

St. Petersburg College Accessibility Services Resource Guide For Faculty and Staff



Prepared by:

SPC Accessibility Services Department

www.spcollege.edu/accessibility

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This resource guide is available in alternate formats upon request.

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Accessibility Services Contacts

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Introduction

Access to education is not limited to simple admission to a college. Many students are overcoming great physical, learning, emotional, and mental challenges to try college. It is an ongoing, twofold process that involves understanding how to accommodate their needs and comply with the law. In fact, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008, ensure that all qualified persons, regardless of the presence of any disability, have equal access to education. Effective tools, such as course substitutions, auxiliary aides, and classroom modifications, provide access to education for the student with a disability. Failure to make such reasonable accommodations can place the college in violation of federal and state statutes, resulting in substantial penalties. The new bottom line is not providing equitable access to higher education to all students is not acceptable.

The design of this Resource Guide, for Faculty and Staff is to raise awareness among all St. Petersburg College (SPC) faculty and staff, with intention of providing meaningful educational opportunities for all students with disabilities. Compliance and its relationship to accessibility and inclusion is fundamental throughout this document, as well as, the variables of language and Universal Design (UD). Compliance issues can often be tough to maneuver through; thus, this guide further offers terminology, descriptions of varying disabilities, suggested teaching methodologies, testing procedures, and answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), and more. There is important work to do both with and on behalf of our students with disabilities. Creating an accessible learning environment, however, benefits all students and increases retention and completion rates, whether they have a disability diagnosis or not. The goal is to level the playing field in order to promote academic success across the board.

Mission Statement

The mission of Accessibility Services is to promote equal educational access for students with disabilities. The mission includes integration of the College Experience

and Universal Design (UD) principles in the strategies and processes to engage and encourage student accountability, self-sufficiency, and autonomy that strengthens success in college and the workforce.

Confidentiality

As directed by state and federal laws and in strict compliance with the Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), all disability information is confidential and maintained by the Accessibility Services Office. FERPA is a federal law that protects the privacy of students' educational records. Students have specific, protected rights regarding the release of such records.

FERPA guidelines only provide for disclosure of disability information to faculty and staff on a need-to-know basis. Guidelines are available online at <https://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpc/ferpa/ps-officials.html>

Disclosure of a student's disability is the personal preference of the student. A student may elect to share information regarding his/her disability. If so, faculty and staff must remember to maintain full confidentiality pertaining to the student's disability. All disability related information discussed with the student is confidential and should take place in a private setting. Additionally, this information should not be discussed with other college faculty and/or staff, with the exception of educational purposes and then only on a need-to-know basis. Information of a fellow student having a disability is not for the instructor to share with the class. In the situation of behavioral concerns, faculty and staff need only to focus on the specific behavior, not the disability. Lastly, faculty and staff should refrain from diagnosing the individual.

Accessibility

Accessibility is the "ability to access" and benefit from some system or entity. The concept focuses on enabling access for people with disabilities, or special needs, or enabling access with assistive technology; however, research and development in

accessibility brings benefits to everyone.

Accessibility is not to be confused with usability. Usability is the extent to which specified persons can use a product (device, service, or environment) to achieve specified goals with effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction.

Strongly related to Accessibility is Universal Design (UD). UD is the process of creating products that are usable, by people with the widest possible range of abilities, operating within the widest possible range of situations. This is about making things accessible to all people. UD policy guidance information is available on the Universal Design for Learning in Higher Education website at http://udloncampus.cast.org/page/policy_legal#.WZMQdFWGOM.

Accessibility Checklist for Course Development

Handouts

1. Are all handouts available in the original electronic format (not scanned to a PDF)?
 - Copy and paste handouts into a Learning Management System (LMS) page.
 - Post the handouts within the LMS for ease of access.
 - HTML pages are the best delivery to students.
 - No special software is required;
 - Responsive to different screen sizes (like phones); and
 - Easy to make changes by instructors but not modified by students.
 - Use original files if HTML is not preferred.
 - PDF documents should be full-text and have the ability to copy and paste the text (not scanned images only).
 - Use Microsoft Office's Accessibility Checker and address any issues it may find.

2. Use black text on a white background using a consistent sans-serif font such as Arial, Helvetica, Open Sans, Tahoma, or Verdana with a minimum 12-point font size.
 - Proper text contrast and font selection provide easy reading when printed in grayscale (save students money on printing).
3. Use **Bold** or *italic* text to provide emphasis to convey a message.
 - Use the built-in Microsoft Word Styles or formatting buttons in the rich text editor.
 - Headings, Strong, and Emphasis.
 - Do not underline words. When underlining a word or words, a screen reader interprets the word or words as a link;
 - Do not use all capital letters. Screen readers read words typed in all capital letters as individual letters;
 - Use of color is not meaningful without sight or being able to discern;
 - Do not use rapid blinking or moving text; and
 - Ensure all transitions are slow.
4. Use headings and subheadings within your documents. Begin with "Header 1" and then logically increase heading number the more specific the content.
 - Headers within Microsoft Word allow easier document navigation.
 - The ability to collapse sections;
 - Can create an automatic table of contents; and
 - Provides an outline of the document to help your students study.
 - Most Learning Management Systems reserve Heading 1 for the title of the page, if using Heading 1 for that purpose then use Heading 2 for the major sub-points or topics of the page.
5. Arrange content within ordered (numerical) or unordered (bullet) lists.
 - Use ordered lists to describe a sequential or stepped process.
 - Use unordered lists to provide notes, emphasis, and focus attention on a group of items or concepts.
6. Use descriptive link text to describe linked content rather than using generic language such as "click here", "read more", or "more info".

- For example, "...visiting the [SPC Library homepage](#) students have access to electronic resources and the ability to find physical..."
- 7. When inserting tables, specify the header row, column, or both. Caption any header row or columns and provide alternative text (alt text).
 - Use tables to convey data;
 - Avoid using tables to provide page formatting; and
 - Do not convert tables of data into images.
- 8. Images should have alt text that describes what is within it, avoid using "image of" or "graphic of" at the beginning or end.
 - Examples of good alt text for an [image of the Flag of Scotland](#) is:
 - "The Flag of Scotland" or
 - "The Flag of Scotland has a white diagonal cross over a blue background."
- 9. Graphs and charts should have alt text of the graph title and the source data table. View the final product in grayscale.
 - The ["Charts and Accessibility" article](#) from Pennsylvania State provides examples of how to design charts with accessibility in mind.
- 10. Insert Math and Chemistry equations using the built-in tools within the LMS or authoring program (Word) to ensure the best optimization with assistive technology.
 - The article, ["Equations: MathML, Images, and LaTeX" article](#) from Pennsylvania State provides background information on how to author equations accessibly.
 - Do not use subject specific abbreviations or acronyms. For example, a screen reader will announce the chemical element symbol He as he and the math term tan (tangent) as tan.

Helpful Tips When Making Your own course Materials:

Microsoft Word

Microsoft Word files (.doc or .docx) have become the universal standard for word processing formats. As long as you keep some basic principles in mind, making a

Word document mostly accessible is easy.

- Before beginning, ask yourself if the delivery of the document needs to be a Word document or could it be as a HTML file, which is more flexible and universal.
- When designing Word documents, use the built-in styles like Heading Level 1, Heading Level 2, etc. to provide an organized structure to your document. This will help provide a consistent layout and make the document easier to for users of certain assistive technologies to navigate. Different styles in Word are customizable to meet your own needs.
- Avoid using text boxes as they make it difficult for screen readers to read the contents of the text box in the proper context of the page.
- Be sure to include textual descriptions (alternative text) of images.
- When creating lists, use the built-in bulleted or numbered list feature instead of manually inserting asterisks, numbers, or tabs.

Office 365 includes a built-in tool to check for common accessibility issues. Click the following link to learn more, [Accessibility Checker](#). In some cases, the warnings it gives will be subjective, so use your judgement.

Microsoft PowerPoint

Microsoft PowerPoint is a popular way to make presentation for traditional face-to-face slide shows and many times the basis for other applications to create recorded narrated online presentations. When designing PowerPoint presentations here are some issues to keep in mind.

- Use the built-in slide layouts instead of drawing custom text boxes on the slide. This will make a consistent design for all of the slides and make it easier for users of assistive technologies to navigate through the presentation.
- Be sure to add alternate text to the images.
- Older versions of the Macintosh version of Microsoft PowerPoint do not have as many accessibility features as newer versions or the Windows version, like the ability to add alternative text to images. Only the 2011

version of PowerPoint on Mac supports this functionality.

- To create a Web based version of the presentation, do not use the “Save as Web Page” feature.
- One of the easiest ways to share an accessible PowerPoint presentation with others is to provide the user with the original PowerPoint file. This works if the presentation uses the standard slide layouts.
- PowerPoint 2010 and 2012 (Windows only), you can use the Accessibility Checker to check for common accessibility issues.

Google Docs

In general, a Google Docs file is not accessible to students with certain disabilities, regardless if in editing mode, viewing mode or, to a degree, the Publish to the Web option selected from the File menu. The best options for sharing a Google Docs file is one of the following:

- Copy and paste the document into another application that can create online documents; e.g., an HTML editor such as Dreamweaver.
- Download it to a Microsoft Word document.

With either option, you may need to add accessibility information (e.g., alternative text for images, row and column headers in tables) to the resulting document using the accessibility checker in Microsoft Word.

Using the *Publish to the Web* option, a Google Docs file may be accessible when containing the following basic elements:

- Plain text with headings denoting each section. Google Documents lets you denote major document sections with headings that carry over to most other applications; e.g., Microsoft Word.
- Links
- Ordered or unordered lists having only one nesting level (no indented sub-lists)
- Only English text and your audience’s default assistive technology language is English.

A Google Docs file containing images, data tables, or lists with multiple levels is not accessible. Adding alternative text for images, headers to rows and columns in a data table, and publish correctly coded nested lists to the Web is not possible in Google Docs files.

Adobe Acrobat: (PDF) Overview

The Portable Document Format (PDF) is a popular format for sharing content on the Web, especially when the precise formatting of the document is essential. PDF files are also common for creating forms and providing a downloadable version of content. PDF files introduce a number of accessibility issues that need special attention. Here are a couple of things to keep in mind when creating PDF documents.

- Before beginning, ask yourself if the delivery of the document needs to be a PDF or could it be as a HTML file, which is more flexible and universal.
- Make sure the software you are using to create the PDF document is capable of creating an accessible PDF. The most common workflow is to use Microsoft Word to create PDFs. In this case, it is important to create your Word document correctly to make the process of creating an accessible PDF as simple as possible.
- Creating an accessible PDF is significantly easier when correctly using the authoring software. In Microsoft Word, this means using things like the built-in styles for providing an organized structure to your document. Only the Windows version of Word supports creating accessible PDFs. PDFs created in the OS X version of Word will not be accessible.
- It is essential that you make a “tagged” PDF document to make it accessible. Within products like Microsoft Word, there is often an option for creating the PDF as a tagged document. Adobe Acrobat allows for the addition of “tags” after converting to a PDF, however, it is easier to do it in the original authoring software.
- If your document uses tables, you will need to insert the appropriate tags, manually, into the PDF document using Adobe Acrobat.

Video and Audio Content

1. While using videos in courses, at a minimum, have “closed captioning” turned on when screened in the classroom.
 - Captions not only benefit the hearing impaired; they also help non-native English speakers, deciphering thick accents or whispers in a film, and help provide context.
 - Check the captions within videos posted on YouTube, Vimeo, and other video hosting websites to ensure accuracy. Consider copying the closed captions into a Microsoft Word document to edit them for accuracy and provide as a Transcript for the video.
2. For videos without speech, high visual content, or text not spoken, audio descriptions are necessary.
 - These type of auditory explanations are to ensure blind individuals can understand the video.
3. Provide a transcript when using Audio-only content.
 - It is best when self-producing video and audio content to write a script first (even include instructions to yourself for what to click or point at if it is a screencast), then record. The script can then be the text transcript of your content.

Multimedia

Please consider multimedia options when planning your activities and assignments. Students with disabilities must have equal access to course material. When using technology or alternative delivery of course materials, please ensure that all aspects of the content are accessible to all students. Examples of multimedia materials include videos, Power Point, YouTube, and on-line materials.

Important note!

When requesting materials from publisher representatives, it is extremely important you request “accessible” materials. All materials, including “emerging technologies”, DVDs, and videos must be accessible to all students. Please contact the Accessibility Technologist, Mary Deschamps, by phone at (727) 341-3771, or by email at

Deschamps.mary@spcollege.edu, if you have any questions.

Major database vendors often have accessibility support pages.

- EBSCO: http://support.ebsco.com/knowledge_base/detail.php?id=5755
- Gale: <http://support.gale.com/technical/618>

[SPC Libraries](#) are also a great resource for accessibility information. The SPC Libraries have Films on Demand and Academic Video Online databases that offer streamed content with captioning and/or transcripts. In addition, many of the databases provided to us from the state have accessibility features including options to listen to and download an article as an mp3.

Additional Resources

- [Accessibility Cheatsheets for PC and Mac](#) (Microsoft Office, Adobe, and YouTube) by The National Center on Disability and Access to Education (NCDAAE).
- [Accessibility Checker Canvas](#) by Canvas
- [Accessibility Yuja](#) by Yuja
- [Creating Accessible PDF Documents from Microsoft Office](#) by the University of Central Florida's (UCF) Center for Distributed Learning.
- [Microsoft Excel Accessibility Support Article](#) by Microsoft.
- [Microsoft PowerPoint Accessibility Support Article](#) by Microsoft.
- [Microsoft Word Accessibility Support Article](#) by Microsoft.
- [WebAIM's WCAG 2 Checklist](#) by Center for Persons with Disabilities, Utah State University (WebAIM).
- California Community Colleges Accessibility Center
<http://cccaccessibility.org/>
- University of Washington Accessibility
<http://www.washington.edu/accessibility/web/>
- ICT for Information Accessibility in Learning
<http://www.ict4ial.eu/>

Considerations when using Online Learning Platforms:

- *Canvas*
The online learning platform used by SPC is accessible in its native state, alt-tag containers and navigation is available, including the native icons, added elements to Canvas (My Courses) may not be accessible.
- *Soft-Chalk*
Be mindful of how content is loaded – sometimes frames can block part of the content and/or access to navigation ‘buttons’.
- *Microsoft browser*
May not work with some screen readers (i.e. JAWS)
- *Mozilla Firefox browser*
May not work with all screen readers.
- *Camtasia videos*
Can be captioned prior to final production – also has voice recognition transcription available.
- *Flash*
Not accessible to screen readers and cannot be captioned after the fact.
- *Interactive Flash based*
Not accessible to screen readers (match, drag n drop).
- *Jing*
Media captioning is not available.
- *Power Point - narrated*
Media captioning is not available.
- *Portable Document Format (PDF)*
If the entire document is an image (i.e. scanned document), it may not be accessible to screen readers.
- *Publishers’ Online Learning Sites*
Some items may not be accessible, request a Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) prior to purchasing and have it reviewed. If the application is already in place, contact an Accessibility Services team member for review.

- *Images*

Must include alternative text for students who rely on a screen reader (describe what it is & why it is there). It does not need to be a long description; however, if a long description is necessary, use the built-in link maker to refer the user to a separate document within.

- *Quizzes and other fill-in activities*

You must use alternative text answer boxes for screen readers.

- *Math & Science*

Screen readers operate left to right, one line at a time; exponents, subscripts, fractions, equations, chemical symbols, etc., may not read correctly. Math Type and MathML (mathematical markup language) and HTML are helpful applications.

- *Links*

The link should be descriptive, i.e. Text Transcript or EPA Website, not just the URL address or the word link.

- *Videos*

Hearing impaired students may require captions or transcripts. Visually impaired students may need a digitally readable transcript with any necessary descriptors. Interactive transcripts work for both hearing and visually impaired students.

- *Online Live Sessions*

Applications such as WebEx, Skype, and others, can be accessible to students who are deaf IF all participants employ the chat box in addition to audio. This can prove problematic if the leader/instructor is trying to demonstrate something onscreen while explaining it, which precludes typing. Another solution is to have an interpreter with the student or an online live transcription service.

While technology for these applications is evolving, they are all not yet 100% accessible. If you are using interactive media, please consider accessible options or arrange for an alternative communication mode as well. Described and Captioned Media Program (DCMP) has an online Description Tip Sheet with media captioning tips. Click on the DCMP link <https://dcmp.org/learn/227>.

SPC offers training with on-demand, self-paced online courses:

- Panopto
Panopto is a video storage and an automatic closed captioning tool, available free for faculty and built into Canvas.
- ADA 101 Training for all SPC employees, available in Canvas.

Textbooks, Course-Packs, and Syllabi

When possible, please make your textbook selections, compiled course packs, and syllabi available early to facilitate the provision of alternate format materials. Some students who are blind, have low vision, or have learning disabilities affecting their reading rates and comprehension, may require printed materials converted to alternate formats. The conversion process is time consuming. Your syllabus is required to determine each text used and the order assignments are due. If you are collating various journal articles and portions of books into course packs for distribution, please use original copies or a copy that is as clean as possible to optimize the quality of the converted materials.

Syllabus Statement

It is important faculty include in each syllabus the following statement informing students they must request accommodations through the proper channels in a timely manner:

“The designing of this course is to be welcoming to, accessible to, and usable by everyone, including students who are English-language learners, have a variety of learning styles, have disabilities, or are new to online learning. Be sure to let me know immediately if you encounter a required element or resource in the course that is not accessible to you. Also, let me know of changes I can make to the course so that it is more welcoming to, accessible to,

or usable by students who take this course in the future.

St. Petersburg College recognizes the importance of equal access to learning opportunities for all students. Accessibility Services (AS) is the campus office that works with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations. Students registered with AS, who are requesting accommodations, are encouraged to contact their instructor by the first week of the semester. For students who have, or think they may have, a disability (e.g. learning disability, ADD/ADHD, psychiatric, medical/orthopedic, vision, and/or hearing), please contact the Accessibility Coordinator (AC) that serves your campus for a confidential discussion. To locate the AC for your specific campus, please go to the college-wide website at <http://go.spcollege.edu/Contact-AccessibilityServices/>."

When reviewing the syllabus with the class, we suggest the faculty member read the accessibility statement aloud. This approach demonstrates to students that the professor is sensitive to and concerned about meeting the needs of all students. Furthermore, it affords students registered with AS the opportunity to make their accommodation needs known to the professor early in the semester.

Suspected Disability

If there is a suspicion of a disability or if a student approaches you regarding a non-documented disability, refer students to the Accessibility Services office. An Accessibility Coordinator can help determine if there is an ADA qualifying disability, and even refer students to community resources to assist them in getting the documentation necessary to access services. Instructors should not take it upon themselves to review documentation and/or decide which accommodations are appropriate for students.

For any student accommodation related questions, please contact the Accessibility Services Coordinator on your campus. Their contact information is available on the

college-wide website at <http://go.spcollege.edu/Contact-AccessibilityServices/>.

The Department of Justice created an Accessible Technology section of its Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Web site, expanding how the ADA applies to certain technologies, such as Web sites, electronic book readers, online courses, and point-of-sale devices. Covered entities have longstanding obligations to make their programs, goods, services, and activities accessible, including online or via other technology. The section compiles the Department's technical assistance and guidance about accessible technology, as well as information about the Department's accessible technology enforcement efforts, regulation development, and other federal accessible technology resources and initiatives in one place. To find out more visit the ADA website at ADA.gov or call the Department's toll-free ADA Information Line at 1-800-514-0301 or 1-800-514-0383 (TTY).

Postsecondary Institutions and Students with Disabilities

All postsecondary institutions have legal obligations towards students with disabilities. The federal laws applicable to postsecondary students with disabilities are:

- The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)
- The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA)

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504

The design of Section 504 is to protect the rights of qualified students with disabilities who attend schools receiving Federal financial assistance. As defined in Section 504, a qualifying person with a disability is, "(1) a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; or (2) a person who has a record of such an impairment; or, (3) a

person regarded as having such an impairment.”

The civil rights statute requires institutions to afford students with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from all postsecondary education programs and activities to the same extent as students without disabilities.

Public Law 93-112, Section 504 states, “No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States, as defined in section 7(6), shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)

Title II of The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) prohibits discrimination and requires that State and local governments make all programs, services, and activities accessible to all individuals with disabilities.

The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA)

The Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA) made clarifying and broadening changes to the term “disability”, which increased the number and types of persons protected under the law. The ADAAA emphasizes the definition of disability is in favor of broad coverage of individuals to the maximum extent permitted by the terms of ADA without the requirement of extensive analysis. The requirements regarding the provision of reasonable accommodations, auxiliary aids and services in postsecondary institutions described in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, are included in the general provisions for non-discrimination under Title II of the regulation.

Responsibilities

Accessibility Services, the student, faculty, and staff must all share in the responsibilities associated with the successful promotion of equal educational access for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities have the responsibility to self-identify and request reasonable accommodations through Accessibility Services, not

through faculty or staff.

Accessibility Services

- Communicate policies and procedures to students, faculty, and staff to ensure the delivery of support services while upholding institutional compliance with legislative mandates regarding persons with disabilities.
- Determine the appropriateness of disability documentation and assist the student in procuring such documentation, if needed.
- Determine eligibility for accommodations on a case-by-case basis by evaluating students based on their abilities and not their disabilities.
- Provide or arrange reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services for students with disabilities in courses, programs, activities, and facilities.
- Maintain confidential records, including documentation and communications.
- Provide assistance for faculty and staff, which provide access to facilities, programs, activities, and services for persons with disabilities, as needed.

Student

- Adhere to SPC policies and procedures.
- Self-identify as a qualified student with a disability.
- Provide Accessibility Services with appropriate documentation of his or her disability.
- Communicate privately with faculty, prior to or during the first week of class, to ensure mutual understanding of accommodations and the provision of such accommodations.
- Request accommodations each semester through the Accessible Information Management (AIM) system, prior to the start of classes each semester. The coordination of accommodations may take a week or more and are not retroactive.
- Initiate requests for alternate format textbooks and publisher materials. The process could take up to six to eight weeks to prepare. Alternate formats not

guaranteed if the student does not request the materials prior to the start of class; all alternate format requests require a receipt as proof of purchase.

- Contact Accessibility Services if questions or difficulties related to the provision of accommodations occur that cannot be resolved between the student and faculty/staff.
- Engage in a fair, objective, and respectful dialogue concerning accommodation options and not transfer or abdicate the student role to parents, agents, or advocates.
- Understand on-line course procedures by contacting the on-line Proctored Testing Coordinator at www.spcollege.edu/ecampus at least 2 weeks before exams begin and coordinate specific requests with the instructor. The student will present a copy of the accommodation documentation to the testing proctor.

Faculty and Staff

- Integrate accessibility into the planning process for departmental facilities, programs, activities, and services.
- Provide access for persons with disabilities to programs, services, activities, and facilities of respective department.
- Seek guidance from Accessibility Services to identify resources available to provide access.
- Utilize, and be responsive to the use of, assistive equipment/technology or modifications that will facilitate effective communication for persons with disabilities.
- Include an accessibility statement in each course syllabus.
- Privately discuss the provisions of accommodations with the student.
- Contact Accessibility Services for clarification when questions arise regarding accommodations.

Important Notes: Disability-Related Considerations in the Classroom

- When you receive an accommodation letter from Accessibility Services, please review the information privately and carefully with the student.
- If “note taking” is an approved accommodation, it is important to respect the confidentiality of the student when asking for a volunteer note taker in your class. Accessibility Services will provide note taking NCR paper as a convenience for all parties. Please give the note taking volunteer packet to the student who agrees to take notes, as there are benefits associated with being a note taker such as priority registration.
- Arrange testing accommodations in coordination with the student, faculty and Accessibility Services through the Testing Center on your campus. Accommodations may include such as reading/scribing, extra time, use of computer, and/or reduced distraction or a private room. Deliver all tests to the Testing Center prior to the testing date (with a testing instruction sheet). Students with private testing needs may make an appointment with the Testing Center prior taking the test. Contact the Testing Center on your campus for specific guidelines.
- Accessibility Services may reserve modified furniture, such as an adjustable desk or a lumbar chair, in your classroom for a student with a disability. Please make sure that the student(s) who require adaptive furniture have it available. Sometimes other students, who do not need this furniture, choose to sit in the space and could potentially present a conflict.
- There may be assistive technology placed in your classroom for particular students. If so, the college-wide AT Specialist will train the student on how to use the equipment.
- There may be a Sign Language Interpreter or C-Print Captionist required for a deaf student in your class. You will receive notice prior to their arrival. Often, there is a need for an extra chair for the services.
- Make note of any student who needs assistance in the case of an emergency

evacuation from your classrooms. Establish a plan to ensure the student will be able to evacuate safely. For all buildings with second and third floors, assist injured or disabled persons to the designated waiting areas. For more information, refer to the SPC Emergency Response Guide or contact SPC Security or the Accessibility Services Office on your campus.

- Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) may be necessary to address the personal needs of a student with a disability so he/she can participate in college activities, services, and programs. The college does not assume coordination of, financial responsibility for, or legal liability for the PCA chosen by the student.

Arrangements to provide and pay for his/her own impartial personal care attendant prior to attending classes is the responsibility of the student. PCAs are obligated to follow the same code of conduct as the campus community, and they should not interfere with the learning environment, nor should the student abdicate their roles and responsibilities as a college student to the PCA or any other entity. The PCA should not participate in class discussions, and should not ask or answer questions unless specifically directed to do so by the student who employs the PCA.

We understood these issues might sometimes naturally evoke a paradigm shift in your role as educators. Your support is appreciated and vital to provide a safe quality educational environment for our students. Do not hesitate to contact the Accessibility Coordinator on your campus or any of our Accessibility Services staff with questions or concerns at any time.

Additional resources

- All students have the right to receive Effective Communication:
<https://www.ada.gov/effective-comm.htm>
- For general Department of Education Guidance:
<https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-releases-guidance-civil-rights-students-disabilities>
- Planning for Accessible Meetings and Events:

<https://adata.org/publication/temporary-events-guide> <http://www.adahospitality.org/accessible-meetings-events-conferences-guide/book>

College Disability Policy

Definition of Disability

The ADA defines a person with a disability as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity (such as problems with walking, writing, reading, or anxiety). Many of the barriers faced are due to the inaccessible environments or misunderstandings and negative beliefs that exist about people with disabilities and their abilities. You may have heard the saying that no two snowflakes are alike. The same adage holds true about a person with a disability. People with disabilities have many different characteristics. People with the same disability may need different accommodations (or help). Many disabilities fall in the category of “hidden disabilities”. An example of this would be a student with learning disabilities. Just because a disability may not be apparent or a student has not needed accommodations to function in every-day life does not mean that he or she may not need accommodations in the academic environment.

General Disability Classification

- A. Physical Disability: people with this type of disability may have difficulties with moving or mobility. They may use assisted devices such as wheelchairs or walkers. Example: Muscular Dystrophy.
- B. Sensory Disability: people with this type of disability may have difficulty hearing or seeing, or both. Individuals with visual impairments may use Braille, canes, or large print to assist them. People who are hard of hearing or deaf may use hearing aids or cochlear implants and/or use sign language. Example: Deaf or Blind.
- C. Cognitive Disability: people with this type of disability may have difficulty learning,

communicating, and remembering information. They may also have trouble with problem- solving, paying attention, or understanding reading, math, or visual information. They may use daily planners, more time on tests, or quiet areas to study. Example: Autism, Down Syndrome, or ADD

- D. Psychiatric and Emotional Disability: people with these types of disabilities may have difficulty with emotions, feelings, and behaviors. Often, the diagnosis for these individuals are Depressive Disorder, Anxiety Disorder, Psychotic Disorder, and/or Mood Disorder. People with this type of disability may use medications, coping skills, or counseling. Example: Manic Depression and/or Anxiety Disorder.
- E. Health-Related Disability: people with this type of disability might have a physical condition that affects their overall health. They may have limited strength, vitality, or alertness due to chronic or acute health problems such as a heart condition, rheumatic fever, asthma, hemophilia, or leukemia.

Qualified Evaluator

St. Petersburg College does not conduct psychological evaluations for students. A licensed psychologist, psychiatrist, or a credentialed education diagnostician must administer intelligence tests. Results/reports should include subtest scores and the evaluator's opinion on what reasonable classroom accommodations would be helpful.

Documentation

Current and prospective students requesting accommodations in their academic work at St. Petersburg College (SPC) must present appropriate documentation to the Accessibility Services of their home campus. The types and quality of documentation received determine the academic accommodations provided to each student on a case-by-case basis.

The Board of Trustees procedure for Services for Students with Disabilities, number P6Hx23-4.021, is available on the SPC website at

<https://webapps.spcollege.edu/botrules/#>.

Request for Services

After a student's documentation is accepted, the Accessibility Coordinator will keep this documentation on file. It is the student's responsibility to request services supported in the documentation (such as tutoring or note taking). A new request is necessary each term based on the specific courses to which the student is registered. Students request accommodations and services online through the AIM system available through the Accessibility Services Tile on their My Courses Student Portal. To fill requests for specific services, assistive technology, or alternative formats, we request a two-week minimum request.

Course Substitutions

Considerations for course substitutions adhere to District Board of Trustees Procedure P6Hx23-4.02 and comply with State Board of Education Rule 6A-10.041, to provide eligible students with disabilities reasonable substitutions for requirements for specific college programs or graduation requirements. Students seeking such substitutions should submit a written request form to the Academic Dean. The student must identify the specific course(s) and program for which a substitution or waiver is being sought, and must include a copy of qualifying disability information either on file with the College or as requested by the Accessibility Coordinator.

Auxiliary Aids

Auxiliary learning aids and services may differ from student to student depending on the individual circumstances, as determined by the documentation provided and the initial interview with the Accessibility Coordinator. Learning aids include note takers, readers or scribes, and assistive technology such as electronic media books, captioned videos, adaptive software, interpreters, and C-print Captionist.

Priority Registration

Students registered with Accessibility Services receive priority registration opportunities, as well as counseling and advisement by appointment in advance of registration timeframes.

Assistive Technology

Assistive Technology (AT) is any item, piece of equipment, software program, or product system used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. Assistive technology helps people who have difficulty speaking, typing, writing, remembering, pointing, seeing, hearing, learning, walking, and many other things. Different disabilities require different assistive technologies. A sampling of AT devices include, and are not limited to, assistive software, adaptive equipment, adaptive materials, alternate format, and more.

Assistive Software

Assistive software, also called adaptive software, refers to computer programs designed for use by individuals with disabilities. Several of our assistive software applications are site licensed, and available for installation on an unlimited number of computers on several of the campuses. Most of the SPC computer labs already have assistive software such as JAWS, Zoom Text, Read Out Loud, and Kurzweil 3000 installed.

- *JAWS* – typically used by students which are blind with little or no functional vision. JAWS offers the user many preferences; however, since most of its users are blind or with no functional vision, it does not incorporate magnification or color preferences. The college has a network JAWS licenses. A student may also bring his/her own laptop with JAWS installed.
- *Kurzweil 3000* – typically used by students with learning disabilities but is also frequently requested by students who have low vision. The design of Kurzweil 3000 is for individuals with Learning Disabilities. It incorporates language learning and study skills tools such as highlighting, bookmarks, dictionary, pronunciation, spell-check, etc. Many states accept Kurzweil 3000 as a testing accommodation as the software allows many of its features to be disabled and password protected for secure testing.
- *Screen Readers* – typically used by student with low vision or are blind. A screen reader is software that reads the content of a computer screen by converting the text to speech. Content displayed on a computer screen can be in the form of a

digital file such as Microsoft Word, PDF document, web page, or any other text-based content. Screen readers cannot read images and graphics, including scanned materials that have not gone through the Optical Character Recognition process. Most screen readers enable users to choose among a variety of options such as reading speed and voice. Screen readers designed for both blind and sighted users also offer magnification and color preferences. Screen reader users often use headsets in order to minimize ambient noise and disruption to those in the vicinity. The college uses several screen readers to assist students with disabilities.

- *Screen Magnification* – typically used by students who are legally blind but have some functional vision. The software enlarges the content displayed on the computer screen. Some screen magnifiers enlarge text, icons, and other graphics up to 20 times or more.
- *Closed-Circuit TV Magnifier (CCTV)* – typically used by students who experience limited functional vision. CCTV is a closed-circuit television monitor and camera system that allows a student to use built-in controls to change font size and alter the view for better access. We may place a CCTV in the classroom at the student's request. Portable CCTVs are also available for loan to students.
- *Dragon Naturally Speaking* – typically used by students with mobility impairments or writing disorders. Dragon is speech recognition software that enables students to dictate instead of typing or using handwriting. Some Dragon versions also enable students to perform all computer tasks through dictation, eliminating the use of the mouse and keyboard. Dragon requires students to train the software to recognize their speech patterns. Once trained, Dragon is very accurate and reliable.
- *C-Print* – typically used by students which are deaf or hard of hearing. C-Print is a computer aided speech-to-text system as a support service option for students with various disabilities used in mainstream educational environments. A C-Print Captionist, using the C-Print program, listens and types the lecture, including comments made by others, onto a laptop computer. The student is able to follow along with the class as the C-Print

program enables fast typing through an abbreviation system that reduces keystrokes and enables the text displayed on the student's laptop screen in real-time.

Adaptive Equipment

Adaptive equipment are mobility or sensory devices used to assist with completing activities of daily living. Mobility adaptive equipment may include crutches, a wheelchair, prosthetic devices, and orthotic devices. Sensory adaptive equipment may include braille, hearing aids or assistive listening devices, and augmentative and alternate communication devices.

- *Digital Recorder*, allows the student to record lectures, labs, or other appropriate learning situations. A student having a digital recorder as an approved accommodation signs a "Recording Agreement" acknowledging the following: "...information contained in the recorded lecture(s) is protected under federal copyright laws and may not be published or quoted without expressed written consent of the lecturer and without giving proper identity and credit to the lecturer." By signing the agreement, the student agrees to abide by the guidelines with regard to any lectures recorded while enrolled as a student at St. Petersburg College.

Alternate Format

Alternate format include braille, audio, electronic, or large print versions of standard print educational materials and textbooks. Examples of alternate format are digital files read by screen readers, screen magnification, large print, tactile materials, and downloadable audio books such as those from Learning Ally. If a student is eligible and requests alternate format materials, we will procure or produce the alternate format that is an effective accommodation for the particular student. Please note alternate formatting is a complex, time-consuming process and may take a turnaround time of up to 20-30 business days. If the student does not request his or her alternate format in a timely manner, there is a possibility, the student will not have their materials by the start of classes. In that case, we will do our best to provide the materials as quickly as possible and may have to provide installments according to dates listed on your

syllabus.

- Braille, typically used by students who are blind or have no functional vision. Braille is a system of raised bumps that represent letters and numbers that allow individuals to read text with their fingers. Braille is not a language in itself; it is a code of language.
- Tactile graphics, typically used by students who are blind or visually impaired. Tactile graphics, including tactile pictures, tactile diagrams, tactile graphs, and tactile maps are images that use raised surfaces so a person that is visually impaired can feel them. At the request of the student, our AT Specialist will generate tactile versions of graphics in the materials assigned.
- Large Print, typically used by students who are visually impaired or have learning difficulties. These students may have trouble reading fine print or deciphering crowded text at one time. Large print font generally ranges from 16 to 22. We will convert your materials to large print at the student request.

Adaptive technology stations, pre-loaded with an Assistive Technology (AT) folder, are available at several SPC Libraries. The AT folder may contain the following programs:

- Ease of Access Centers
- ECHO Desktop for SmartPen
- JAWS
- Kurzweil 3000
- Magnifier
- ZoomText and more...

Sign Language Interpreters

Sign language interpreters facilitate communication between people who are deaf or hard of hearing and people who can hear. The ADA defines a qualified sign language interpreter as “an interpreter who is able to interpret effectively, accurately and impartially both receptively (e.g. understanding what the person with the disability is saying) and expressively (e.g. having the skill needed to convey the information back to that person), using any necessary specialized vocabulary.” Sign language is a visually

interactive language that uses a combination of hand motions, body gestures and facial expressions. There are several different types of sign language, including American Sign Language (ASL) and Signed English.

C-Print

A computer aided speech-to-text system is a support service option for students with various disabilities used in mainstream educational environments. A C-Print Captionist, using the C-Print program, listens and types the lecture, including comments made by others, onto a laptop computer. The program simultaneously transmits the text to the student's laptop. The C-Print program enables fast typing through an abbreviation system that reduces keystrokes, thus allowing the student follow along with the class in real time.

Organizing Events

Event organizers are strongly encouraged to place an accessibility notice statement in all materials announcing the event. This includes electronic communications such as email as well as print materials (e.g., banners, posters, fliers, brochures, "clings," postcards, etc.). The text must include the name and contact information for the individual, school, department, or other unit or group to contact for accommodations. Suggested text is set forth below.

Suggested accessibility notice statement (long version)

"Please contact _____ (name of event organizer) at _____ (event organizer phone number and email) at least one week prior to the event to request disability accommodations. In all situations, a good faith effort (up until the time of the event) will be made to provide accommodations."

Any persons requiring an accommodation such as interpreting or C-Print captioning should contact the Lead Interpreter at 727-791-2523 at least two weeks before the event."

Suggested accessibility notice statement (short version)

“For disability accommodations please contact _____ (name of event organizer) at _____ (event organizer phone number and email).

Any persons requiring an accommodation such as interpreting or C-Print captioning should contact the Lead Interpreter at 727-791-2523 at least two weeks before the event.”

Event organizers are required to ensure that all materials for the event are available in an alternative format upon request. Event organizers are responsible for contacting the Accessibility Services office during the event planning stage to ensure that all materials are accessible.

Note: It is not necessary to include an accessibility notice in communications regarding routine or standing meetings for small groups of individuals when none of the individuals is in need of an accommodation.

Specific Learning Disability

You may not ask about an individual’s specific learning disability. The descriptions and interventions outlined below are informational resources; however, the best approach to reach all learners is Universal Design.

“A Specific Learning Disability is a disorder in one or more of the central nervous system processes involved in perceiving, understanding and/or using concepts through spoken/written language or non-verbal means. This disorder manifests itself with a deficit in one or more of the following areas: attention, reasoning, processing, memory, communication, reading, writing, spelling, calculation, coordination, social competence, and emotional maturity.” (Rehabilitation Services Administration, 1985). Students with specific learning disabilities may exhibit some of the following characteristics:

Inappropriate social behavior	Poor note taking skills
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Impulsivity	Poor study skills
Attention disorders	Passive learning styles
Poor listening skills	Difficulty following directions
Inconsistent performance formation	Poor handwriting
Poor recall	Confusion with mathematical symbols
Failure to memorize basic number facts	Test anxiety
Difficulty shifting from one task to another	Poor vocabulary
Disorientation in time	Poor strategies for monitoring errors
Disorganization	Difficulty aligning numbers

The impact of some of the characteristics listed above may include reading, auditory processing, visual processing, writing, speaking, retrieving information, performing mathematical calculations, time management, and organizational skills.

Despite varying learning problems, students with specific learning disabilities still have a number of talents and gifts and are of average to superior intelligence. With support, motivation, and appropriate intervention, they can successfully complete the work required for a college degree.

Classroom Tips

- Provide a detailed course syllabus, assignment list, and reading list early so they are available before the class begins. Materials may need conversion into an alternate format, or the student may need additional preparation time.
- Begin lectures and discussions with written and oral overview of topics to be covered.
- Use multiple formats such as visual aids, three-dimensional models, charts or graphics, group projects, visual stimuli, audio, and video content to accommodate different learning styles.
- Pause and ask questions during lectures and discussions to check for understanding.
- If possible, provide presentations or lecture materials on line. Make statements

that emphasize important points, main ideas, and key concepts when lecturing.

- Allow the student to turn in early drafts of papers or projects for feedback.
- Provide a study guide or practice exams that familiarize students with the format of the test.

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders (ADD/ADHD)

The characterization of ADD/ADHD is persistence of inattention and/or hyperactivity that is more frequent and severe than is typically observed in individuals at a comparable level of development (DSM-V). Symptoms fall into two categories, 1) inattention and 2) hyperactivity and impulsivity. These categories include behaviors as failure to pay close attention to details, difficulty organizing tasks and activities, excessive talking, fidgeting, or an inability to remain seated in appropriate situations. They also may have difficulty “screening out” unimportant stimuli in the environment. ADD/ADHD may have an impact on planning skills, organizational skills, impulse control, time management, and the ability to stay focused.

Tips for working with students with ADD/ADHD

- Encourage selective scheduling of classes. Schedule classes so the student has a break between them provides an opportunity for the student to review and organize notes and prepare materials for the next class. Medication is another factor for course time planning.
- Clearly outline course requirements and due dates, communicate classroom rules, and behavioral expectations such as punctuality, cell phone use, etc.
- Utilize different teaching methods. Include hands-on, interactive, and small group activities when possible.
- Emphasize organization and time management.
- Encourage the organization of study groups.
- Keep instructions as brief as possible. Provide instructions for exams and assignments in print as well as orally.
- Provide hard copies of lecture materials and class notes.

Deaf, Hard of Hearing

Hearing impairment refers to a reduction in sensitivity to sound, even when amplified. In the United States, more students have hearing impairment than any other chronic physical disability. In general, persons who are born with severe hearing losses present the greater challenge to education because English is not their native language. Students who are born deaf or become deaf before acquiring language tend to struggle more with organization and articulation of spoken languages and may use interpreters for access. Nevertheless, persons with hearing impairments, whether deaf or hard of hearing, can succeed at every level.

People who identify themselves as “Culturally Deaf” are members of a distinct linguistic and cultural minority. As with any cultural group, deaf persons have their own values, social norms, and traditions. Because of this, one should be sensitive and attentive to cross-cultural information in the mainstreamed classroom setting. These students probably use American Sign Language as their primary means of communication, but have some familiarity with English as a second language. Culturally deaf students will use American Sign Language interpreters in the classroom setting.

Late-deafened adults have English as their primary language and may not understand much sign language. In some cases, a C-Print Captionist will attend class with late-deafened students.

Students who are “Hard of Hearing” may use speech, lip-reading, and hearing aids to enhance oral communication. Assistive listening devices in the classroom may include public address systems or transmitter/receiver systems with a clip-on microphone for the instructor. Be aware that misunderstandings can occur when utilizing lip reading alone as only 30-40% of spoken English is visible on the lips.

Although some deaf students may choose to speak for themselves, there is a wide range in the intelligibility of their own voices. Vocal control, volume, and articulation often are affected as hearing loss may influence their ability to monitor their own voices. Hearing impairment may have an impact on proficiency with the English language, both

comprehension and usage, verbal communication/interaction, social integration, the ability to conceptualize, and understanding instructions.

Tips for working with students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing:

- Maintain eye contact with the student, not the interpreter. This develops an appropriate instructor/student rapport.
- Rephrase a thought, rather than repeat the same words, if the student does not understand.
- Address the student directly, via the interpreter. Remember that the interpretation process involves translating the message from one language to another, and may involve some time lag.
- Speak at your normal pace. The interpreter or student will ask you to make adjustments if necessary.
- Try to stay as close to the interpreter as possible, as the student will probably monitor your facial expressions and body language to support the interpreted message.
- Face the class when speaking.
- Make presentations or lecture materials available for student access.
- Provide a written supplement to oral assignments, including instructions.
- Recruit a note taker for note taking services, if needed.
- When students make comments or ask questions, repeat the question before answering, or phrase your answers in such a way that the questions are obvious.
- Consider the impact of lighting on the student's ability to see your face (lips, expressions, gestures).
- Notify the lead interpreter of schedule changes or class cancellations as far in advance as possible to facilitate appropriate interpreter scheduling.
- Do not expect interpreters to assume other duties; they are only in the classroom to facilitate communication.
- Ensure closed captioning on all video presentations for student access.

Visual Impairment

Visual impairment is the loss of visual function of such magnitude that special aids and use of other senses are necessary to achieve performance ordinarily directed by visual clues. Students who have visual impairments range from having total absence of sight to varying degrees of useful vision. Vision also may fluctuate or be influenced by factors such as inappropriate lighting, light glare or fatigue. The major challenge facing visually impaired students in the educational environment is the amount of visual material to which continual exposure in textbooks, class outlines, board writings, etc. Removing a student's visual barriers often requires unique and individual strategies based on the student's particular visual impairment and his/her communication skill. Because a student is visually impaired, do not assume they cannot participate in educational activities. Orientation, mobility, and rehabilitation specialists employed by the State Division of Blind Services can often determine special aids and/or accommodations that facilitate integration into the classroom setting. The impact of a visual impairment may include mobility and orientation (student may use guide dog or walking stick), access to and the inability to utilize visual materials such as films, graphs, demonstrations, and written or printed materials, use of technology, and difficulty in focusing on small-group discussion when there is more than one group functioning.

Tips for working with students who are blind or low vision:

- Allow partially sighted students to sit near the front of the room or other optimum locations.
- Provide large print visuals when appropriate.
- Provide textbook titles in advance to prepare for alternate formatting, if needed.
- Accept a tape recording of written assignments.
- Photocopies of class handouts or course packets should be of good quality and not reduced below original size.
- Recruit a note taker for note taking services, if needed.
- Consider impact of lighting and the need for a variety of low-vision aids to integrate the classroom.
- Consult with Accessibility Services staff on any lecture materials, assignments, or

tests that require alternate formatting for the student. Blind students may need peer assistance to complete labs or interactive in-class assignments. Assistance for labs or interactive coursework may be coordinated through the instructor or Accessibility Services.

Speech Disorders

Students may experience a myriad of speech impairments that range from stuttering, speech articulation, and voice problems, to complete speechlessness. These challenges include difficulties in projecting, as in chronic hoarseness and esophageal speech; issues with fluency, as in stuttering and stammering as well as dysarthria that alters articulation of particular words or terms. Do not to assume their challenges with speech extend to their ability to hear or comprehend. Speech disorders may affect communication skills, presentation skills, and social integration.

Tips for working with students with speech disorders:

- Address these students naturally.
- Allow voluntary opportunities to speak in class, if needed. Calling on a person who stutters instantaneously increases the demands for speech and is not helpful.
- Ask students to restate or clarify verbal communication as necessary.
- Modify assignments such as, one-to-one presentations or allow use of computer with voice synthesizer.
- Allow more preparation or substitutions for oral class reports.
- Support inclusiveness in classroom.
- Be patient; permit them the time necessary to express themselves without filling the gaps in their speech.

Motor Impairment

Motor impairment is the partial or total loss of the function of a body part because of a spinal cord injury, amputation, or musculoskeletal back disorders. Such impairment may result in involuntary movement, total paralysis, and reduced levels of function in tasks

that require general trunk mobility. These motor impairments range from obvious visibility of the spinal cord injury and amputation to the more nebulous such as the chronic back disorder. Because of these variants, the educational expectations for these students will differ greatly in relation to the type of disability. Educational planning for the student includes investigation of interests, aptitudes, and physical limitations to determine the appropriate educational goal consistent with the disability. Motor impairment may influence mobility, writing and/or speaking, inability to sit for prolonged periods, standing, participating in classes involving physical activity, physical stamina, and hand/finger dexterity.

Tips for working with students who have mobility impairment:

- Ensure classroom layout is accessible.
- Do not assume; consult with the student regarding limitations.
- Give assistance only if student asks for it.
- Incorporate a means by which the student can participate in class/group activities.
- Be familiar with the emergency evacuation plan and know the closest emergency exits and areas of rescue; provide assistance if necessary.

❖ Students with wheelchairs

- Allow for enough physical space around the classroom for the student to maneuver.
- Do not hang or lean on a student's wheelchair. Often, a person considers the wheelchair part of their "body space".
- Push the wheelchair only if the student asks, or if you have offered and it has been accepted.
- If an adjustable desk and/or lumbar chair is in your classroom, please do not remove or move the furniture.

❖ Students with hand function limitations

- Accept tape recording of written assignments/exams.

- Give or ask support personnel to give exams orally when necessary or allow extra time for students who are able to write but who have diminished speed.
- Utilize competencies learned rather than speed for grading criteria.
- Facilitate finding a note taker, if needed.
- Accessibility Services provides speech-to-text options, recorders, and devices such as larger keyboards or large Track Ball Mouse options for students with hand function limitations. If your class requires interaction with the keyboard and you notice the student is struggling to keep up, please consult with Accessibility Services.

❖ Students with chronic back problems

- Allow the student breaks to stretch or to stand if needed.
- Be aware of emotional discomfort that often accompanies chronic pain.
- Accessibility Services may provide a lumbar chair to the student. Do not move or remove furniture from the room.

Cerebral Palsy

Cerebral palsy is from an injury to the motor center of the brain, which may have occurred before, during, or shortly after birth. Manifestations may include involuntary muscle contractions, rigidity, spasms, poor coordination, poor balance, or poor spatial relations. Visual, auditory, speech, hand- function, and mobility problems might occur. Sometimes, a misunderstanding occurs with students with cerebral palsy because of their physical limitations. These students, many times, are very intelligent and capable of processing concepts. They may need assistance with demonstrating their knowledge through physical means such as verbal or written communication. The impact of cerebral palsy may include difficulty with coordination, balance, visual, auditory, speech, and hand functions.

Tips for working with students with cerebral palsy

- Do not assume; consult with the student regarding limitations.
- Accept tape recording of written assignments/exams.

- Give or ask support personnel to give exams orally when necessary or allow extra time for students who are able to write but who have diminished speed.
- Utilize competencies learned rather than speed for grading criteria.
- Facilitate finding a note-taker, if needed.
- Incorporate a means by which the student can participate as part of a group in activities or labs (peer assistant).
- Be familiar with the emergency evacuation plan and know the closest emergency exits and areas of rescue; provide assistance if necessary.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Traumatic brain injury, often referred to as TBI, is a complex injury with a broad spectrum of symptoms and disabilities, which result in physical, cognitive, and/or psychosocial impairments. Since our brain defines who we are, the consequences of a brain injury can affect all aspects of our lives, including our personality. Students who have TBI's may eventually regain function, or must learn to cope with permanent loss of function. TBI's may affect behavior, memory, attention, balance, coordination, organizational skills with reading and/or writing, cognition (verbal/visual perception or expression), and reasoning skills

Tips for working with students with a TBI

- Outline of course syllabus, with full transparency on due dates for assignments and tests/exams.
- Keep instructions brief. Allow time for clarification of directions and essential information.
- Use more than one way to explain information.
- When teaching, state objectives, review previous information, and summarize periodically.

Psychological Disabilities

Psychological illnesses can affect individuals of any age, gender, and intellectual group. These illnesses include, yet are not limited to, bipolar, anxiety disorders, depression,

post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), schizophrenia, and social disorders. The illness can occur at any developmental period; however, the onset of many of these psychological disabilities commonly occurs between the ages of 18-25 and is the age group for a majority of students enrolled in postsecondary education. It is important for us to understand the implications of such illnesses. A psychological illness falls under the definition of a disability when it results in substantial limitations of a major life activity. The impact of a psychological illness might include unpredictable episodic symptoms, side effects from medications, poor attendance, and the ability to perform academically.

Tips for working with students who have psychological disabilities

- Allow early access to syllabus and reading assignments. Allowing the student time to organize and begin reading assignments may help the student stay on track in instances of poor attendance.
- Allow beverages in class. Some medications cause extreme thirst as a side effect.
- Offer alternative ways of completing assignments. For example, a student with severe anxiety might perform better with a written assignment.
- Provide regular feedback on performance and assignments.
- Consider allowing students to make up work as appropriate.
- Be aware that a student with an emotional disorder may receive treatment with therapeutic medications, which may affect performance and speed.
- Behaviors that vary from the norm may be an indication the student is experiencing a recurrence of symptoms and is in need of intervention.
- Realizing that students can assume full responsibility for their thoughts, feelings and actions, it helps when an instructor displays empathy.
- If you notice a student displaying signs of depression, talks about depression, is having a crisis, or is anxious about something, please direct him/her to the Student Assistance Program (SAP) through BayCare Behavior Health. The call is confidential and toll-free, (800) 878-5470, or visit BayCare online at BayCareSAP@BayCare.org.

Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

PTSD is the development of characteristic symptoms following exposure to one or more traumatic events. Traumatic events include, but are not limited to, exposure to war, threatened or physical assault, threatened or actual sexual violence, being kidnapped, natural or human-made disasters, and severe motor vehicle accidents. The clinical presentation of PTSD varies. In some individuals, fear-based re-experiencing, emotional, and behavioral symptoms may predominate. In others, the inability to experience pleasure in activities once enjoyed (exercise, music, social interaction) or depressive, anxious, and agitated mood states may be most evident. In some other individuals, arousal and reactive-externalizing symptoms are prominent, while in others, mild to extreme detachment (dissociation) or maladaptive behaviors dominate. However, some individuals exhibit combinations of these symptom patterns. The effects of PTSD may include the inability to think in concrete or abstract terms, short-term working memory, decreased social interaction with class or groups, low self-concept, sensitivity to potential threats, inability to reason, and the inability to concentrate.

Tips for working with students who have PTSD

- Outline of course syllabus, with full transparency on due dates for assignments and tests/exams.
- Keep instructions brief. Allow time for clarification of directions and essential information.
- Use more than one way to explain information.
- When teaching, state objectives, review previous information, and summarize periodically.
- Provide instructions for exams and assignments in print as well as orally.
- Provide hard copies of lecture materials and class notes.

❖ *Disruptive Behaviors*

Although most students with psychological disabilities never draw attention to themselves by behaving disruptively, a few, because their symptoms are more persistent and/or cyclical, may experience periods in that “holding it together” becomes

more difficult. Do not confuse disciplinary issues with mental health issues. All students, including students with psychological disabilities, have the responsibility to meet the code of conduct by adapting behavior to the educational environment. If disruptive behavior persistently occurs or a student violates the code of conduct, the issue most likely is not due to mental health. It is a disciplinary issue and grounds for a referral to the Associate Provost. For students expressing behavior concerns or asking for assistance, direct them to the Student Assistance Program (SAP) through BayCare Behavior Health. The call is confidential and toll-free, (800) 878-5470, or visit BayCare online at BayCareSAP@BayCare.org.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

ASD is a neurodevelopmental disorder ranging from mild to severe and characterized by core features of social/communication deficits, repetitive/restrictive behaviors, and a lack of emotional exchange. While all people with ASD share the core features of the disorder, specific manifestations in developmental, cognitive, emotional, and/or behavioral areas are unique to each individual. Individuals with ASD may appear naïve and clueless, suggesting that social awareness and perception are impaired. There may be problems recognizing, interpreting, and responding to cues sent in conversation especially in unstructured or unfamiliar situations. Individuals with ASD may seem uninterested, withdrawn, peculiar, or just different. It is important to note that in each individual with ASD, these areas may vary along a scale from mild to severe. Persons with ASD may experience co-occurring psychiatric manifestations such as anxiety, depression, learning disabilities, etc., and take prescription psychotropic medications, which may cause side effects. The impacts of autism spectrum disorder may include lack of participation, anti-social interaction, and poor problem solving skills, low attention span, and inadequate structure/time management.

Tips for working with students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

- Be very specific with directions, projects, and assignments.
- Repeat instructions and check for understanding.
- Set explicit guidelines for classroom behavior.

- Avoid overstimulation.
- Avoid sarcasm; they may not understand expressions and slang.
- Get to know the student so he/she will feel comfortable coming to you with problems.
- Help connect students to tutors who they can use as a resource.

Health Related Disabilities

Health related disabilities are often hidden disabilities caused by such conditions as lupus, cancer, rheumatoid arthritis, cystic fibrosis, heart disease, hemophilia, asthma, blood disorders, diabetes, chronic fatigue, immune deficiency disorders, chemical sensitivities, or seizure disorder. Health related disabilities might influence balance, coordination, vision, attendance or participation, drowsiness and fatigue, sensory functions, language, and memory.

Tips for working with students who have health relates disabilities

- Allow early access to textbook information and syllabi.
- If possible, provide access to lecture materials.
- Allow students to have beverages/food in class and to leave the classroom for breaks, as necessary.
- Consider allowing students to make up missed work, as appropriate.

Seizure Disorder

A meaningful simple definition for a seizure disorder is difficult because of its wide variability. Seizures may consist of only a brief suspension of activity (petit mal); automatic motor activity or complex alterations of behavior (psychomotor); or a full-blown generalized motor seizure (grand mal). Other than the occasional seizure, persons with this disorder generally look and function like everyone else in society yet may experience some memory dysfunction. By controlling seizures with medication, the educational potential is good for persons who have this disorder and should not diminish, unless serious memory deficits exist.

Students with a seizure disorder may experience brief lapses of consciousness or “staring spells” causing disruptions in the learning process. Students may also experience side effects from anticonvulsant medication resulting in slowed reactions, clumsiness and poor hand coordination, eye focusing difficulty, and flatness of affect. Additional impacts include increased absences if grand mal seizures are not medically well controlled, memory deficits due to complex partial seizures or temporal lobe epilepsy, and clouded thinking caused by chronic seizure disorders and effects of medication.

❖ *What to know ahead of time if a student with seizure disorder is in your class*

- Be aware of the type of seizure disorder.
- Learn what to do when a grand mal seizure occurs.
- Allow for absences related to recovery from grand mal seizures.
- Recognize effects of medication on performance and allow extra time for exams and completion of class assignments.

❖ *What to do if a student has a seizure in your class*

- Remain calm and reassure other students.
- Have someone call 911 or follow directions on accommodations.
- There may not be a need to call an ambulance:
 - If the seizure ends in under five minutes, and
 - If consciousness returns without further incident, and
 - If there are no signs of injury, physical distress or pregnancy (Epilepsy Foundation of America, 1989).
- Ease the student to the floor.
- Remove objects that may injure the student.
- Do not attempt to stop the seizure nor interfere with the student’s movements.
- Let the seizure run its course.
- Never place, or try to place, an object in the student’s mouth.
- Turn the head or body to the side to prevent the tongue from slipping to the back of the throat interfering with breathing.

- Do not attempt to revive a student who may turn pale, have irregular breathing, or stop breathing. Seizure activity will diminish and they will breathe regularly on their own.
- Assure a student who has experienced a seizure that all is well and that you understand.
- Attempt to give student privacy if bladder incontinence occurs after a grand mal seizure.
- Allow the student who has experienced a grand mal seizure to rest and check their condition frequently. They will usually be disoriented and extremely tired.
- Do not give food or drink unless seizure activity has passed.
- Call an ambulance should another seizure follow within a half hour or so, or when a seizure state persists for a prolonged period. These conditions require prompt medical attention.

Substance Abuse

Substance abuse is a condition of physiological and/or psychological dependence on any of a variety of chemicals such as, illegal drugs, some prescription drugs, and alcohol. Federal anti-discrimination legislation protects individuals who are recovering from drug and alcohol abuse or who are in treatment programs to assist their recovery. These individuals are eligible for college services, under the same protections as students with disabilities. These students may experience psychological problems such as depression or anxiety. They may also exhibit poor behavioral control, and if they are using medication as part of their treatment, they may experience undesirable side effects.

Veterans

Traditionally, the United States has promoted education as the catalyst to a successful transformation in life. With the return of service members from the Global War on Terror, colleges and universities face challenges with meeting the needs of this rising veteran population. For veterans, provision of educational opportunities are often complicated by combat related stressors, mental health issues, substance abuse,

multiple disabilities, and difficulties associated with cultural assimilation. Assisting, advising, and educating these students, with or without documented disabilities, is not as easy as it might seem. Thus, the goal of this document is not to set “hard and fast” rules to address veterans, current and future, registered in your course of instruction. Its goal is to incite an appreciation and awareness for our service members and the challenges they bring to the classroom as they attempt to transform from the role of “Protector” to “Protected.”

The same as individuals with disabilities, service members have important protections and rights under Federal law. The ADA and Section 504 prohibit discrimination based on disability and applies to nearly every postsecondary institution in the United States. These laws also protect veteran students returning to college with a variety of disabilities as defined by the laws’ criteria, including loss of limb, severe burns, PTSD, TBI, deafness, vision, and learning disabilities.

To receive academic adjustments, veterans with disabilities must be proactive! Postsecondary schools do not have a duty to find students with disabilities. If you have a veteran registered in your course, who appears to struggle beyond the norm in the areas of focus, memory, fatigue, absenteeism, and anxiety, do not hesitate to refer the student to the Accessibility Services office on your campus. Common behaviors a veteran with a disability may exhibit include agitation, avoidance, depression, defensiveness, lethargic, fearful, persistent denial, guilt, loneliness, and futility.

Tips for working with veteran students with disabilities

- Create the course structure utilizing UD guidelines.
- Reduce distractions.
- Allow for specific seating.
- Increase natural lighting.
- Divide large assignments into smaller goal-oriented tasks.
- Allow longer or frequent work breaks as needed.
- Provide additional time to learn new concepts.

- Assign/collaborate with a classmate to act as a peer mentor.
- Allow additional time for class assignments, projects, or exams.

Communication Hints When Interacting with Individuals with Special Needs

Oftentimes, interacting with individuals with special needs breeds nervous energy and anxiety about what to say takes over. Some people are fearful of coming across as stereotypical or judgmental. Others may simply be uncomfortable because they have never interacted with someone with a special need. Below are some communication hints to promote comfortable interaction.

- Be yourself! Talk about the same things you would with anyone else.
- Students with disabilities are *people* first. A disability is simply a trait that makes someone unique.
- Look at and speak directly to that person rather than a companion who may be along for the visit.
- When greeting a person with loss of vision, identify yourself and others with you.
- Gain attention of hearing impaired persons by tapping their shoulder or waving your hand.
- When talking with a person in a wheelchair, reposition yourself to the person's eye level.
- Do not assume; ask the person if he or she needs assistance. If accepted, ask specifically what type of help they need.
- Be considerate with your questions. Do not be overly curious; respect the person's privacy.
- Be patient, some disabilities make people walk, talk, or think at a different pace.
- Listen attentively to persons with speech impairments; encourage rather than correct.
- Do not interact with a person's guide or service animal; the animal is working.
- Avoid assumptions about a person's capabilities or interests.
- Do not stare at a person who has a disability with which you are unfamiliar.

- Do not assume that all people with a similar disability have the same limitations.
- When guiding people with visual impairments, first offer them your arm rather than grabbing
- Do not pretend to understand if you are having difficulty doing so. Always ask for clarification.
- Refrain from being overprotective or oversensitive.
- Provide information in clear, calm, respectful tones.
- Allow opportunities for addressing specific questions.
- At no time should you tell information about a person's disability shared in confidence.
- Relax; do not be embarrassed if you happen to use accepted common expressions such as "See you later" or "Got to be running along" that seem to relate to the person's disability.

Emergency Preparedness

There may be an occasion when an emergency arises on campus or in the classroom and a student with a disability requires immediate intervention. ADA emphasizes how important it is for local entities to protect citizens from harm, including helping people prepare for and respond to emergencies, and how a critical part of this responsibility involves making things accessible to people with disabilities. Many of the emergency management practices in place for local entities can also apply to college campus communities. Below are some highlighted points to take into consideration when evaluating how accessible your current emergency preparedness and response programs are in accordance with Board of Trustee Rules and Procedures (P6Hx23-1.23). For additional information, please refer to the SPC Emergency Response Guide procedures.

Evacuation Procedures

If there is a fire, smoke is the greatest danger. Always stay low where the air is less toxic and visibility is greater. Do not use elevators for evacuation.

- Remain calm.

- Close doors and windows if possible, leave them unlocked for search teams.
- Assist injured or disabled persons to a designated rescue waiting area.
- Use the nearest, safest route to the designated evacuation area. Be alert for hazards (smoke, debris, flames) and move quickly to the outside.
- Move away from the building.
- Do not block entrances.
- Do not block elevators.
- Do not permit re-entry to the building until an emergency services official confirms it is safe.
- Report any missing persons to emergency personnel.
- Do not release any information about students, staff, or the status of the emergency to the media, family, friends, or the public. Direct all such inquiries to the Provost's Office, Marketing & Public Information (727.341.3274) or the Command Center, if one is established.
- If requested, assist emergency personnel. Otherwise, remain calm and stay clear of emergency operations.
- View SPC evacuation procedure video at SPC Homepage/Campus Safety, www.spcollege.edu/safety .

Areas of Rescue

In case of an evacuation, all faculty and staff should be familiar with the designated Areas of Rescue points located in each of the college's campus facilities. Areas of rescue points are designated places of refuge for all non-ambulatory persons (injured and disabled persons) who are unable to navigate the stairwells during an evacuation.

As a matter of practice, all staffed departments should establish a buddy system by pairing co-workers with persons identified as those in need of assistance during evacuations. Instructors with non-ambulatory students should establish a plan to recruit "transport buddies" in each scheduled class.

Once persons arrive at the rescue points, push the intercom button titled, "Emergency

Assistance,” located on the stairwells’ back wall and wait for a response. This will initiate a notification to emergency personnel on the ground floor, an established on-site command center, or emergency response switchboard. Emergency personnel will respond to the caller with the requisite auxiliaries to evacuate each person as necessary.

Evacuation of Students with Visual Disabilities

In case of emergencies, alert the student to the nature of the situation. You may offer assistance and guide him or her to the nearest emergency exit and away from the building to safety. Some types of emergencies require safety within a building. Depending upon the nature of the emergency, during crisis periods, there may be a lot of commotion and noise. A visually impaired student may not be able to orient as well as in emergencies. Your assistance is critical to their safety.

An example of assistance to a visually impaired person is to use the sighted guide technique. You do this by offering the person an elbow. While holding on to your elbow, alert the student to where he or she is and inform him or her of any obstacles, debris, doorways, or narrow passages as you walk. Once safe, orient the student to his or her surroundings and ask if they need further assistance.

Evacuation of Students with Mobility Disabilities

Assist the student with limited mobility to the facility’s designated area of rescue. Do not leave the student alone. In most instances, do not attempt to carry a person in a wheelchair; you can risk the chance of injuring yourself or the student.

Evacuation of Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing may not hear alarms or other audible warnings. Instructors should immediately inform the hearing-impaired student of the emergency. There are three ways to get a person's attention:

- Write a note for the student alerting him or her to the emergency and instructing him or her to connect with their designated transport “buddy” and to immediately exit the building or report to the designated area of rescue.

- Turn the light switch off and on to gain the student's attention.
- Tap his or her shoulder.

In most instances, an interpreter/ transcriber will be in the classroom to explain the emergency to the student. Provide any assistance a student might need during the evacuation process.

Common Myths about People with Disabilities

Myth: Accommodations mean lowering standards and giving students an unfair advantage.

Fact: Accommodations are not to fundamentally alter the core requirements of a course. The design of an accommodation is to remove disability-related barriers and thus enable students to meet existing standards.

Myth: Students with disabilities lack the skills to succeed in college.

Fact: In order to qualify for accommodations, students with disabilities must meet the same academic and technical requirements as their peers. During the course of their academic careers, they will demonstrate strengths and weaknesses just like other students.

Myth: Students with disabilities always need extra help.

Fact: Many people with disabilities are independent and capable of giving help to others. If you would like to assist someone with a disability, ask if he or she needs it before you act.

Myth: Wheelchair use is confining; all students who use wheelchairs are "wheelchair-bound."

Fact: Wheelchairs, just like bicycles and cars, are assistive devices that enable people to get around. Not all students in wheelchairs are "wheelchair-bound".

Myth: If you cannot see a disability, it does not exist or the student is faking.

Fact: There are many "hidden disabilities", such as learning disabilities, ADD/ADHD, or psychological disabilities. Hidden disabilities are as valid and pose as many challenges as more visible disabilities.

Myth: Students with learning disabilities have below average intelligence.

Fact: By definition, individuals with learning disabilities have average or above intelligence as measured by an individual IQ test and have a significant discrepancy between their ability and achievement.

Myth: Given the proper instruction, students can grow out of their learning disabilities.

Fact: Individuals with learning disabilities can and do acquire improved skills that often enable them to compensate for their learning disability. However, learning disabilities are permanent and cannot be "cured".

Myth: All people with ADD are hyperactive and have Learning Disabilities.

Fact: Only small percentages of people with ADD are hyperactive and/or have learning disabilities. ADD, ADHD, and LD are separate disabilities, exhibit differently, and affect people in different ways.

Myth: People with psychiatric disabilities can only work at low-level jobs. They are not suited to be in the college setting and may never hold important or responsible positions.

Fact: People with psychiatric disabilities are individuals. As such, their career potentials depend on their particular talents, abilities, experience, and motivation, as well as their current state of physical and mental health. Visit the National Alliance on Mental Illness online at <https://www.nami.org/About-NAMI> for more information about mental health conditions.

Myth: Blind students are proficient in Braille and use a guide dog.

Fact: Only a small percentage of blind people are fluent in Braille and only a small

percentage use a guide dog. Ever-advancing technologies enable people who are blind to choose among many types of assistive technologies to participate in life activities such as reading and navigating.

Myth: All legally blind people have no functional vision.

Fact: A legally blind person may have some functional vision, or "low vision". People with low vision can often see with the use of assistive technologies, if the light is not too bright or there is not too much glare.

Myth: All students who are deaf or hard of hearing can read lips.

Fact: Lip-reading skills vary among people who use them and are never entirely reliable.

Myth: Deaf students cannot speak.

Fact: As our speech production depends on our ability to hear the speech of others and monitor our own, the speech of some deaf people is not clear enough to understand. For this reason, some deaf people prefer not to speak. However, the speech capabilities and preferences of deaf persons vary from individual to individual.

Myth: All people with speech disorders are deaf or hard of hearing.

Fact: Many speech disorders result from causes other than not being able to hear one's own speech and the speech of others.

Myth: People with speech disorders need help completing their words/sentences.

Fact: No, it is best to wait patiently for people with speech disorders to express their own thoughts.

Myth: People can fully recover from TBI.

Fact: Recovery from even mild TBI may occur very slowly or remain incomplete. Any TBI can result in permanent and measurable deficits in processing speed, attention, memory, and behavior.

Myth: An IQ score in the average range is an accurate measure of recovery from TBI.

Fact: The IQ score is a composite of many different scores. Therefore, an IQ score in the average range can represent superior performance on some tasks and severely impaired performance on others.

Myth: All people with health related disabilities are limited in what they can do and learn.

Fact: Some people with health related disabilities have no restrictions and may need only some accommodations and assistive technologies to have equal access. Others may require more intensive accommodations and services.

Myth: Success for people with severe health related disabilities cannot occur without fundamental modifications to the academic environment.

Fact: Although accommodations do require adjustments to the academic environment, they will never require that you fundamentally alter your course core requirements.

Myth: Accessibility Services is responsible for providing all services to students with disabilities.

Fact: Students with disabilities are just like their peers. Assurance of access is a shared institutional responsibility.

Frequently Asked Questions FAQ

Q: How does a student obtain disability services?

A: The student must register with the Accessibility Services office and provide proper documentation. The student and the Accessibility Coordinator will discuss services to fit the disability during a confidential meeting. Accommodations are on a case-by-case basis, depending on the physician or psychologist report. Even students with the same type of disability will not necessarily qualify for the same accommodations.

Q: What are my responsibilities?

A: If you receive an accommodation letter from a student or through an email from the Accessibility Services office, have a private discussion with him or her to ensure a mutual understanding of the accommodations. If you have questions, call the AS Coordinator named in the accommodation letter or the AS Director, Aimee Stubbs, at 727-341-3398. If you do not receive an AS accommodation letter, please do not allow academic adjustments or furniture alterations, no matter how obvious the need may seem. You do not need to read paperwork/determine services yourself. Suggest the student contact the campus AS office for information and assistance.

Q. How do I know what type of academic adjustment a student needs?

A. The accommodation letter you receive from the student states all approved academic adjustments. If you have questions, call the AS Coordinator named in the accommodation letter or the AS Director, Aimee Stubbs, at 727-341-3398.

Q. My student is asking for accommodations beyond those stated on the AS accommodation letter. What should I do?

A. The federal statutes are designed to promote equal access, and the AS accommodation letter represents our best professional assessment of what the student needs to provide parity. You are not obligated to provide any service other than the approved accommodations as stated on the official AS letter. What happens in your classroom beyond the legal requirements is up to you. We recommend that you not allow or offer any type of additional accommodation, even if it seems logical in a specific circumstance. If you do allow “extras”, please be aware that this may make life difficult for other faculty, and other students in the class may protest a perceived unfair advantage. If you have questions, call the AS Coordinator named in the accommodation letter or the AS Director, Aimee Stubbs, at 727-341-3398.

Q. What if I think a student might have an undisclosed learning disability?

A. If you suspect a student may have a learning disability because of performance, you may privately ask questions like, “How are your other classes going? Was this subject

always hard for you? Did you ever attend special support programs or classes?” Please do not use the word “disability”. If the student acknowledges he or she has academic support through Accessibility Services, request a copy of their accommodations. If you have questions, call the AS Coordinator on your campus or the AS Director, Aimee Stubbs, at 727-341-3398.

Q: What if I am unsure how to handle a situation with a student with a disability?

A: First, ask the student. He/she is the best source of information about his/her disability. Second, contact the campus Accessibility Services Coordinator.

Q. A student requested a note taker in my class. What do I do?

A. Qualified students with the accommodation of a note taker should present you a packet with a script for you to read aloud to the class asking for a volunteer. If you do not have an accommodation letter for the student, request they send you a copy. In some cases, a student that is extremely limited in communication skills, the AS Coordinator may communicate with you and provide the packet in advance of the course.

Q. My student says he/she needs specific testing accommodations, a test reader or scribe. How do I arrange this?

A. When a student needs a test assistant such as a reader or scribe, a private location, formula cards, or assistive technology, it is the student’s responsibility to arrange such assistance, with the testing office, in advance. If you have a student who qualifies, you will see the accommodations listed on the accommodation letter. Formula cards are for Math classes only, require approval by the instructor prior to the test, and sent with the test to the testing center.

Q. What is the process for setting up accommodations for Online Proctored Exams?

A. Notify Lindsey Eaton if a student has accommodations such as formula cards or write-on copy. Students can upload their accommodation letter when they make an appointment through the Test Reservation System. If a student requires assistive

technology, it is the student's responsibility to make sure the proctoring site has the proper accommodations and all assistive technology is coordinated in advance.

Q. Do I have the right to know what type of disability a student has when they ask for an accommodation?

A. No. A student does not have to inform the faculty member about their disability, only the needed accommodations. If you have a question regarding the need for an accommodation, then you, as a faculty member, may contact your campus Accessibility Services Coordinator. The Accessibility Services Coordinator cannot give details about the disability. However, the student may disclose his/her disability to you, at which point you are under an obligation to maintain confidentiality regarding the student's disability.

Q. What can I do if I disagree with the requested academic accommodation?

A. If you disagree with the adjustment requested, you may contact your campus Accessibility Services Coordinator; however, you must continue to provide the academic adjustment as stated in the accommodation letter.

An instructor may not forbid a student's use of an aid if that prohibition limits the student's participation in the school program. Section 504 states, "A recipient may not impose upon handicapped [sic] students other rules, such as the prohibition of tape recorders in classrooms or of service animal guides in campus buildings, which have the effect of limiting the participation of handicapped [sic] students in the recipient's education program or activity."

It is important to remember that under the ADA, if you do not allow appropriate and approved academic adjustments to the student, you the faculty member, as well as the institution, and may be liable for damages, including monetary damages.

Q. Does the student receive "special privileges" under this legislation?

A. No, the provision of accommodations is not giving students "special privileges". Accommodations minimize the impact of the student's disability to the greatest extent

possible. Institutions, by providing accommodations, do not have the expectations to make changes in the requirements of a major or substantial change in an essential element of the curriculum. It is important to expect the same academic performance from the student with a disability, utilizing the approved accommodation, as from a student without a disability.

Q. Do students have a deadline to request their accommodations prior to classes?

A. Students do not have a deadline in which to request their accommodations; however, provisions are not retroactive. For students receiving accommodations, we suggest they make their requests two to three weeks prior to the start of each semester. In some cases, we may need to set up specific equipment or request alternate format for material needed in the class.

Q. After failing a test, the student stated they had academic accommodations. What do I do?

A. Accommodations are not retroactive. We strongly urges all students to request their accommodations and discuss needed adjustments or auxiliary learning aids with instructors at the start of the semester or as soon as possible. It is responsibility of each student to communicate his or her needs to the instructor.

There may be times when a student registers with Accessibility Services during the semester. Once you receive the accommodation notice, you should make every effort to coordinate any approved adjustments as soon as possible to provide access for the student.

Q. What can I do to make the classroom environment open to students with disabilities?

A. It is important to remember that people with disabilities are just that, people. Here are a few easy-to-remember tips:

- Make a general announcement regarding your availability to assist with special needs. If a student states the need accommodations, please direct the student to meet with the campus Accessibility Services Coordinator.

- It is important to include a statement in the syllabus informing students they must request accommodations through the proper channels and in a timely manner.
- Ask questions; the student is the best source of information.
- Do not label or stereotype a person with a disability. Not everyone who has a disability has the same needs. This is also important when addressing accommodations.
- Follow the basic disability etiquette found in this resource guide.

Q: Do I also have to provide these services to international students with disabilities needing auxiliary aids or services?

A: Yes. International students who have disabilities are entitled to the same protection from nondiscrimination based on disability, as are United States citizens. Section 504 states the prohibition of discrimination covers any “otherwise qualified person with a disability in the United States.” Section 504 does not state the student has to be a citizen of the United States.

Q: Who pays for these accommodations/assistive devices?

A: Each institution is responsible for the provision of appropriate auxiliary aids and services at no cost to the student. However, each institution may determine which department pays for a particular accommodation. The institution cannot place a limit on its expenditure for auxiliary aids or services or refuse to provide auxiliary aids because it believes that other providers of these services exist. The institution may work with an outside agency, such as Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), to assist in obtaining the item for the student. At SPC, federal and state grant funds financially support many of the services and assistive devices. Creating an accessible educational environment is an institutional responsibility and needs consideration for all activities, curriculum, and facilities.

Q: What are my responsibilities concerning field trips and outside programs?

A: Persons with disabilities are entitled to participate in the most integrated settings possible. Instructors must offer accommodations for all field trips or special programs. If

an institution offers transportation to students going on a field trip, it must offer accessible transportation for students with disabilities. For example, a student enrolled in your class student uses a wheelchair, and you decide to use a college van to take the students to a museum, you must offer accessible transportation to the student with a disability. The student may accept or refuse the accessible transportation.

Q: What are possible consequences if I personally do not provide the accommodation requested?

A: Students denied auxiliary aids or services, can file a complaint under Section 504 with the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education, or under the ADA Titles II and III under the jurisdiction of the Department of Justice. The student may file the complaint with both offices if he or she so desire. The ADA may enforce monetary damages and the student may name both an individual, such as a professor, and the institution in the complaint. You as a professor are personally liable, as well as the institution, if named in the complaint.

Q: Do I have to provide academic adjustments if the student is taking the class for an audit?

A: Yes. Legislation states that any student with a disability is eligible for all services if the institution receives federal assistance.

Q. Is there a difference between Section 504 and ADA?

A. Both, Section 504 and the ADA, protect the rights of persons with disabilities. Section 504 only applies to entities that receive federal financial assistance, whereas the ADA covers most establishments, receiving funds from private donors and/or assisted with state and/or federal funds.

Q. If a college or university is compliant with Section 504; does that mean the school is automatically compliant with the ADA as well?

A. In most instances, yes. However, to the extent that the ADA provides greater protection to individuals with disabilities, the college or university must comply with the

ADA.

Q. Who is considered “otherwise qualified” under the ADA and Section 504?

A. Students who can meet the technical and academic qualifications for entry into the school or program; parents or members of the public who have a disability; an employee with a disability who can, with or without reasonable accommodations, meet the essential requirements of the job; persons who are discriminated against because of their association with individuals with disabilities.

Q. Who is an “individual with a disability?”

A. An individual with a disability is a person who has a physical or mental impairment, which substantially limits a major life activity; has a record or history of such an impairment; or regarded as having such an impairment.

Q. What constitutes a “major life activity?”

A. Major life activities include walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, caring for one-self, and performing manual tasks.

Q. What are the obligations of students with disabilities?

A. In order for a student with a disability to receive academic accommodations, he or she has an obligation to self-identify as having a disability and that he or she needs accommodation.

Q: What obligation to students does the college have under Section 504 and the ADA?

A: The College must provide reasonable accommodations for the student’s known, and documented, disability in order to afford an equal opportunity to participate in programs, courses, and activities. A college may not discriminate against any individual solely based on disability.

Q. What are the implications of the ADA for higher education institutions?

A. ADA affords students with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in and

benefit from all postsecondary education programs and activities. That includes any course, course of study, or activity offered. Rules may not be imposed that would limit the student with disabilities from fully participating in a program or activity. Academic requirements must be modified, on a case by-case basis, to provide qualified students with disabilities an equal educational opportunity.

Q. Must the college provide the student all the academic adjustments and auxiliary aids he or she wants/needs?

A. No, a college is not required to provide academic adjustments or auxiliary aids and services if such provisions would fundamentally alter the nature of the program or academic requirements, which are essential to a program of study, or to meet licensing requirements.

**If you have other questions about Accessibility Services,
please contact your campus Accessibility Coordinator.**

Thank you for your continued support!