

Mount Olive College

Disability Services Faculty Handbook

Mount Olive College
Teaching & Learning Center
Christa Strube, Director
549 Michael Martin Dr., Waylin Center
(919) 658-2502, ext. 1185
1-800-635-0854, ext. 1185
Fax: (919) 658-7674
www.moc.edu

Last Updated: 7/15/09

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is designed to serve as a tool to help faculty work with students with disabilities in and out of the classroom. Some of you may have worked with a variety of needs in the past; however, some of you may have never had a student with a disability in your classroom. Students with disabilities may or may not be affected in a college classroom setting; however, Mount Olive College does have an obligation to provide eligible students with an equal chance at academic success.

Oftentimes, faculty are ready and willing to help any student, including a student with a disability, but they may not know what is expected of them. This handbook will also help to outline faculty rights and responsibilities and expectations, as well as student rights and responsibilities.

Please also review the tips for teaching students with disabilities and information on specific disabilities. This information may provide additional direction and understanding for faculty.

This handbook was written with the assistance of several resources from other colleges and universities, especially Meredith College, Cuesta College, Delta College, and the University of Kentucky.

Use this handbook as a guide and reference, not the “final word.” It does not cover all situations and all policies and procedures. If you have questions at any time or after reviewing this handbook, please do not hesitate to contact Disability Services at (919)658-2502, ext. 1185.

Thank you for your continued support of your students and of the Teaching and Learning Center.

Sincerely,

Christa Strube

Christa Strube
Director, Teaching and Learning Center
Coordinator, Disability Services

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mount Olive College Disability Services	
Introduction to MOC Disability Services and the Law	4
General Services of Disability Services	5
Student Eligibility and Disclosure	6
Faculty Announcements and Syllabus Statements	7
Rights and Responsibilities	
Mount Olive College Responsibilities	8
Student Rights and Responsibilities	8
Faculty Rights and Responsibilities	9
Working with Students with Disabilities	
Disability Myths and Facts	10
Disability Etiquette	11
Teaching Students with Disabilities	12
Teaching Students with Specific Disabilities	13
Visual Impairments	13
Hearing Impairments	14
Mobility Impairments	15
Medical Disabilities	16
Learning Disabilities	17
ADD / ADHD	18
Psychological / Psychiatric Disabilities	19
Universal Design: Teaching Techniques for Accessible Learning	20
Advising Students with Disabilities	21
Accommodations and Services	
Reasonable Accommodations	22
List of Possible Accommodations	23
Policies and Procedures for Supplemental Notetaking	24
Faculty Resources	25

INTRODUCTION TO MOUNT OLIVE COLLEGE DISABILITY SERVICES (DS) AND THE LAW

Mount Olive College affirms its commitment to nondiscrimination on the basis of disability and its intention to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Mount Olive College will provide appropriate and reasonable accommodations and support services for its students with self-disclosed disabilities, as defined by these laws.

Disability Services assists the College in complying with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which states that “no qualified individual with disabilities shall, on the basis of their disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of or be subject to discrimination under any post-secondary program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.” Disability Services also assists the college in complying with the ADA, which provides comprehensive civil rights protection from discrimination for “individuals with disabilities.”

As defined by the ADA, an “individual with a disability” is a person who:

- Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, or
- Has a record of such an impairment, or
- Is regarded (perceived by others) as having such an impairment.

“Major life activities” include functions such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.

The mission of Mount Olive College Disability Services is:

1. To assist students with disabilities in overcoming environmental, educational, and attitudinal barriers and to provide the academic support services and accommodations to have equal access to Mount Olive College.
2. To promote university awareness of the needs and capabilities of students with disabilities.
3. To serve as a resource to and for members of the university community, prospective students, parents, and members of the public.

Mount Olive College Disability Services are coordinated by and housed in the Teaching and Learning Center.

GENERAL SERVICES OF DISABILITY SERVICES

What we do:

- Offer pre-admissions information
- Certify eligibility for services
- Determine reasonable accommodations
- Facilitate accommodations with student and related faculty and/or departments
- Refer students to appropriate services, such the Teaching and Learning Center (TLC), Counseling Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, diagnostic services, etc.
- Offer opportunities for student, faculty, and staff awareness
- Obtain and maintain all disability-related paperwork

What we do not do as covered under Section 504 and ADA:

- Provide formal diagnostic evaluations. The student is responsible for providing up to date documentation at their own cost.
- Provide separate/special classes for students with disabilities.
- Provide tutorial services other than the Teaching and Learning Center. All students, whether registered with Disability Services or not, have the same access to free tutoring through the TLC.
- Provide exemption from graduation requirements.
- Alter course and / or program requirements and standards for students with disabilities.
- Provide attendants, individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, and other devices of personal nature.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY AND DISCLOSURE

Student Eligibility

In order to receive services, the student with a disability has an obligation to:

- Self-identify that he/she has a disability
- Self-identify the need for accommodation
- Provide documentation of the disability

Student Disclosure to Disability Services

Some students with disabilities will identify themselves as such by contacting Disability Services. DS will request documentation and determine eligibility and accommodations.

Faculty Accommodation Agreement Letter

At the beginning of the semester, faculty may be approached by a student with a disability who has a Faculty Accommodation Agreement Letter that outlines approved accommodations. This means that students have been deemed eligible by Disability Services. It is inappropriate to inquire about the details of the disability, but you can ask the student how the disability will affect specific tasks required in your course. Also see "Reasonable Accommodations."

Students who Disclose to Instructors

At times, students with disabilities may not disclose to Disability Services, but instead, they may disclose to an instructor. If a student approaches you to disclose a disability without a "Faculty Accommodation Agreement Letter," refer him/her to Disability Services. If a student tries to show you medical documentation, **do not accept it** or look at it; return it to the student for him/her to take to Disability Services.

Students who Disclose Late in the Semester

Students, especially those with "hidden" disabilities, may not disclose at the beginning of a semester - or at all - because of shame, their distaste for pity, or their fear of disbelief either about the legitimacy of their problem or the need for accommodation. Such students, in the absence of instructional adjustment, may run into trouble in their college work. In a panic, they may self-identify just before or after an examination and expect instant attention to their needs.

In these cases, DS will issue a Faculty Accommodation Agreement Letter as soon as the student is determined eligible; then accommodations can begin. *Note that accommodations are not retroactive.* You need not re-administer tests or make adjustments to course activities/grades that have already occurred if the student makes a request late in the semester.

Students who Don't Disclose / Faculty Referrals

For various reasons, students may not wish to request accommodations and/or services from Disability Services. This student will not have a Faculty Accommodation Agreement Letter, but the professor may realize or suspect that the student has a disability. In these instances, it is inappropriate to ask students if they have a disability. However, if you are concerned about the student, you may wish to meet individually with him/her to inquire about what might be affecting progress in your course. Perhaps the student will disclose after all. If so, refer him/her to Disability Services. If the student still doesn't disclose, you might provide a list of campus resources, including Disability Services.

FACULTY ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SYLLABUS STATEMENTS

In order to inform students about Disability Services, it is recommended that professors make an announcement during the first week of class and also include a statement advertising Disability Services in their syllabus.

Below are sample announcements and statements to be used by faculty:

Sample Syllabus Statement:

“Mount Olive College does not discriminate against qualified students with documented disabilities in its educational programs. If you have a disability-related need for accommodations in this course, contact the Director of the Teaching and Learning Center at (919) 658-2502, ext.1185. Also, please notify your instructor during the first week of class of any special needs or concerns.”

Sample Class Announcement:

“If you have a documented disability and need an academic accommodation, please contact Christa Strube, Coordinator of Disability Services, at (919) 658-7792.”

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Mount Olive College Responsibilities

Under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the college has the following responsibilities:

- To prohibit discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities
- To reduce or eliminate physical, academic, and attitudinal barriers
- To provide reasonable accommodations
- To maintain the strictest of confidentiality
- To develop a shared responsibility and community for individuals with disabilities
- To assist the student in self-advocacy
- To assist the student in problem solving
- To guide the student to possible resources that might assist him/her, whether it is on campus or networking within the community

Student Rights

Under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students have the following rights:

- To not be denied access to courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities offered through the college due to a disability
- To receive reasonable accommodations that provide equal opportunity
- To have access to auxiliary aids and/or assistive technology
- To not be counseled towards “more restrictive careers”
- To receive assistance from Disability Services in removing any physical, academic, and/or attitudinal barriers
- To not be discriminated against due to a disability or receive any retaliatory discrimination
- Appropriate confidentiality of all information regarding their disabilities and to choose to whom information about their disabilities will be disclosed
- Information available in accessible forms

Student Responsibilities

Under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students have the following responsibilities:

- Meet qualifications and maintain essential institutional standards for courses, programs, services, jobs, and activities
- Self-identify a disability if they wish to receive services
- Self-identify the need for accommodations and request them
- Demonstrate and/or document (from an appropriate professional) how the disability limits their participation in courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities
- Follow procedures for obtaining reasonable accommodations
- Adhere to all Disability Services policies and procedures
- Provide own personal independent living needs or other personal disability needs
- To abide by the Mount Olive College Code of Conduct and Academic Honor Policy

Faculty Rights

Under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), faculty have the following rights:

- **Documentation:** Faculty have the right to Request verification of a student's eligibility for any requested accommodations. Such verification will be in the form of a letter written by the Coordinator of Disability Services and delivered by the student. Disability Services is the only office designated to review disability documentation and determine eligibility for appropriate accommodations.
- **Accommodations:** Expect the student to initiate accommodation requests and testing arrangements. Faculty also have the right to challenge accommodations if they believe the student is not qualified and/or if the accommodation would result in a fundamental alteration of the program or course.

Faculty Responsibilities

Under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), faculty have the following responsibilities:

- **Accommodations:** As an employee of Mount Olive College, which has compliance obligations under federal law, it is the responsibility of the faculty member to assume a shared responsibility in providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Faculty should also act immediately upon getting a student's request for accommodations by meeting with the student, contacting DS (if you have questions), and providing the service.
- **Evaluation:** Identify and establish essential functions, abilities, skills, and knowledge of their courses and evaluate students on this basis. Students with disabilities should meet the same course expectations as their peers.
- **Confidentiality:** Students with disabilities are covered under FERPA and civil rights laws. Treat and protect all disability-related information as confidential medical information. For example, keep printed items such as emails regarding student disability-related information in a protected location. Also, at no time should the faculty member make any statements or implications that the student is any different from the general student population.

DISABILITY MYTHS AND FACTS

Listed below are some common myths about people with disabilities and the facts. The myths below usually result from a lack of experience and interaction with persons with disabilities.

Myth	Fact
People with disabilities feel more comfortable around other people with disabilities.	This myth may have arisen from the many years of segregated learning and living environments. Years ago it was common to see people with disabilities grouped together, but it is no longer the case.
If you do not have a disability, you are insensitive toward people with disabilities.	Everyone will have a disability at some time, be it a broken leg or an impairment that comes with aging. Stereotyping people without disabilities is as wrong as stereotyping people with disabilities.
People with disabilities are special, heroic, and courageous.	People with disabilities can be as annoying, inspiring, creative, and rude as anyone.
People with disabilities need to be protected from failing.	People with disabilities have a right to participate in the full range of human experiences including success and failure.
People with disabilities have different goals than people without disabilities.	Because people with disabilities have all types of cultural, social, and economic backgrounds, their goals can be as different as any two persons' goals are.
People with disabilities have problems getting around.	People with disabilities know what they need to get from point A to B and may use a walker, wheelchair, or bus to get there. Problems only arise when architectural or attitudinal barriers get in the way.
People with disabilities are usually very sedate and unable to participate in recreational activities.	People with disabilities lead diverse lives and take part in any sport or hobby you can think of including: mountain climbing, kayaking, dancing, horseback riding, and snow skiing.
When all the architectural barriers are removed, people with disabilities will be completely equal members of society.	Attitudinal barriers often prove to be the most difficult barriers for people with disabilities to navigate.

Source: University of Kentucky's Engaging Differences Project
http://www.uky.edu/TLC/grants/uk_ed/etiquetteintro.html

DISABILITY ETIQUETTE

Although students with disabilities should be treated no differently than other students, there are some things to remember when interacting with students with disabilities.

Ask before doing.

Don't assume people with disabilities need your help. Ask if you can be of assistance.

Be aware of your language.

Using terms like "student with disability" rather than "disabled student" puts the emphasis on the person rather than on his/her disability.

Other language that is encouraged includes, "personal with a disability," "person who has [epilepsy]," "person who uses a wheelchair," and "person who is [deaf or hard of hearing]."

Language to avoid includes, "crippled, handicapped, invalid, the disabled, the blind, victim of . . . , stricken with . . . , wheelchair-bound, insane, epileptic, retarded, deaf-mute, etc."

Relax.

Don't be afraid to approach someone with a disability. Don't worry about using words like "walk" with a person using a wheelchair. Treat a person with a disability just as you would like to be treated and just as you would treat anyone else.

Speak directly to the student.

Don't consider a companion or interpreter to be a go-between. Speak directly to the student and make eye contact.

Give your full attention.

Be considerate of the extra time it may take for a person with a disability to get something done or said. Don't talk for the person who has difficulty speaking, but give help when needed. Keep your manner encouraging rather than correcting.

Speak slowly and distinctly.

When talking to a person who is hard of hearing or has other difficulty understanding, speak slowly without exaggerating your lip movement. Stand in front of the person and use gestures to aid communication. Many students who are deaf or hard of hearing rely on being able to read lips. When full understanding is doubtful, write notes.

Appreciate abilities.

Students with disabilities, like those without disabilities, do some things well and some not as well. By focusing on what they can do, not what they can't do, you can help build confidence.

Use common sense.

Although some students with disabilities may require significant adaptation and modification in the classroom, more often common sense approaches can be applied to ensure that students have access to course content.

Source: Cuesta College - <http://academic.cuesta.edu/acasupp/DSPS/7etiquet.htm>

TEACHING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students bring a unique set of strengths and experiences to college, and students with disabilities are no exception. While many learn in different ways, their differences do not imply inferior capacities. There is no need to dilute curriculum or to reduce course requirements for the student with a disability. However, special accommodations may be needed, as well as modifications in the way information is presented and in methods of testing. Faculty will be aided in these efforts by drawing upon the student's own prior learning experiences, using available college and department resources, and collaborating with MOC Disability Services.

Specific suggestions for teaching disabled students can be further discussed with DS; however, the following general considerations may be helpful:

Dividing the Responsibilities

To the extent manageable, students with disabilities bear the primary responsibility, not only for identifying their disabilities, but for making necessary adjustments to the learning environment (e.g. for reading and taking notes). For testing arrangements and some other course/classroom accommodations, the cooperation of the faculty member is vital.

Faculty-Student Relationships

Dialogue between the student and instructor is essential early in the term, and follow-up meetings are recommended. Faculty should not feel apprehensive about discussing the student's disability as it relates to the course. The student's own suggestions, based on experience with the disability and with school work, are invaluable in accommodating disabilities in college.

Attendance and Promptness

The student using a wheelchair or other assistive devices may encounter obstacles or barriers in getting to class on time. Others may have periodic or irregular curtailments of functioning, either from their disability or from medication. Flexibility in applying attendance and promptness rules to such students would be helpful.

Classroom Adjustments

A wide range of students who are disabled may be served in the classroom by professors making book lists available prior to the beginning of the term, planning thoughtful seating arrangements, speaking directly toward the class, and writing key lecture points and assignments on the chalkboard.

Functional Problems

In addition to the adjustments for each category of disability, some understanding is required in coping with more subtle and sometimes unexpected manifestations of disability. Chronic weakness and fatigue characterize some disabilities and medical conditions. Drowsiness, fatigue or impairments of memory or speed may result from prescribed medications. Such curtailments of functioning and interference with the student's ability to perform should be distinguished from the apathetic behavior it may resemble.

Testing and Evaluation

Depending on the disability, the student may require the use of readers and/or scribes, extended time for exams, a modification of the test format, and/or other modifications. The objective of such special considerations should always be to accommodate the student's learning differences, not to water down scholastic requirements. The same standards should be applied to disabled students as to all other students in evaluation and assigning grades.

Source: Cuesta College - <http://academic.cuesta.edu/acasupp/DSPS/7TEACHUS.HTM>

TEACHING STUDENTS WITH SPECIFIC DISABILITIES

Below are definitions of certain types of disabilities, practical suggestions for how to work with students with certain disabilities, and specific possible accommodations.

Students with Visual Impairments

A small minority of people are actually totally blind; most are considered "legally blind." Difficulties experienced by individuals with visual impairments may include: recurring eye strain while reading, inability to read standardized print, inability to read poor quality print or certain colors of print, and sensitivity to bright light. Students who have been blind since birth, or shortly after, have no visual memories. Their concept of objects, space, and distance may be different from those who became blind later in life. Mobility skills of individuals may vary also, depending on the age of onset of blindness and the quality and extent of mobility training and mobility talent. Some students who are blind will use Braille with competence, but many do not use it at all. Most students with visual impairments can acquire information through listening. Some students who are blind are competent typists, but their written communication and spelling skills sometimes reflect their natural dependency on audio transmission of information.

Specific suggestions for working effectively with students who are vision impaired:

- When you introduce yourself, announce your presence and speak directly to him/her, never an assistant. The next time you see him/her, you may have to reintroduce yourself and explain the context in which you first met.
- Treat the student with visual impairments very much like you would any other student. Use phrases like "see you later" without being self-conscious.
- If you are in a room alone with a person who is blind, explain what you are doing, such as shuffling papers or making a phone call. Tell him/her when someone comes in the room or when you leave the room.
- It is never impolite to ask if a student with a visual impairment needs or would like assistance.
- When using visual aids in the class, be as descriptive as possible. Words like "this" or "that" can be confusing. Read aloud any notes from the board or overheads.
- Convert spatial directions to the student's perspective.
- Make copies of overhead materials or diagrams so that the student can later ask an assistant to describe the information in detail or so that the student can scan it into a computer.
- Provide a list of readings before the start of the semester to allow for document conversion.
- A student may use a Guide Dog. These dogs have been trained to guide people who are blind, to keep out of the way, and to be quiet. These working dogs should not be treated as pets and should not be petted while working.
- When relocation of a class is necessary, a note on the chalk or door is not adequate. It would be helpful to have a sighted student wait for the visually impaired student to arrive.

Possible Accommodations:

- Alternative testing (extended time, reader, scribe, distraction reduced setting, and/or computer)
- Materials in alternate format (larger font, emailed, etc.)
- Note-taking assistance
- Tape recorder in class
- Textbooks on tape
- Reader services
- Other

Students with Hearing Impairments

More individuals in the United States have a hearing impairment than any other type of physical disability. A hearing impairment is any type of auditory impairment while deafness is an inability to use hearing as a means of communication. Hearing loss is measured in decibels and may be mild, moderate, or profound. A person who is born with a hearing loss may have language deficiencies and exhibit poor vocabulary and syntax.

Definitions

- *Hearing Impairment:* A generic term used to describe all types of hearing defects ranging from a minute loss to profound deafness
- *Hard of Hearing:* A specific condition in which hearing is defective to varying degrees; usually a hearing aid can enhance the understanding of speech
- *Deaf or Deafness:* An inability to use hearing as a means of communication; hearing aids can enhance awareness of vibrations such as horns or sirens, but not speech

Specific suggestions for working effectively with students who are hearing impaired:

- Be sure to face the student when talking. Speak slowly and do not over exaggerate your lip movements. Keep your hands away from your face. Students with hearing impairments often rely on lip reading.
- Lighting is very important when communicating with a deaf or hard of hearing person. Try to talk where there is adequate, well distributed light.
- Using facial expressions, gestures, and other "body language" is helpful in conveying your message.
- Allow the student to have preferential seating so that view is not obstructed or so that they can maximize use of the good ear.
- Use visual media as much as possible in presenting course-related information.
- Use captioned videos or provide transcripts of the video in advance.
- Avoid speaking while handing out papers or writing on a chalkboard.
- Acknowledge the speaker and repeat comments and questions so that the student can participate in class discussions.
- Students with hearing disabilities may also have speech and/or language impairments. They may also have difficulty acquiring new vocabulary and written communication.

- Because of a time lag between the spoken word and the interpretation, the student's contribution to the lecture or discussion may be slightly delayed. Although this does not affect a student's ability to learn new information, some difficulty in the acquisition of new vocabulary may lead to reluctance to participate in class.

Possible Accommodations

- Alternative testing (extended time, reader, scribe, distraction reduced setting, and/or computer)
- Note-taking assistance
- Interpreter
- Other

Students with Mobility Impairments

A variety of orthopedic/mobility related disabilities result from congenital conditions, accidents, or progressive neuro-muscular diseases. These disabilities include conditions such as spinal cord injury, cerebral palsy, amputation, muscular dystrophy, cardiac conditions, cystic fibrosis, paralysis, polio/post-polio, and stroke. Functional limitations and abilities vary widely even within one group of disabilities. Students with mobility impairments may use wheelchairs, crutches, braces, walkers, or canes; however, not all students with mobility impairments require mobility aids.

Specific suggestions for working effectively with students who are mobility impaired:

- Most students who use wheelchairs will ask for assistance if they need it. Do not assume automatically that assistance is required. Offer assistance if you wish, but do not insist, and be willing to accept a "No, thank you" graciously.
- A wheelchair is part of the person's body space. Do not automatically lean on the chair; it is similar to hanging or leaning on the person.
- When talking to a student in a wheelchair for more than a few minutes, sit down if possible in order to be on a similar level.
- Be considerate of tardiness. Students with mobility impairments may require more time to get to and from classes because the accessible travel routes are sometimes round about and they have more difficulty making up for time lost when an earlier class is held overtime. Other reasons for these students occasionally being late are waiting for assistance in opening doors, maneuvering along crowded paths and corridors, and relying on transportation. If a student who uses a wheelchair or has another mobility related disability is frequently late, it is, of course, appropriate to discuss the situation with him/her and seek solutions. Most students will schedule their classes with ample time between them; however, this is not always possible.
- Arrange special seating arrangements if necessary.
- If the location of your office is inaccessible, please meet the student in an accessible location.
- If a class involves field work or field trips, ask the student to participate in the selection of sites and modes of transportation. The student will be able to tell you his/her specific limitations. Special arrangements may have to be made for field trips when students have

difficulty transferring from wheelchair to other vehicles. Please contact DS in these instances.

Possible Accommodations

- Alternative testing (extended time, reader, scribe, distraction reduced setting, and/or computer)
- In-class scribe
- Note-taking assistance
- Textbooks on tape
- Adapted equipment
- Other

Students with Medical Disabilities or Other Health Impairments

A wide range of medical conditions may interfere with a student's ability to attend lectures and tutorials, complete assignments by due dates, or be assessed in the usual ways. Students with neurological diseases may also have mobility and/or vision impairment. Students with epilepsy may have damage to the part of the brain that affects speech. There may be a lack of balance and coordination with some conditions, as well as chronic fatigue. Medical disabilities may include health problems such as cancer, epilepsy, asthma, diabetes, multiple sclerosis, AIDS, etc.

Specific suggestions for working effectively with students with medical disabilities:

- Some medical conditions leave students vulnerable to a wide range of infections and viruses; frequent absenteeism due to hospitalization and/or medical changes may be possible.
- Some students may have difficulty persisting with tasks especially when physical discomfort is an issue.
- Some medications may result in lethargy and concentration difficulties. This may make a student less likely to participate actively in class discussions.
- Mood swings and depression may be associated with chronic medical conditions.
- Students may sometimes exhibit anxiety, particularly if there is a history of unexpected "episodes" in public.
- Some students may have had gaps in their educational experience as a result of periods of hospitalization, which may cause a lack in confidence in their learning abilities.
- Symptoms may fluctuate, varying in severity even over relatively short periods of time. Some medical disabilities are progressively degenerative. The course of these diseases is highly unpredictable.

Possible Accommodations:

- Alternative testing (extended time)
- Note-taking assistance with absences due to disability
- Flexibility with attendance policy. Discuss this with Disability Services and student.
- Other

Students with Learning Disabilities

Learning Disability (LD) is a generic term for a group of disorders which affect the manner in which individuals with average or above average intelligence acquire, store, retrieve, and express information. A learning disability is characterized by a marked discrepancy between intellectual capacity and achievement in processing information that affects a person's performance in one or more academic areas, such as math, reading, and/or writing. The effects of a learning disability can differ among students depending on the severity of their disability and the academic areas impacted. Thus, a variety of instructional strategies can enhance the learning of students with learning disabilities. It is crucial to use the student's own experiences to determine the most effective accommodation for instruction.

Definitions

Learning Disabilities are:

- *Permanent:* A learning disability is not a disease, so there is no cure, but there are ways to overcome the challenges it poses through identification and accommodation.
- *Often inconsistent:* A person may have problems on Monday but not on Thursday. The LD may cause problems in grade school, seem to disappear in high school, and reappear in college. It may manifest itself in only one specific area such as math or writing.
- *Frustrating:* Persons with learning disabilities often have to deal not only with functional limitations, but also with the frustration of "proving" that their invisible disability is as handicapping as any other.

Specific suggestions for working effectively with students who are learning disabled:

- Provide and adhere to a comprehensive syllabus which includes due dates for readings, assignments, and test dates.
- Make required reading list available prior to the first day of class.
- Give instructions clearly and concisely in both oral and written form.
- Use verbal and visual highlighting for major concepts or terminology (e.g. outline class presentations and write new terms and key points on the chalkboard).
- Provide access to lecture outlines, notes, study guides, and/or copies of overheads
- Read aloud material that is written on the chalkboard, in handouts, or overheads and verbally describe any charts, graphs, etc.
- Repeat and summarize segments of the lecture and briefly review its entirety at the end of class. Start each class with a brief overview of the previous class' information.
- Illustrate abstract concepts using concrete examples.
- Break down assignments if/when possible and give plenty of warning when changes are made to the schedule or task.
- Use clear, concise directions on exams and group similar types of questions together.
- Encourage students to form study and discussion groups.
- Encourage active use of office hours for information clarification.
- Create a low-anxiety situation for optimal learning.
- Approach teaching and learning from a multi-sensory perspective.

Possible Accommodations:

- Alternative testing (extended time, reader, scribe, distraction reduced setting, etc.)
- Use of tape recorder
- Use of calculator / spell-check
- Note-taking assistance
- Other

Students with Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD / ADHD)

ADD / ADHD is thought to be genetic and caused by a chemical imbalance of the neurotransmitters in the brain. Students with ADD/ADHD have a short attention span and difficulty concentrating. They may be easily distracted and have difficulty listening to lectures as well as starting and finishing assignments. Some students are hyperactive and fidgety; others may appear to be constantly wired or “spacey.”

Specific suggestions for working effectively with students who are ADD/ADHD:

Many students with ADD/ADHD would benefit from the use of strategies previously presented in the section on learning disabilities. Additional strategies that also might be helpful in working effectively with students who have ADD/ADHD are:

- Provide clear explanations of tasks and specific due-dates.
- Remind students of impending deadlines as the semester progresses.
- Provide an outline with broad margins and triple-space to aid organization.
- Vary the presentation format (i.e., lecture, presentations, discussion) and permit breaks during a class session.
- Invite students to sit near the front of the class, away from possible sources of distraction.
- Use more than one way to demonstrate or explain information.
- Break information into small steps when teaching many new tasks or concepts.
- Provide information about assignments in written form.
- Keep instructions brief and as uncomplicated as possible.
- Allow time for clarification of directions and essential information.
- Set deadlines for smaller parts of a large project or long paper.

Possible Accommodations:

- Alternative testing (extended time, distraction reduced setting, etc.)
- Use of tape recorder
- Note-taking assistance
- Other

Students with Psychological / Psychiatric Impairments

The term “psychological impairment” can be applied to students with a range of psychological disabilities from depression to schizophrenia. These students may be impacted in the educational setting due to difficulty focusing and maintaining concentration, difficulty completing work within deadlines, trouble remembering things, negative side-effects of medication (drowsiness, headaches), and the search for the most effective medication. Students with psychological disabilities may also have difficulties relating to people. However, people with these disabilities are not necessarily violent. These issues can vary in severity from day to day and in relation to the student’s amount of stress.

IMPORTANT: Students with disabilities, including psychological disabilities, are subject to the same code of conduct as all students at MOC, as stated in the MOC Student Handbook.

Specific suggestions for working effectively with students who are psychologically impaired:

- Discuss inappropriate behavior with the student privately. Explain acceptable conduct as well as inappropriate conduct in class.
- Refer the student to Counseling Services for therapeutic help or crisis management. Refer abusive or threatening behavior to the Academic Affairs office and other administrators.
- Invite the student to sit near the front of the class, away from possible sources of distraction.
- Provide information about assignments in written form.
- Set deadlines for smaller parts of a large project or long paper.
- Provide clear explanations of tasks and specific due-dates.
- Remind students of impending deadlines as the semester progresses.
- Be calm and supportive. Pressuring the individual may increase the impact of the disability.

Possible accommodations:

- Allow time extensions for assignments delayed by student's needs – specifically bed rest or hospitalization.
- Provide alternate methods for completing assignments.
- Allow the student to tape lectures or use a note-taker.
- Allow time extensions for exams
- Provide exams in a separate, quiet setting
- Other

UNIVERSAL DESIGN: TEACHING TECHNIQUES FOR ACCESSIBLE LEARNING

Following are some common teaching techniques being used by faculty in colleges and universities. These may not be “accommodations,” but they can be helpful. These techniques improve learning for all students in addition to providing access for students with different disabilities:

- Provide and adhere to a comprehensive course syllabus which includes due dates for readings, assignments, and test dates.
- Discuss organizational / study skills strategies pertinent to the course (note taking, outlining, reading textbook, etc.)
- Provide access to lecture outlines, notes and/or copies of overheads for students to reference after class, or assist qualified students in finding a student note taker.
- Speak clearly and slowly if you normally speak quickly or have an accent.
- Introduce each lecture with a brief overview of the previous class information.
- Use verbal and visual highlighting for major concepts and terminology, e.g. write key concepts and new terminology on the board.
- Give assignments concisely in both orally and in written form.
- Break down assignments if/when possible and give plenty of warning when changes are made to the schedule or task.
- Use clear, concise directions on exams.
- Verbally describe or explain charts, diagrams and graphs.
- When possible, demonstrate new procedures.
- Verbally discuss information on the board or on transparencies.
- Encourage active use of office hours for information clarification.
- Use cooperative learning techniques.
- Encourage students to tape lectures
- Encourage students to form study and discussion groups.
- Create a low anxiety situation for optimal learning in the whole class.
- Approach teaching and learning from a multi-sensory perspective.
- Use materials and activities that focus on students' experiences, opinions and reactions.
- Use accessible technology, e.g., computers, assistive listening equipment, captioned videos, etc.

ADVISING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

A student may tell his/her advisor of his/her disability. If so, the student's specific disability should be considered in planning the student's schedule.

Possible issues and questions to consider when advising a student with a disability:

Putting together a manageable schedule:

- When are you most alert? Early morning or afternoon?
- Do your joints ache / body ache in early morning?
- Topics regarding trigger reaction (e.g. seizure, anxiety, etc.)
- Do difficult topics require more time (e.g. math, foreign language)?
- Do you need time to eat and take medication(s) at certain time(s) of the day?
- Amount of time required to pay attention, be seated in class (1 v. 1 ½ hrs.)
- Number days/week of being in-class for continuity and practice (2 v. 3)
-

Factors/variables to consider when choosing classes:

- Class format (small group discussion v. larger lecture)
- Class time of day (see above)
- Teaching style
- Exam format (essay v. multiple choice)
- Amount of reading
- Number of credit hours (manageable, staying on course to graduation, scholarship requirements?)

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Reasonable accommodation of a disability generally means reasonable adjustment of the learning environment to reduce or eliminate, as much as possible, barriers to learning encountered by the student based on his/her documented disability.

According to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students of Mount Olive College with documented disabilities may receive reasonable accommodations. The need for accommodation can range from presentation of materials to format of exams, but the underlying purpose of these accommodations is to enable students to be evaluated on the basis of their abilities, not their disabilities.

At the beginning of a semester, you may be approached with a student with a disability who has a Faculty Accommodation Agreement Letter from Disability Services. The letter will state classroom and/or testing accommodations for the student based on his or her disability. With this letter, the instructor can assume that the student has provided documentation and the accommodations are appropriate based on the student's documented disability. Even though accommodations will be determined by Disability Services, faculty may want to make a suggestion for a specific course. You should discuss the specific course applications with the student and contact the Coordinator of Disability Services with any questions. By signing this letter, an instructor agrees to provide these accommodations for the student if/when needed. If you believe that a recommended accommodation is unreasonable, please discuss your concerns with the Coordinator of Disability Services.

Occasionally, no accommodations are requested, but the student will provide the letter as a means to notify the instructor of the disability in case they may be requested later in the semester.

IMPORTANT: A faculty member should not provide accommodations or make modifications for a student unless he/she provides a Faculty Accommodation Agreement Letter. It could be problematic if a student, without this letter, asks a professor for an accommodation, such as additional time on a test because he/she has a learning disability, and the professor provides it. Future professors may not honor this request, and, unfortunately, a precedent has been set. It can be very difficult for Disability Services to explain to students that they may not actually qualify for services.

Even though the Faculty Accommodation Agreement Letter does not specify the disability, most students will explain their disability to instructors, and of course, you may ask them for more information. However, you should not directly inquire into the diagnosis. You may contact Disability Services regarding the student's specific disability and needs. If the student has signed a Release of Information Form, the information may be shared.

Although a student may be entitled to receive accommodations, he/she is still expected to meet the instructor's expectations and course requirements.

LIST OF POSSIBLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Examples of reasonable accommodations include, but are not limited to:

Accommodations provided by the instructor:

- When requested, providing a syllabus to Disability Services prior to the start of a semester so that written materials and texts can be put into an alternative format for the student (i.e. on tape, electronic format, Braille)
- Allowing the use of a tape recorder
- Providing an enlarged copy of printed materials
- Testing with special circumstances (alternate formats, locations, extra time, etc.)
- Providing a written copy of lecture notes or overheads
- Seeing that wheelchair accessible furniture is properly placed
- Assisting the student in finding a volunteer to take notes (see note-taking information to follow)
- Allowing the student to participate or demonstrate knowledge in a non-conventional way
- Providing other appropriate modifications that facilitate inclusion of the student with a disability
- Use of a computer for in-class assignments and note-taking when and if appropriate
- Preferential seating

Accommodations provided by Disability Services:

- Assistive technology (CCTV, JAWS, other)
- Hiring and scheduling sign language interpreters, readers, or scribes
- Converting textbooks or other classroom materials into a format that is appropriate for the student (i.e. on tape, electronic format, Braille)
- Administering tests in special circumstances
- Providing appropriate modifications that assist the instructor in meeting the student's needs in the classroom or in any program or service offered by the college
- Relocation of classrooms upon request and advanced notice

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR NOTETAKING ACCOMMODATION

Notetaking services are provided as a reasonable accommodation for students with documented disabilities that interfere with the individual's ability to take adequate notes in class. The student is encouraged to attend classes first to determine for which classes notetaking is a necessity.

It is the responsibility of the student approved to receive the notetaking accommodation to locate individuals who will take notes for him/her. The notetaker should be someone who is currently enrolled in the same course as the student. The notetaker should also be someone who is punctual and consistent in attendance; someone who is physically and mentally attentive in class; and someone who takes legible, organized, and complete notes.

Suggestions for locating a volunteer notetaker:

- If the student is comfortable, he/she can directly ask someone in the class to volunteer to share notes. This will allow the student to establish a good relationship with the notetaker. The professor would not need to be involved.
- The student can ask the professor to assist in locating a volunteer notetaker. Professors can either make recommendations or make an anonymous announcement regarding the need for a notetaker. It is recommended that the student remind the professor of confidentiality before an announcement is made. Disability Services will provide students with a memo to give to professors regarding how to assist and announce.
- If no classmate volunteers, the student is encouraged to discuss options with the coordinator of Disability Services as soon as possible.

Once a notetaker has been identified, the student and the notetaker should arrange a system for sharing notes that works for both. Contact information should also be exchanged. There are several options that might work:

- The notetaker may use the copy machine in downstairs Henderson or in the Disability Services office in the Waylin Center. The notetaker can get the notes to the student at a time and place convenient to both. The notetaker should contact Disability Services for copier instructions.
- If the student receiving services wishes to remain anonymous, the student receiving services is responsible for notifying the coordinator of Disability Services so that a mailbox in the Disability Services office, or another convenient location, can be set up where the notes will be deposited by the notetaker and picked up by the student. The notetaker will be notified by the professor of this arrangement.

FACULTY RESOURCES

The resources below provide additional information on general disability services and specific disabilities. Some of the resources offer suggested teaching strategies that may be helpful when working with a student with a disability. If you have any concerns or questions, you are encouraged to contact the Coordinator of Disability Services.

Internet Resources

www.moc.edu/academics/tlc.cfm

MOC Teaching and Learning Center website. Select “Faculty Resources” or “Disability Services” for several useful Internet links and student/faculty handbooks.

Resources Available at the Teaching and Learning Center

Copies of the following references are available at the TLC:

1. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) handbook

Resource notebooks have been compiled including articles, handouts, fact sheets, and other references related to different learning, physical, and psychological disabilities. These are located inside the TLC Resource Library in the “Disability Services” section. Some of the topics included in this reference manual are listed below:

1. College students and adults with Disabilities
2. Information on various types of Learning Disabilities (definitions, explanations)
3. Teaching Students with Hearing Impairments
4. Various fact sheets on psychological and physical disabilities and disorders
5. The transition from high school to college for DS students
6. Teaching strategies for specific subjects

Books, newsletters, and journals related to disabilities and disability services are also available in the TLC Resource Library.

Moye Library

Mount Olive College Moye Library has several books and resources related to disabilities and teaching students with disabilities. Visit Moye Library or the online library catalog at <http://www.moc.edu/moyelibrary/index.cfm>