to the lecture.

Attendance Accommodation

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

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

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

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

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

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

Student Disability Services recommends that students with a disability-related need for flexibility in attendance meet with their instructors to discuss the extent to which modification in attendance policies may be reasonable for a particular class. The student and instructor should have a clear understanding of what accommodation can be made for disability-related absences. In cases where attendance is an essential part of the class, a medical or mental health withdrawal may be considered a reasonable accommodation if absences become excessive. Student Disability Services is available to consult with faculty on issues concerning disability and attendance. For more information, contact Tamara Mancini at 742-2405.

Extended Time and Blackboard

BLACKBOARD ASSISTANCE

It's common to have students who need extra time when taking an online assessment. Here's how you can accommodate this on Blackboard:





1. Open the Blackboard course and click on the action link for the exam to modify.
2. Select Edit the Test Options.
3. Scroll to the Test Availability Exceptions section in Test Options.
4. Click the Add User or Group button. Select the students and/or groups. (Tip: If you have multiple students who need the same amount of additional time, create a group for those students first (Control Panel > Users and Groups) and then select that group here.) Click Submit.

5. You now have the ability to set a unique set of exemptions (Number of Attempts, Timer, Availability dates, and Force Completion) for each student or group selected. This availability date and time field will even work outside the preexisting availability settings used by the other students taking the exam.

3. Test Availability Exceptions

*Click **Add User or Group** to search for course users and groups to add to the exception list. Timer and Force Completion must be enabled in the previous Test Availability step to enable those settings for Exceptions. If you choose to use groups, you must make the group unavailable if you do not want students to see group members. Click **Remove all Exceptions** to delete all exceptions for the test.*

Add User or Group **Remove All Exceptions**

User or Group	Name	Attempts	Timer	Availability	Force Completion
	Demo Two	Single Attempt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 120 <input type="checkbox"/> Auto Submit		<input type="checkbox"/> ✕
	Demo Four	Single Attempt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 90 <input type="checkbox"/> Auto Submit	 After: 06/16/2014 08:00 AM	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ✕

6. Click Submit to save these updated test options.

Please contact Blackboard Support at blackboard@ttu.edu if you have difficulties or questions with this procedure.

Copies of Materials

Student Disability Services can provide duplicate copies of notes for students in a course. The faculty member must provide a list of the specific student(s) eligible to receive supplemental notes for each course section.

Recorded Lecture

On rare occasions you might have a student who requests to record your lectures. While this can be an accommodation in place of notetaking, it is not a requirement. However, please keep in mind that for some students with mobility impairments this is a much more effective accommodation. We would ask that you address each request on an individual basis.

Medical Considerations for Students with Disabilities

Students who have chronic illnesses are protected under ADA. When working with these students, it is important to keep in mind that while they are protected under ADA, they still must adhere to all attendance requirements and course deadlines. However, there are some considerations to keep in mind when working with students with medical issues:

1. Should a student have a flair up of their medical condition during a semester, you can consider make up work as long as they provide you medical documentation

(Doctor's note) indicating they have been into the office for medical care and are currently under treatment that may affect class attendance.

2. Should the absences become more than is allowed by the course policy stated on the syllabus, the instructor must determine if the excessive absences cause the student to miss a significant amount of the essential materials. When looking at this, please consider the following:
 - a. Are there any alternative methods for the student to get the course materials, such as an online section they could be switched to?
 - b. Can the student complete assignments at home and still get the critical components needed for successful completion of the course?
 - c. Are there any supplemental materials available to the student to assist with learning the critical information?

Once these options are considered, then the faculty member must determine if the student needs to drop the course, take an incomplete, or work out an agreement to finish the course in an alternative manner. The SDS office will assist with developing a solution if the instructor and the student cannot reach an agreement.

Is My Student's Pregnancy Considered a Disability?

Pregnancy is not covered under ADA unless there are other health issues that are exacerbated by the pregnancy causing a temporary chronic medical condition. There are no accommodations for being pregnant. However, you may want to consider reasonable adjustments, as permitted by course requirements.

1. Can test dates be adjusted?
2. Are there tasks, assignments, etc. the student could complete at home if needed?

It is imperative that you are able to clearly articulate the essential elements of the course to the student. We also suggest that the department create a committee to discuss essential elements and special situations, such as pregnancy which may arise during the semester.

Sign Language Interpreting and Real-time Transcription Services

INTERPRETER SERVICES

In order to receive interpreting services in the classroom, a student must be approved through Student Disability Services (SDS). Approval is contingent upon documentation of disability. Each semester a student enrolls for courses and desires interpreting services, the student must make contact with the Interpreter Coordinator to request services. Once approved, interpreting services are guaranteed for the entire semester, as long as students adhere to the guidelines established by SDS and approved by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR). Services are determined each semester and are on a case-by-case basis.

For outside class requirements, such as field trips or other assigned activities, as well as meeting with professors during office hours, students should request an interpreter from Student Disability Services. The interpreter request form is for students who are currently

registered with Student Disability Services (SDS) and is intended for academic purposes on the main Texas Tech University campus only.

Interpreter requests for events lasting less than 3 hours require at least 72 hours advance notice. Requests submitted with less than 72 hours' notice cannot be guaranteed. Interpreter requests for events lasting longer than 3 hours (i.e. conferences, training, etc.) require at least 3 weeks advance notice in order for our office to determine the appropriate accommodations. Events outside of Lubbock will be considered on a case-by-case basis contingent on availability of interpreter services in the area.

***Note:** In the event that interpreters are not available, other appropriate services will be considered (i.e. RCART, UbiDuo, FM System, or other supportive technology).

ROLE OF THE SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER

Sign language interpreters are trained professionals who provide a culturally appropriate communication link between Deaf, hard of hearing and hearing individuals. Interpreters have education in the field and a certification by a state/national board, which must be maintained by Continuing Education Units. Interpreters follow the Standards of Ethical Behavior established by the Board for Evaluation of Interpreters. For more information, visit www.dars.state.tx.us or www.rid.org. It is a conflict of interest to be both an active participant and a neutral communicator between Deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing persons. For this reason, it is not the interpreter's role to advise, edit, advocate, teach, participate or have conversations with students while in the interpreting situation. The interpreter must faithfully convey the spirit and content of the speaker. Interpreters do not interject personal opinions. Deaf, hard of hearing and hearing persons using interpreter services have the right to control the communication interaction and make their own decisions. Interpreters will not answer questions of clarification or explanation; students should direct questions toward the professor. The professor can give a better explanation as to how it may relate to the class material.

WORKING WITH A SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER

- The interpreter will position him/herself so the Deaf or hard of hearing student can have a clear line of sight of the teacher, the interpreter, and any visual aids.
- Make sure there is adequate lighting in the classroom.
- Speak at your normal pace.
- Talk directly to the person who is Deaf or hard of hearing as if the interpreter is not present. For example, say "The meeting will be Friday at 9:00 a.m.," rather than, "Tell him/her that the meeting will be Friday at 9:00 a.m."
- Don't request that the interpreter not interpret something you say. It is the interpreter's job to interpret everything that is heard.
- Often there will be a pause in the interpretation. The interpreter is taking time to receive the complete thought and render an accurate interpretation.
- Provide the interpreter a copy of any handouts given to students. This allows the interpreter to scan over the material and prepare an accurate translation of the message.

- Allow time for a pause when referring to handouts or visual aids. If you do not pause, the student may miss part of the message because he/she is looking over the materials.
- Don't communicate vital information in high traffic areas or while walking. For example, don't tell a Deaf person that the date has changed for the next exam while walking down the hall. The Deaf person must watch you, the interpreter, and where they are going; this could lead to missed information.
- Don't ask the interpreter to take on any responsibility other than relaying information.
- Seek clarification if needed.

REALTIME TRANSCRIPTION SERVICES

Remote Communication Access Real-time Translation (RCART) is designed to provide the Deaf or hard of hearing student with a real-time transcription of the lecture in the classroom or event. This process is accomplished by a remote connection which includes the following: laptop, internet, specialized software, receiver, transmitter, and microphone. Student Disability Services contracts with third party vendors that provide the Remote CART services. The transcriber is located offsite so the audio is transmitted through a lapel microphone to the receiver which then sends the signal via the internet. The transcriber listens to the lecture and types the text using captioning software which is then sent to the student's laptop through the internet so the student can read the lecture in real time.

An important point to consider is that the transcriber may or may not be able to hear other students in the classroom, and the Deaf student may not be able to ask questions or make comments. When working with a student who is using a Remote CART system, please remember to repeat questions or comments from the audience. The audience/students in the room are not wearing microphones; therefore, the questions will not be heard by the transcriber. When you repeat questions or comments, the student will have equal access to the classroom information via the transcription.

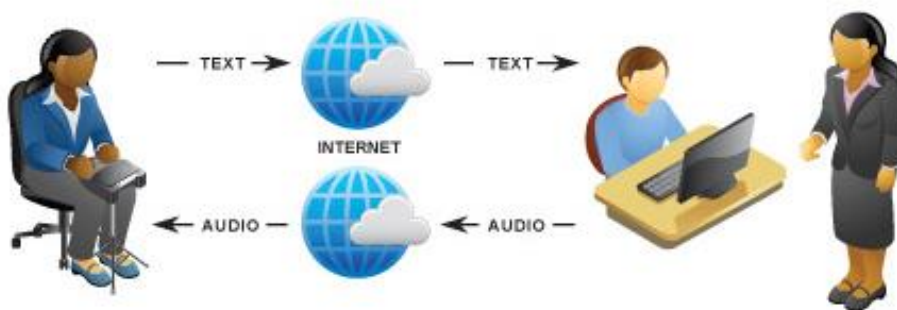


Image retrieved from: <http://captionfirst.com/services/cart/>

Student Disability Services coordinates all academic interpreting and transcription services. If you have questions or concerns, please contact:

James Whitfield
Assistant Director/Interpreter Coordinator
806-742-2405 Ext. 230
james.whitfield@ttu.edu

Captions & Subtitles in the Classroom

"Both ADA and Section 504 are civil rights statutes that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability, obligate colleges and universities to make certain adjustments and accommodations, and offer to persons with disabilities the opportunity to participate fully in all institutional programs and activities. Texas Tech University adheres to these regulations and the Texas Commission on Human Rights Act."

--TTU OP 10.08: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

DEFINE

Captioning – a visual representation of the audio portion of videotape material – enables deaf learners to have full access to materials used in the classroom.

- **Open Captions** - Open captions are always visible and cannot be turned off. They are burned directly into the video and are a part of the picture.
- **Closed Captions** - Closed captions are captions that are encoded, or embedded, into the video and cannot be seen unless turned on using menu options
- **Subtitles** - Subtitling is a method of making the soundtrack of a video recognizable to viewers who do not understand the language being spoken or viewers unable to hear the audio. Subtitles may appear as translations to foreign languages from the spoken language or straight transcripts of the spoken language.
- **Transcription** - Transcripts are also produced by highly trained personnel who listen to the program audio, transcribe every word spoken, every sound effect, regional-accent descriptors, and even onscreen action and time stamps – depending on the level of detail the client requires. The script can be formatted in a variety of different ways.

GUIDELINES

According to federal, state, and university guidelines all materials presented in the classroom must be in an accessible format. For Deaf and hard of hearing students to have equal access, all class-related materials (specifically, PowerPoint voice-overs, online courses, audio recordings) must be closed captioned, subtitled or transcribed. Videos, movies, and internet clips must be captioned or subtitled as a transcription is not sufficient. This applies to both on-campus and online courses.

If you have materials that are not compliant with this ADA mandate, please seek support from your immediate supervisor, the Dean of the College, and/or the [TTU Accessibility Compliance Team](#). Student Disability Services' goal is to assist by providing you with

information that will help you be more effective in your classroom, as well as helping you maintain compliance with federal, state, and university disability guidelines.

For additional information, please contact Student Disability Services.

CAPTIONING ORGANIZATIONS

- [PepNet2](#) – Captioning Tip Sheet
- [Described and Captioned Media Program \(DCMP\)](#) – Free loans of described and captioned educational media and a clearinghouse of information related to educational media access.
- [National Captioning Institute, Inc. \(NCI\)](#)
- [FCC's Fact Sheet on Requirements for Closed Captioning](#)
- [National Court Reporters Association](#)
- [TTU Accessibility Compliance Team](#)

COMMUNICATION

Frequently Asked Questions

How is extra time justified for students with learning disabilities?

Other students could improve test scores if they were allowed additional time as well. Various factors account for the need for extra time on tests for students with learning disabilities. These include: a) speed of processing; b) visual perceptual deficits; c) difficulty with mechanics of syntax, spelling and punctuation; and d) reading comprehension deficits. Research (at UC Berkeley, 1991 and the University of Toronto, 1993) on the effects of extended time on exams has shown dramatic improvements for students with learning disabilities, but only marginal improvement for students without learning disabilities. Rather than providing an unfair advantage in the class, extended time for exams allows these students to demonstrate their level of mastery of the course objectives, rather than reflecting the deficits innate to their learning disabilities. In other words, it "levels the playing field."

Should I refer a student to Student Disability Services?

Faculty members are encouraged to refer students to Student Disability Services if the student has disclosed that they have a disability.

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

On the Texas Tech University campus Student Disability Services is regarded as the authority to verify disabilities and determine whether a student qualifies for academic accommodations. All students eligible for accommodations have presented the necessary documentation and been verified by the SDS staff.

How are accommodations determined for a student with a disability?

Reasonable accommodations are determined on an individual basis after considering the specific disability and documentation of functional limitations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. See the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD) for more information regarding documentation guidelines. Accommodations are designed to provide an equal educational opportunity not to give the student a competitive edge.

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

The information regarding a student's disability should be shared only when there is a compelling reason for disclosure. The U. S. Department of Justice has indicated that a faculty member generally does not have a need to know this information, only that it has been appropriately verified by the office assigned this responsibility on behalf of the institution. Students may submit their verification to Student Disability Services without disclosing to their instructors the specific nature of their disability. Upon a student's request for accommodations, the university and the instructor are required by law to appropriately accommodate the student in a timely manner. While students are not

required to share their specific disability information, students are encouraged to discuss their specific needs with their instructors.

What is a disability?

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

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

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

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

Are "disability" and "handicap" the same thing?

A "disability" is a condition caused by accident, trauma, genetics or disease that may limit a person's mobility, hearing, vision, speech, or mental function. A person may have more than one disability.

A "handicap" is a physical or attitudinal constraint imposed upon a person; for example, stairs, narrow doorways, and curbs are handicaps imposed upon people with disabilities who use wheelchairs.

What is a reasonable accommodation?

A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a course, program, service, job, activity, or facility that enables a qualified individual with a disability to have an equal opportunity to attain the same level of performance or to enjoy equal benefits and privileges as are available to an individual without a disability. Some common academic accommodations include extended time on tests, use of peer note takers, use of computer with spell check, and provision of sign language interpreters.

How does a person become eligible to receive accommodations?

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

A student must:

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

Who determines the accommodation?

Student Disability Services staff determine the accommodations using:

- Documentation of the disability from qualified professionals provided by the student,
- Information gathered from an intake process, and information from history of the disability.

The determination of reasonable accommodations considers the following:

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

Won't providing accommodations on examinations give an unfair advantage to a student with a disability?

"Accommodations don't make things easier, just possible; in the same way eyeglasses do not improve the strength of the eyes, they just make it possible for the individual to see better. Accommodations are interventions that allow the learner to indicate what they know. Without the accommodations, the learner may not be able to overcome certain barriers." (Samuels, M. 1992 - Asking the Right Questions. The Learning Center, Calgary)

Accommodations are designed to lessen the effects of the disability and are required to provide fair and accurate testing to measure knowledge or expertise in the subject. Careful consideration must be given to requests for accommodations when the test is measuring a skill, particularly if that skill is an essential function or requirement of passing the course, such as typing at a certain speed or turning a patient for an x-ray. In such cases, please contact a Student Disability Services staff member for guidance.

The purpose of academic accommodations is to adjust for the effect of the student's disability, not to dilute academic requirements. The evaluation and assigning of grades should have the same standards for all students, including students with disabilities. For many test takers, the most common accommodation is extended time. In specific circumstances, students may also require the use of readers and/or scribes, a modification of test format, the administration of examinations orally, or an alternative time for testing. For out-of-class assignments, the extension of deadlines may be justified, especially if the student is relying heavily on support services (readers for term papers, etc.).

What do I do when a student discloses a disability?

Ask for the Letter of Accommodation from the student; this letter describes the accommodations that faculty are legally mandated to provide. During an office hour or at

another convenient time, discuss the letter and the accommodations with the student. Students **MUST** present a letter from Student Disability Services to receive accommodations. If the student does not have a letter, he or she should be referred to the appropriate staff member at Student Disability Services to request services. Student Disability Services staff will determine the appropriate accommodations after reviewing documentation of the disability provided by the student.

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

Students have a responsibility to give instructors and Student Disability Services adequate time to arrange accommodations. All Student Disability Services staff encourages students to identify early in the semester. Instructors can help by extending an invitation in class and in the syllabus an invitation for students to identify themselves early in the semester: "Any student who may need an accommodation due to a disability, please make an appointment to see me during my office hours. A letter from Student Disability Services authorizing your accommodations will be needed."

Once a student has identified to the instructor and requests disability-related accommodations authorized by Student Disability Services, the University has a legal responsibility to make reasonable attempts to accommodate the need, even late in the semester. There is no responsibility to provide accommodations prior to identification; for example, allowing the student to re-take exams with extended time.

Can I review the student's documentation of the disability?

Student Disability Services is the office designated to receive and interpret documentation of the disability. Student Disability Services staff certifies eligibility for services and determines accommodations. Disability information is confidential and students are not required to disclose this information to instructors.

What if I suspect that a student has a disability?

Talk with the student about your concerns regarding his or her performance. If the concern seems disability-related, ask if he or she has ever received assistance for a disability. If it seems appropriate, refer the student to Student Disability Services to apply for services. Whether to self-identify to Student Disability Services is the decision of the student; however, to receive accommodations, disclosure to Student Disability Services with proper documentation is required.

If the student has never been evaluated for a learning disability and/or Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Student Disability Services will provide a list of local resources where the student may be screened or tested. Some of the resources offer a sliding fee schedule.

What if a student with a disability is failing?

Treat the student as you would any student who is not performing well in your class. Invite the student to your office hour to discuss reasons for the failing performance and what resources the student may use to improve. Encourage the student to see the Student Disability Services staff to discuss some additional strategies to improve his or her grades.

Contact the Student Disability Services staff member who initialed the Instructor's Letter to discuss any additional concerns.

What if a student with a disability is often absent?

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

What is a note taker?

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

How can I assist a student with getting notes?

The Letter of Accommodation will document the need for note takers. Students who cannot take notes or have difficulty taking notes adequately due to the effects of their disability can be accommodated in a number of ways including: allowing them to tape record lectures, assisting them in obtaining an in-class volunteer note taker, and providing them with an outline of lecture materials and copies of overhead transparencies.

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

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

Who is responsible for requesting an interpreter?

To receive interpreter services the student must contact the Interpreter Coordinator at least two weeks before the semester begins, place a request for interpreting services for the upcoming semester, and provide a current schedule. This process must be followed so that we can efficiently provide services and accommodations on the first day of class. If a student makes any changes to his/her course schedule, he/she must notify the Interpreter Coordinator immediately. The Interpreter Coordinator will have one week from the date of written notification to provide services for any changes to class schedules already in place.

For outside class requirements, such as field trips or other assigned activities, as well as meeting with professors during office hours, students should request an interpreter from Student Disability Services. The interpreter request form is for students who are currently registered with Student Disability Services (SDS) and is intended for academic purposes on the main Texas Tech University campus only.

Interpreter requests for events lasting less than 3 hours require at least 72 hours advance notice. Requests submitted with less than 72 hours notice cannot be guaranteed. Interpreter requests for events lasting longer than 3 hours (e.g. conferences, training, etc.) require at least 3 weeks advance notice in order for our office to determine the appropriate accommodations. Events outside of Lubbock will be considered on a case-by-case basis contingent on availability of interpreter services in the area. Remember the no-call /no-show policy applies to Interpreter Request assignments as well.

**Note:* In the event that interpreters are not available, other appropriate services will be considered (e.g. RCART, UbiDuo, FM System, or other supportive technology).

Do I need to alter my teaching style with an interpreter?

Interpreters are professionals who facilitate communication between hearing individuals and people who are deaf or hard of hearing. The role of the interpreter is similar to that of a foreign language translator: to bridge the communication gap between two parties.

Some adaptations in presentation style may be helpful when using a sign language interpreter. The interpreter will let you know if you need to slow down your rate of speaking or if they need you to repeat any information. A desk copy of the book is especially helpful for the interpreter when the class is using examples or doing exercises from the text. Please realize that if students are looking at the interpreter, they cannot be reading a book, writing, or taking notes; a pause for the students to finish their task may be required before continuing the lecture.

What can I expect if there is an interpreter in my classroom?

Interpreters are bound by the code of ethics developed by the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, which specifies that interpreters are to serve as communication intermediaries who are not otherwise involved.

When an interpreter is present, 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."

Speak normally, noting that there may be a lag time between the spoken message and the interpretation.

When referring to objects or written information, allow time for the translation to take place. Replace terms such as "here" and "there" with more specific terms, such as "on the second line" and "in the left corner."

In a conference room or class environment, the deaf student and interpreter will work out seating arrangements, with the interpreter usually located near the speaker.

Inform the interpreter in advance if there is an audiovisual element in a presentation, so arrangements can be made for lighting and positioning.

In sessions that extend longer than one hour, the interpreter may require a short break to maintain proficiency in interpreting.

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

Students should let you know at the beginning of the semester if they will need assistance during an emergency.

Students who are blind or have low vision may need a "buddy" to assist them exit the building.

Some students with head injuries or psychiatric disabilities may become confused or disoriented during an emergency and may also need a "buddy."

Students who use wheelchairs should NOT use the elevator but should wait for Security to safely assist them to exit the building. Security has the schedules of students who will need emergency evacuation. To prevent injuries, instructors or other untrained personnel should NOT attempt to evacuate a student who uses a wheelchair. Please wait for trained emergency personnel.

What if a student has a seizure in my classroom?

Student Disability Services encourages students with seizure disorders to inform their instructors about what should be done if a seizure occurs during class time. Some students request that Security be called immediately; others request action as listed below. Seizures happen when there is a sudden electrical discharge in the brain. Each individual has a unique reaction. A seizure can result in a relatively slight reaction, such as a short lapse in attention, or a more severe reaction known as a grand mal, which involves convulsions. Seizure disorders are generally controlled by medication, so the possibility of a seizure in the classroom is rare. If one does occur, the following actions are suggested:

- Keep calm. Ease the student to the floor and open the collar of the shirt. You cannot stop a seizure. Let it run its course and do not try to revive the student.
- Remove hard, sharp, or hot objects that may injure the student, but do not interfere with his or her movements.
- Do not force anything between the student's teeth. Turn the student's head to one side for release of saliva.
- Place something soft under the head. Make sure that breathing is unobstructed, but do not be concerned if breathing is irregular.
- When the student regains consciousness, let him or her rest as long as desired.
- To help orient the student to time and space, suggest where he or she is and what happened. Speak reassuringly to the student, especially as the seizure ends.
- The student may be agitated or confused for several minutes afterward. Don't leave the student alone until he or she is clearheaded. Ask whether you can call a friend or relative to help the student get home.
- If the seizure lasts beyond a few minutes, or if the student seems to pass from one seizure to another without regaining consciousness, contact the campus Safety and

Security office. This rarely happens, but when it does, it should be treated immediately.

Website Resources

- **DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology)**
The international DO-IT Center promotes the success of individuals with disabilities in postsecondary education and careers, using technology as an empowering tool.
<http://www.washington.edu/doi/>
- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**
Read more about this federal law, its amendments, and how it applies to secondary education accommodations and access.
<http://www.ada.gov/>

CONTACT INFORMATION

Student Disability Services
Box 45007, 335 West Hall
Lubbock, TX 79409-5007

Website: www.depts.ttu.edu/sds/
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