

Western Nevada College
Disability Support Services

Instructor Handbook



Revised April 2010

Table of Contents

Disability and the Laws	2
What is meant by otherwise qualified	3
What is a Disability.....	3
How does DSS verify a Disability	3
What are functional limitations.....	5
What is the Responsibility of: DSS, Student with Disability, Faculty.....	5
Accommodating Students with Disabilities Check List	6
Professors’ Rights when dealing with student registered with Disability Support Services.....	7
What is a reasonable accommodation	7
Arranging for Accommodations	9-10
Faculty Tip Sheets.....	11-17
Teaching Students with Hearing Loss	11
Working with a Sign Language Interpreter in the Classroom	12
Blindness and Visual Impairments.....	13
Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder Combined Type (HDHD).....	14
Medical/Chronic Health Related Impairments	15
Psychological or Psychiatric Impairments.....	16
Teaching Students with Medical/Mobility Impairments.....	17
Landmark College Best Practices	18
Contact Us.....	19

Western Nevada College

Disability Support Services

Background

Disability and the Laws

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the **Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990** are Civil Rights laws. They affirm that people with disabilities should have access to the social, economic, educational and cultural aspects of national life. Their impetus is the assertion by people with disabilities of their inalienable right to be treated as equals. The Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act has been proposed but not yet finalized, once final, updates will be posted.

The first Civil Rights law in the world for people with disabilities was passed in 1968. It was known as the *Architectural Barriers Act*. It required Federal facilities to be physically accessible for wheelchair users and others with mobility limitations. Its true significance, however, was to redefine disability in a civil rights context. Thus, disability now had to be considered, not as a medical problem, but as a social problem. The law acknowledged that barriers in federal buildings denied entrance arbitrarily to citizens who experienced significant mobility limitations, such as wheelchair users.

Section 504-Rehabilitation Act of 1973

In 1973, Congress passed Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), a law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of physical or mental disability (29 U.S.C. Section 794). It states:

No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States. . . shall solely by reason of her or his disability, 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 Office of Civil Rights in the U. S. Department of Education enforces regulations implementing Section 504 with respect to programs and activities that receive funding from the Department. Section 504 regulation applies to all recipients of this funding, including colleges, universities, and post secondary vocational education and adult education programs. Failure by higher education schools to provide auxiliary aids to students with disabilities that results in a denial of a program benefit is discriminatory and prohibited by Section 504.

Section 504 requires that we inform faculty, administration, and staff of the following:

1. They can exclude no student from any course, major, or program solely based on a disability.
2. This law mandates that certain academic adjustments, commonly called accommodations, be employed, especially regarding the provision of alternative testing and evaluation methods for measuring student mastery, unless such an alternation would result in a modification to course objectives.

What is meant by otherwise qualified?

In short, Section 504 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibit discrimination against students with disabilities who are otherwise qualified, and that when appropriate, such students must be provided reasonable accommodations.

In other words, students have a right to access upon meeting the qualifications. Once qualifications are met, it is illegal to arbitrarily eliminate students with disabilities solely on the basis of their physical or mental condition. To do so would be discrimination. Failure to remove program barriers by refusing or denying reasonable accommodation would also be a form of illegal discrimination. The law does not mean that students get special considerations, but that they should enjoy a level playing field in which to compete, succeed and thrive.

Violation of Section 504 carries with it the threat of loss of Federal funds, including Federal research grants and student financial aid.

What is a Disability?

Eligibility for protection under the ADA and Section 504 requires the applicant to meet one of the following three criteria:

1. Have a physical or mental condition that substantially limits one or more major life activity.
2. Have a record of such a physical or mental condition.
3. Be regarded as having such an impairment, whether actually having the impairment or not.

Examples of disabilities include, but are not limited to the following:

- attention deficit disorders
- blindness/low vision
- cerebral palsy
- communication/speech disorders
- deafness/hearing impairments
- emotional/psychological disabilities
- developmental disabilities
- muscular dystrophy
- seizure disorders
- specific learning disabilities
- spinal cord injuries
- temporary disabilities
- traumatic brain injuries and
- other health impairments.

How does DSS verify a disability?

Students with Learning Disabilities and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

DSS requires current documentation (within the last five years). Consideration will be given for older diagnostic evaluations in particular cases. Documentation should include testing scores and a verifying statement from a school psychologist, clinical psychologist, neuropsychologist, or other qualified professional. This group of students comprises the largest population of students served by DSS. Learning disabilities affect the manner in which individuals acquire, integrate, and/or express knowledge. Learning disabilities may affect a student's performance in reading, writing, spoken language, mathematics, or orientation to space and time.

Students with Visual, Hearing, Physical, and Chronic Medical Condition Disabilities

DSS requires medical records for students with visual and/or hearing limitations and, in particular instances, may accept verification of disabilities from the Vocational Rehabilitation. Documentation must include narrative explanation for clarification and may include audiometric and/or optometric results. Documentation must include specific restrictions due to a physical disability and potential accommodations required.

Visual Disabilities

Visual disabilities can vary from total blindness to low vision. Students with visual disabilities may experience eye strain, sensitivity to light, an inability to read printed material or to distinguish certain colors. Students who have been blind from birth have no visual memories. Their concepts of objects, space, and distance may be different from those persons who develop visual disabilities later in life. Mobility and orientation skills also vary due to numerous factors. Students with low vision may not have an apparent “visible” disability. Difficulty in performing in class readings, open book tests, locating lecture information, completing scantron forms, or viewing lecture notes may occur.

Hearing Disabilities

The age of onset of a hearing disability will have a great impact upon the student’s English ability, both spoken and written. Generally, English is considered a second language for students with hearing disabilities when sign language is the dominant mode of communication. Providing all directions in writing, speaking to the student rather than the interpreter, using telecommunication relay services, and close captioned videos are appropriate requests.

Physical Disabilities

Physical access is one of the major concerns for students with orthopedic disabilities. Students may encounter unavoidable delays during inclement weather, heavy foot traffic times, and periods of construction. In order to fully participate in classroom activities requiring full use of hands and/or legs, educational assistants may be a required accommodation. When a course requires travel to alternative locations, those locations must be accessible.

Chronic Health Conditions

There are a number of chronic health conditions that may interfere with a student’s academic work, concentration, and attendance. Some students may be in pain, or be taking medication with varying side effects, such as drowsiness. Students with seizure disorder may be affected at any time without warning. Some medication can lessen or control seizures, but produce side effects such as slowed response and impaired coordination. Such medication makes it unlikely a seizure will occur in class. In the event of a seizure during class, remain calm. Although its manifestations may be intense, they are generally not painful to the individual. Do not restrain the student and clear the area of objects that may injure the student during the seizure. Help lower the person to the floor and place cushioning under the head. Loosen tight clothing. Do not force anything between the teeth. Do not try to restrain body movements. After a seizure, faculty should deal forthrightly with the concerns of the class in an effort to forestall whatever negative attitudes may develop.

Students with Psychological Disabilities

DSS requires a letter from a clinical psychologist, psychiatrist, LCSW, or counselor. Documentation needs to be current (within the past year) and may include diagnostic treatment information, and potential medication side effects. Psychological disabilities include, but are not limited to, depression, bipolar disorder (or manic depressive disorder), anxiety disorders, and schizophrenia. Determination of eligibility of services is based on severity, duration, and onset of the disorder. Some students undergoing treatment take prescription medication to help control symptoms. This medication may have side effects such as drowsiness or disorientation.

What are functional limitations?

A disability must limit functioning in one or more major life activities before one can receive an accommodation. The effect of a disability on program access is referred to as a functional limitation. A physical or mental condition, in and of itself, does not necessarily require accommodation. There must be a logical link between the functional limitation stemming from the disability and the accommodation requested. DSS staff first identifies functional limitations through discussion with the student and review of documentation and provides the student with information about the accommodations for which the student is eligible. Lastly, the student chooses the ones believed appropriate for a given situation.

Example: A student who is blind cannot see to read print in textbooks. The disability, blindness, causes the functional limitation, an inability to read printed text. Thus, the student may choose the accommodation of reading the text in an alternative format such as enlarged format, Braille, RFB&D/Daisy, or audio/MP3. On the other hand, blindness doesn't prevent one's ability to take notes during a course lecture when Braille and other electronic devices are available for this task. Therefore, a student who is blind may not be eligible for the accommodation of note-taking services because the functional limitations of blindness do not affect the ability to take notes using Braille or by electronic means.

What is the Responsibility of: DSS, Student with Disability, Faculty?

DSS is responsible for:

- verifying disabilities and need for accommodation
- recommending reasonable accommodations
- teaching students about their rights and responsibilities
- advocating for program access

DSS does not have either the right or the responsibility to look over the shoulders of students with disabilities. Students are ultimately responsible for themselves. DSS works with students and, when appropriate, with their instructors, to determine two things. First, which accommodations are reasonable and second, identify other campus and community services that may be appropriate and refer students to them. DSS gives students some possible designs as well as the tools needed to build a level playing field for themselves. In the end, the access a student builds, in concert with DSS and faculty, is their own.

Student is Responsible for:

- identifying themselves
- requesting reasonable accommodations given their disability in reasonable time
- meeting the academic standards expected of all students

Ultimately, responsibility lies with the student. They must contact DSS and faculty with questions and concerns. Through the cooperation of all parties, timely reasonable accommodations are provided.

Faculty is responsible for:

- being open to accommodating
- providing program access
- meeting with the student to discuss needs
- implementing reasonable accommodations
- maintaining confidentiality

Faculty has a responsibility to assist in the provision of accommodations as described in the Notice of Accommodation letter. Universal design of courses affords equal access to all students with or without disabilities.

Everyone is responsible for:

- problem-solving issues/concerns
- maintaining academic standards for course and degree program

Accommodating Students with Disabilities Check List

This checklist is provided to assist faculty in building an accessible learning environment based on universal design in their courses. Universal design is holistic in nature emphasizing the provision of a multisensory approach to teaching so that more students benefit.

- **Include a statement on the syllabus regarding services.** See 2 examples below:

**If you have a disability for which you will need to request accommodations, please contact the Disability Support Services office (Bristlecone building, Room 103) as soon as possible to arrange for appropriate accommodations.*

**WNC supports providing equal access for students with disabilities. Susan Trist (DSS coordinator) is available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that students may require. Please contact Susan (445-3275) at your earliest convenience.*

- **Grant reasonable accommodations.** Accommodations are changes in the way things are done. They are reasonable so long as course standards aren't fundamentally altered and there is a logical link between the student's disability and the accommodation.
- **Consult with the student.** The student will initiate the discussion by providing an accommodation letter from DSS that details appropriate accommodations. Students are encouraged to set up appointments to discuss one-on-one needs.
- **Verify the existence of the disability and need for accommodation.** DSS will provide an accommodation letter that verifies the student's qualifications for services. Students not presenting a letter, but requesting accommodations can be referred to DSS so appropriateness of the request can be made.
- **Permit students to use auxiliary aides and technologies which ensure access.** Depending on the disability, students may use note takers, sign language interpreters, readers, scribes, and lab assistants. Others may use tape recorder/players, computers, adaptive software, assistive listening devices and other technologies for the same purpose.
- **Grant testing accommodations.** Depending on the particular needs of a student, it may be necessary to extend testing times to one and one-half or double time, provide a quiet environment, alternative testing formats, e.g., audio taping, reader, scribe, enlarged copy, or computer disk for screen reader software. DSS offers testing accommodation services for all of these when they cannot be provided by a department.
- **Regard disability-related discussions and information with confidentiality.** It is important not to violate student confidentiality in any way. Divulge only what a student gives written permission for, i.e., sometimes a student will allow identification to a classroom note taker. Take your cue from the students.

Anticipate that students with disabilities may potentially be in every course. It is not required, however, to anticipate every accommodation that any student with a disability might need prior to the

request. Simply be prepared for the fact that some requests for accommodations will be made. And by all means, expect students with disabilities to successfully meet the requirements of your courses!

Professors' Rights when dealing with students registered with Disability Support Services

A professor has the right to:

- Determine course content and general methods of teaching.
- Make informed decisions about how best to adapt their teaching and assessment methods to accommodate all students.
- Ensure that the standards in their course are not lowered or compromised.
- Ensure that a student has demonstrated mastery of the essential requirements of their course in order to obtain an appropriate grade.
- Fail any student if he/she does not demonstrate mastery of essential course requirements.
- Question a specific accommodation request if it is either inappropriate for their course, or if the nature of the request would alter the essential requirements of a course.
- Determine through consultation with knowledgeable professionals the most appropriate ways to adapt their course to the needs of a particular student.
- Be treated respectfully by all students in their class.

What is a reasonable accommodation?

Reasonable accommodations are changes in the learning environment that allow students with disabilities equal access.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- extended testing times
- note takers
- enlarged course material
- sign language interpreters
- adaptive computer software
- accessible classrooms
- alternative textbook format

DSS coordinates and provides reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities. Accommodations are individualized to address specific functional limitations resulting from a disability. There must be a logical link between the functional limitation and the accommodation.

The Coordinator relies heavily on documentation of the disability when determining accommodations. Also, she draws the student into a discussion of limitations and possible strategies. Accommodations not requested by students will not be provided.

The bottom line is that students with disabilities must perform at satisfactory levels in their academic pursuits at Western Nevada College. If they do not request reasonable accommodations and perform poorly without them, their civil rights have not been violated. The student must then deal with the consequences of unsatisfactory academic progress.

Are these accommodations fair to other students?

This question is often asked of students with disabilities. The underlying assumption of the question is that fairness and equal treatment are synonymous with "the same" treatment. However, the same treatment doesn't always measure fairly.

First, these laws protect students with disabilities from being subjected to the arbitrary measure of what is best for others, except in cases of safety to others. Second, the assumption of the law is that modifying non-essential tasks should give the student with a disability an equal, or fair, chance to demonstrate their ability, minimizing their functional limitations to the greatest extent possible.

Example:

A student whose limitations in the physical task of writing or other fine motor manipulations may be an excellent writer even though they cannot print or type the letters and words. Thus, the physical act of writing is a non-essential task. The student's mastery of language and course material must not, under the law, be judged by their ability to manipulate a pencil or pen, or by use of a keyboard. Accommodating the student by providing a scribe to record the student's essay responses, for example, permits the student to show whether they can write effectively and whether they have acquired the information and critical skills the instructor wished to convey in the course.

A student whose limitations in the way they learn, learning disability, that involves eye hand coordination or thought processing may need accommodations that assist with their learning, i.e., books in alternate format, readers and scribes for tests, screen readers, help with marking scantron sheets, etc. Providing a reader and a scribe may help with effectively expressing the knowledge of the course subjects.

Make a point to give case-by-case consideration as required under law. What one student receives does not necessarily mean all students with disabilities will receive. Fair and just as described in the dictionary means the students takes the same test as everyone else and just means each according to their need. The provision of accommodations is not an issue of fairness but justice.

First, the laws protect students with disabilities from being measured in an area that they cannot show their true level of abilities. Second, reasonable modification allows students with disabilities an equal opportunity to perform at a standard equivalent to students without a disability. While an accommodation may present an advantage to students without a disability, it isn't an advantage for a student with a disability, but an equalizer.

Arranging for Accommodations

Before Accommodations are Implemented

Students with disabilities meet with DSS staff confidentially as a first step in arranging accommodations.

The staff verifies the disability and determines how the disability affects academic work. This is accomplished through discussion with the student and review of documentation. Students with insufficient documentation may be referred to physicians, psychologists or other qualified diagnosticians at the student's expense, for complete assessment before accommodations are granted. On a case by case basis, temporary accommodations may be provided while the student is securing documentation.

Accommodation Process

After the disability and its functional limitations are verified, the student is provided information about the various reasonable accommodations which address the student's disability. The student then chooses the reasonable accommodations that best apply in a given course or semester.

1. Notice of Accommodation letters are hand carried to faculty by student.
2. Faculty member and student discuss implementation of accommodations.
3. DSS is contacted by faculty or student with any problems.

When are accommodations not provided?

WNC provides accommodations unless they fall under one of the following three categories:

- **FUNDAMENTAL ALTERATION:** If an accommodation reduces the academic standards of the College, its schools, departments, or its courses, the College denies the accommodation and deems it unreasonable. Academic standards are essential for any student. Determination of a fundamental alteration is made after discussion with faculty on the essential components of the course or major. Students with disabilities must acquire the same knowledge and skills as other students.
- **UNDUE HARDSHIP:** If an accommodation costs too much or is impossible to administer, the accommodation is deemed unreasonable. An undue administrative burden occurs when the College doesn't have enough time to respond to the request, or when it would be impossible or infeasible to administer. In every instance, the College reserves the right to offer other, equally effective accommodations. In twenty years of case law and findings under Section 504, the federal government has never allowed a post-secondary institution to claim undue financial hardship as a legitimate refusal to provide auxiliary aids or services.
- **PERSONAL SERVICE:** If a request for an accommodation falls under the definition of a personal service, the College is not responsible for providing the request. Personal services are those that a person with a disability must use regardless of attendance at the College. In addition, personal services are those for which no correlation between the disability's functional limitation and program access can be established. The College, for instance, does not purchase wheelchairs or other assistive technologies used in every setting to compensate for a mobility disability. Other examples of personal services may include independent living, mental health, rehabilitation, remediation, tutoring and personal care attendant.

Academic Adjustments

The following is a descriptive list of typical academic accommodations available to students with disabilities. Determination of the appropriateness of any given accommodation is done by DSS prior to implementation by faculty.

Alternative Textbook Format

Students with visual or learning disabilities may arrange to order digital copies of textbooks from Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D) through the DSS institutional membership. The student is responsible for informing the DSS office of books that they need in alternative format. DSS will provide alternative format for textbooks that are not available through RFB&D. Audio/MP3 formats may be available upon request.

Equipment Loan

Students may check out equipment for use in the classrooms.

Adaptive Equipment and Software

Adaptive equipment and software are available in the DSS office and some computer labs and classrooms.

FACULTY TIP SHEET

Teaching Students with Hearing Loss

Deafness or Hearing Impairments

More individuals in the United States have a hearing impairment than any other type of physical disability. A person who is born with a hearing loss may have language deficiencies and exhibit poor vocabulary and syntax. People with acquired deafness may have excellent speech. Some students with hearing loss may use hearing aids and rely on lip reading. Many students learn communication through American Sign Language (ASL).

Hearing Impairment: Refers to any type or degree of auditory impairment.

Deafness: An inability to use hearing as a means of communication.

Useful Tips for working with students who are deaf or hard of hearing

- Don't talk with your back to the class when writing on the board. It destroys any chance of the student getting facial or speech reading cues.
- Make sure you have a deaf student's attention before speaking. A light touch on the arm, a wave or other visual signal will help.

Possible reasonable accommodations:

- Assistive listening devices, Fm Systems
- Sign Language Interpreters
- Note Takers
- Captioning
- Front Row Seating
- Repeat the questions and remarks of other people in the room
- When speaking to the student speak directly to the student, not the interpreter
- Allow time to translate to another language i.e., sign language
- Use visual aids as much as possible
- Provide copies of overheads
- Provide videos and slides with captioning
- Assist with evacuation, if needed

Special Note: Many people who are deaf use American Sign Language (ASL).

They often view themselves as a cultural, linguistic minority. As with any cultural group, people who are deaf have their own values, social norms and traditions.

FACULTY TIP SHEET

Working with a Sign Language Interpreter in the Classroom

Introduction

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing often require classroom accommodations so they can understand and learn the material presented. Some individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing prefer communicating through sign language as opposed to writing, lip reading, or if the individual possesses residual hearing, possibly using a device to amplify sounds.

When sign language is the preferred form of communication, the services of a sign language interpreter may be arranged for the student as a reasonable and useful classroom accommodation to help the student learn and understand course content. Therefore, it is important for both students who are deaf or hard of hearing and instructors who teach these students to know how to utilize the services of an interpreter effectively.

Effective use of interpreting services requires an accurate understanding of the interpreter's role and responsibilities as well as your own role and responsibilities as instructor when an interpreter is present in your classroom. Listed below is a brief definition of the interpreter's job, followed by suggested guidelines that can help make the teaching process go smoothly for you, the interpreter, and most importantly, for the student. For more information on interpreting in the classroom or on teaching students who are deaf or hard of hearing, please contact the Disability support Services office.

Description

A sign language interpreter is a trained professional who facilitates communication and conveys all auditory and signed information so that both hearing and deaf individuals may fully interact.

The interpreter is bound by a code of ethics, which includes keeping all material interpreted strictly confidential. In addition, interpreters are to maintain the integrity of the message, always conveying the content and spirit of the speaker. The interpreter's mission is to facilitate communication; he/she should neither add nor delete any information at any time. Because of the specific nature of the interpreter's role, it is important not to ask the interpreter for his/her opinion or to perform any tasks other than interpreting.

It is also important to keep in mind that sometimes, depending on the length of the class, more than one interpreter will be present. Typically, any class over two hours requires the services of two interpreters who will take turns interpreting, usually at 20-minute intervals.

FACULTY TIP SHEET

Blindness and Visual Impairments

Blindness: Anatomical and functional disturbances of the sense of vision to cause total loss of light perception.

Visual Impairment: Any deviation from the accepted norm that affects peripheral vision, central vision, binocular vision or color vision.

- Useful tips for working with a student who is visually impaired or blind
- Use verbal cues
- Be descriptive in giving directions (“The chair is about two steps to your left”.)
- Do not be embarrassed to use such phrases as “Do you see what I mean?”
- Do not shout
- Offer assistance in an emergency or in evacuation if needed
- Do not take the person’s arm. Let the student grasp your left arm, usually above the elbow.
- Do not pet the student’s guide dog.

Possible reasonable accommodation

- Provide handouts, reading list or syllabi in advance so that the student can transfer into alternate formats (Computer disk or printed material can be helpful)
- Face the class when speaking
- Convey in words whatever is on the board, overhead or video monitor
- Coordination of reader, note taker and scribe may be necessary
- Use of black markers with white boards, avoid colors
- Screen enlargers/magnifiers
- Text readers/scanners or Books on Tape
- Enlarged text exams
- Talking calculators
- Tape recorded lectures
- Braille devices

FACULTY TIP SHEET

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder combined type

AD/HD is a neurobiological disorder that interferes with a person's ability to sustain attention, focus on a task, or delay impulsive behavior.

Common characteristics

- Inability to Focus
- Impulsivity
- Distractibility
- Inattentiveness
- Hyperactivity
- Inappropriate behaviors in social settings
- Reduced ability to follow instructions and/or complete tasks
- Anxiety
- Memory Problems
- Restlessness

Useful tips for interacting or assisting successfully with someone with AD/HD

- Pay attention to providing instructions that are clear and easy to follow
- Give assignments in written form as well as verbally
- Try to create a distraction reduced environment for interactions
- Often the social skills demonstrated by someone with AD/HD can be misconstrued as aloofness or rudeness. Be aware that the impaired social skills are a symptom of AD/HD and not necessarily a representation of the person's lack of interest or concern.

Possible reasonable accommodations

- Extended time of tests
- Separate quiet testing facility
- Tape recorded lectures
- Note taker
- Academic counseling for reduced course load
- Textbooks on tape or CD-Rom
- Use of wireless FM listening system

FACULTY TIP SHEET

Medical/Chronic Health Related Impairments

A wide range of conditions may interfere with stamina and mobility and affect academic functioning.

Common Conditions may include

- Asthma
- Auto Immune diseases
- Diabetes
- Cancer
- Chronic Fatigue Syndrome
- Fibromyalgia
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Muscular Dystrophy

Possible Reasonable Accommodations

- Occasional absences may be unavoidable due to severe pain, extreme fatigue or other health related concerns.
- Testing may need to be flexible to allow students to work during optimal times of the day.
- Progression of an illness may be unpredictable. Extended deadlines or “incomplete” grades should be considered if the work is delayed due to illness or disability issues.
- Tape recorded lectures and or texts
- Note takers or scribes
- Flexibility with exam accommodations such as scheduling proctors, and computer assisted exams.

Other concerns

- Chronic health problems may create secondary disabilities such as depression and anxiety.
- Periodic remissions may allow for added energy and euphoria, while exacerbations may require hospitalizations.

FACULTY TIP SHEET

Psychological or Psychiatric Impairments

Psychological disabilities cover a wide range, including depression, anxiety, and chronic mental illness. Students with psychiatric disabilities may require regular treatment or on occasion, hospitalization. Emotional concerns may manifest themselves in negative or apathetic attitudes and behavior. Remember that these students may have as little control over their disabilities as students with physical disability.

Common Characteristics

- Depression
- Poor concentration
- Irritability
- Fatigue
- Anxiety
- Apathy
- Perception problems
- Physical symptoms
- Learning difficulties

Possible reasonable accommodations

- Academic counseling for a reduced course load
- Exam accommodations (quiet room, extended time, assistive technology)
- Note takers or tape recorded lectures
- Be willing to clarify assignments and performance expectations
- Establish clear boundaries regarding your relationship with students and refer them to counseling if necessary.
- Student may have a relapse that requires hospitalization. "Incomplete" grade may be warranted if this is due to the psychiatric disability.

FACULTY TIP SHEET

Teaching Students with Medical/Mobility Impairments

Developed by Patricia Carlton and Jennifer Hertzfeld

The Ohio State University Partnership Grant Improving the Quality of Education for Students with Disabilities

Description

Mobility impairments are often due to conditions such as cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, or spinal cord injury. Students may use crutches, braces, or a wheelchair, and in a few instances, may be accompanied to class by a Personal Care Attendant (PCA). Medical impairments are often invisible disabilities, caused by such conditions as arthritis, asthma, cancer, orthopedic limitations, post surgery, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, or seizure disorder. The student may have limited energy; difficulty walking, standing, or sitting for a long time; or other disabling characteristics, such as an inability to write.

Functional limitations may be episodic for some students who may experience dizziness, disorientation, and difficulty breathing during a recurrence. For example, with asthma or a seizure disorder, a student may have periods when they function without any accommodations, but at other times their functional limitations are quite severe.

Even with the same disability, students with mobility or medical impairments may have a wide variety of characteristics. For example, persons who have experienced a spinal cord injury are likely to show differing degrees of limitation. They may require different types of class accommodations or may need no accommodations, depending upon functional limitations.

Landmark College – Best Practices

WNC participated in a four year demonstration project with Landmark College and four other community colleges to ensure students with disabilities receive a quality higher education. Grant title: “A Needs-Based Best Practices Professional Development Program for Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities in the Community College Setting”

Below you will find log in instructions to the online modules created as a result of this grant. You will find the content exceptional.

Instructions to create an account & access Demo Disabilities content

- 1) Go to <https://lcirtcourses.landmark.edu> and click on the link to ‘Create new account’
- 2) Fill out the form for a ‘new account’
 - a. You pick a username and password
 - b. Enter your email address at your college or university, so we know which partner institution you are from
 - c. Enter your first name, last name, city/town, country
- 3) After you submit the form, an email confirmation with a link to click on will be automatically sent to you from ‘Technical Support.’
- 4) Once you've clicked on the confirmation link in your email, you can then go to 'Courses' and click on the link to 'Best Practices...'
- 5) You'll be asked for an Enrollment Key. You will only use this the first time you access the course. It is different for each LCIRT course.

Enrollment Key: bestpractices

There is a video demonstration of creating an account at:

http://intranet.landmark.edu/lcirt_courses/moodle-support/

If you have difficulty logging in, please speak with your disability services provider, or email lcirtcourses@landmark.edu

CONTACT US

Disability Support Services

Phone:

775-445-3275

Fax:

775-445-3149

Mailing Address:

Western Nevada College
Disability Support Services
2201 West College Pkwy
Carson City, NV 89703

Web site:

<http://www.wnc.edu/dss/>

Office Hours:

Monday through Friday: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Campus Location:

Bristlecone Building, Room 103

Questions or Comments:

E-mail: trists@wnc.edu