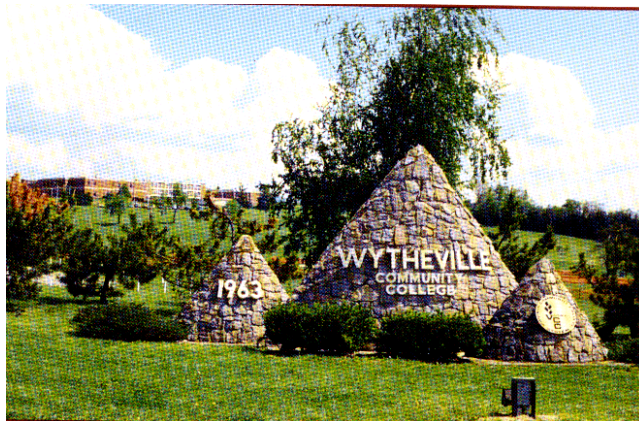


# COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

## A DESK REFERENCE GUIDE FOR FACULTY AND STAFF



### Wytheville Community College

Distributed by Student Services

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The original resource guide was developed by Project PAACS  
(Postsecondary Accommodations for Academic and Career Success),  
a three year demonstration project funded by the U. S. Department of Education,  
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services)  
(PR Award No. H078C50060)

This booklet has been updated and modified since the original guide was developed.

#### Selected Resources Consulted in Updating this Guide

Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD) Training Manual, 2001

Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD) Exam Accommodations Reference Manual, 2000

Gordon, M. & Keiser, S., (2000). Accommodations in Higher Education under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): A no-Nonsense Guide for Clinicians, Educators, Administrators, and Lawyers

Jarrow, J. (1997). Higher Education and the ADA: Issues and Perspectives

# **College Students with Disabilities: A Desk Reference Guide for Faculty and Staff 2011-2012**

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This resource guide is designed to assist faculty and staff to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. The mandate to provide reasonable accommodations comes from federal law and from the mission of the institution to provide an educational opportunity to all its students.

Faculty and staff need to know.....

- What the laws require.
- What recent legal decisions further defined the requirements of the law?
- Who is responsible for what?
- What are reasonable accommodations for different types of disabilities?
- Tips that facilitate student learning
- Tips for disability awareness.
- What are the university resources?

**The college is not required to lower its standards.**

<p>Section 504 does require that the college provide reasonable accommodations that afford an equal opportunity for students with disabilities. Achieving reasonable accommodations for a student with a disability involves shared responsibility between students, faculty and staff.</p>
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**This guide is designed to serve as a quick reference for information, accommodations, and legal requirements in providing equal access for students with disabilities.**

## The Law

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states that .....

“No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States... shall, solely by reason of ...disability, be denied the benefits of, be excluded from participation in, or subject to discrimination under any program of activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

A person with a disability includes...

“any person who (1) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, (2) has a record of such an impairment, or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment.”

A “qualified person with a disability” is defined as one ...

“who meets the academic and technical standards requisite to admission or participation in the educational program or activity.”

Section 504 protects the rights of qualified individuals who have disabilities such as, but not limited to:

- |                                  |                            |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| ▪ Blindness/visual impairment    | Chronic illnesses such as: |
| ▪ Cerebral palsy                 | AIDS                       |
| ▪ Deafness/hearing impairment    | Arthritis                  |
| ▪ Epilepsy or seizure disorder   | Cancer                     |
| ▪ Orthopedic/mobility impairment | Cardiac disease            |
| ▪ Specific learning disability   | Diabetes                   |
| ▪ Speech and language disorder   | Multiple sclerosis         |
| ▪ Spinal cord injury             | Muscular dystrophy         |
| ▪ Tourette’s syndrome            | Psychiatric disability     |
| ▪ Traumatic brain injury         |                            |

Under the provisions of Section 504...

Colleges and universities may not discriminate in the recruitment, admission, educational process, or treatment of students. Students who have self-identified, provided documentation of disability, and requested reasonable accommodations are entitled to receive approved modifications of programs, appropriate academic adjustments, or auxiliary aids that enable them to participate in and benefit from all educational programs and activities.

Section 504 specifies that colleges and universities may not...

Limit the number of students with disabilities admitted, make preadmission inquiries as to whether or not an applicant has a disability, use admission tests or criteria that inadequately measure the academic qualifications of students with disabilities because special provisions were not made, exclude a qualified student with a disability from any course of study, or establish rules and policies that may adversely affect students with disabilities.

Modifications and accommodations for students with disabilities include:

- Removal of architectural barriers
- Provide services such as readers for students with blindness, visual impairments or learning disabilities, qualified interpreters and notetakers for students with deafness or orthopedic impairments
- Provide modifications, substitutions, or waivers of courses in major fields of study or degree requirements on a case-by-case basis (such accommodation need not be made if the institution can demonstrate that the changes demonstrate that the changes requested would substantially alter essential elements of the course or program)
- Allow extra time to complete exams
- Permit exams to be individually proctored, read orally, dictated, or typed
- Use alternative forms for students to demonstrate course mastery
- Permit the use of computer programs or other assistive technological devices to assist in test-taking and study skills.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act contains more specific information about compliance issues in postsecondary education than the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA did extend the law to cover private institutions of higher education as well as those receiving federal funding. Colleges and universities can expect to see more rigid enforcement of the law with the passage of the ADA.

## Recent Legal Decisions

### **The college must provide the accommodation**

Students are required to assume the responsibility for securing the necessary accommodations. The college is required to provide reasonable accommodations for a student's known disability so that the student has an equal opportunity to participate in the courses, activities, or programs. The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) ruled that a university may not charge students for necessary accommodations.

### **Expense of accommodation is not undue hardship**

Providing auxiliary aids or incurring an expense to ensure access would not constitute undue hardship to the university. In determining what constitutes an undue hardship, the OCR views the entire financial resources of the university rather than any single department or college.

### **Classroom must be accessible**

A classroom's location must be changed to provide accessibility for a student with mobility impairment. The college does not need to make every classroom accessible but must provide for the participation of students with disabilities when "viewed in its entirety."

### **Extended time**

Extended time is a reasonable accommodation for a student whose documentation calls for that accommodation. The college is required to ensure that the student is provided additional time to complete tests and/or course work in order to provide an equal opportunity for that student.

### **Altered form of exam**

The form of an exam must be altered if the testing procedure puts a student with a disability at a disadvantage based on the student's documented disability. There may be an exception when the purpose of the test is to measure a particular skill.

### **Accommodation must be documented**

The college may refuse to grant a student's request for an accommodation which is not specifically recommended in the student's documentation.

### **Handouts in alternate format**

If a student with a visual impairment is enrolled in a class, the instructor must provide handouts in the alternate format requested by the student. In addition, all handouts must be made available to students on the same day they are distributed to non-disabled students.

### **Material on reserve in the library**

The instructor must make course material on reserve in the library in alternate formats for students with visual impairments enrolled in the course.

### **Diagnostic information confidential**

Faculty/staff do not have the right to access diagnostic information regarding a student's disability. Faculty/staff need only know the accommodations that are necessary to guarantee an equal opportunity for the student.

### **Personal liability**

An individual faculty member who fails to provide an accommodation to a student with a documented disability may be held personally liable.

**Academic freedom**

Academic freedom does not permit instructors to decide if they will provide special aids and services for students with documented disabilities in the classroom.

**Testing accommodations**

Accommodations for testing such as readers, scribes, or the use of adaptive equipment must be provided for a student with a documented disability.

**Personal services and aids**

The college is not required to provide personal services such as attendant care, or personal aids such as wheelchairs or eyeglasses.

**Accessible programs**

The college must operate its programs in the most integrated setting appropriate.

**Preadmission**

Preadmission inquiries as to whether a person has a disability are not permissible.

**Weight training**

College must provide comparable opportunities to students with disabilities.

**Accommodations criteria**

The college may not use as a sole criteria for admission or rejection of test that has been shown to be discriminatory for persons with disabilities.

**Job announcement postings**

Postings for job announcements must be readily accessible to students with visual impairments.

**Bulletin identify 504 coordinator**

The name of the Section 504 Coordinator must be identified in recruiting materials such as application forms and school bulletins.

**Student may file a grievance**

A student with a disability may file a claim with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

**Career counseling**

Career counselors are prohibited from counseling a student with a disability into more restrictive career paths than are recommended to non disabled students with similar abilities and interests.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Responsibilities of Students**

Students with disabilities have the responsibility to:

1. Self-identify concerning disability status to Student Services staff in a timely manner.
2. Provide disability documentation that is as recent. See documentation guidelines on WCC's website under Students with Disabilities for more information.
3. Request necessary accommodations each semester.

### **Responsibilities of Disability Counselor**

1. Make information available to prospective and new students about the availability of services and how to self-identify.
2. Meet with students by appointment who self-identify as having a disability to develop an individual accommodation plan, if appropriate.
3. Maintain confidential student files.
4. Work in conjunction with the Dean of Student Services to identify the physical or academic barriers for students with disabilities. Be an advocate for the removal of barriers.
5. Identify available community resources, adaptive equipment, and other resources for students with disabilities. Provide information on appropriate and reasonable accommodations, and refer students to appropriate resources.
6. Serve as a liaison between students with disabilities and WCC faculty/staff and appropriate agencies.
7. Provide information and promote awareness about Disability Services to WCC faculty, staff, students, and surrounding communities.
8. Serve as an advocate for students with disabilities, as appropriate.

### **Responsibilities of Faculty/Staff Members**

#### If Notified in Writing

1. Faculty/staff members have the responsibility to cooperate with Student Services in providing authorized accommodations in a reasonable and timely manner.
2. Faculty/staff should meet with students who provide a student accommodation form to establish the means of providing accommodation and sign for the receipt of the accommodation form on the student's Accommodation Agreement Form.

#### If Not Notified in Writing

If the student requests accommodation and the faculty/staff member have not been notified of the student's need for accommodation, then the faculty/staff member should refer the student to Student Services. If the disability is visible and the accommodation appears appropriate, the faculty/staff member should provide the accommodation while awaiting official notification.

#### If Questions of Appropriateness of Accommodation

If a faculty/staff member has questions about the appropriateness of certain accommodations, Student Services staff should be contacted for further clarification. The faculty/staff member should continue to provide accommodations while the issue is being resolved. When a student uses a tape recorder in the classroom, it is appropriate to ask the student to sign an agreement not to release the recording or otherwise obstruct the copyright.

Faculty and staff do not have the right to access the student's diagnostic information or fail to provide the authorized accommodation. Faculty and staff have the right to request the specific reasonable accommodations.

## **Shared Responsibilities**

- Students with disabilities have the first responsibility to report their needs to the faculty in a timely manner as faculty are not required to anticipate special needs.
- Faculty/staff members should keep student in mind when making special class arrangements such as field trips.
- Faculty/staff should use the recommend disability statement on their syllabus and Blackboard classes. This statement is available on WCC's website under Students with Disabilities.
- Students must request testing accommodations and extended time on assignments at least 48 hours in advance. If the student waits until the day of an exam or due date of the assignment to ask for accommodations such as extended time or a separate testing area, the student has failed to make the request in a timely manner. The testing accommodation request form is available on WCC's website under Students with Disabilities.
- If the student fails to ask for extended time until late in the semester, the instructor is only required to provide accommodations from that time and does not need to offer make up exams.
- When a student discloses a disability, faculty/staff members should ask what they can do to help facilitate learning. Often it is as simple as allowing the student to sit in the front of the class.
- Faculty/staff members may not discourage student from specific fields of study if the student meets the admission requirements and maintains the appropriate grades and is otherwise qualified. Faculty members are responsible to provide an education and the student is responsible to maintain academic requirements.

## Ten Things That Students and Faculty Need to Know about Disability and Student Services

STUDENTS should introduce themselves to faculty during the first two weeks of the term.	<b>1 Interaction</b>	FACULTY could encourage early disclosure by including friendly language in syllabi.
STUDENTS should visit their professors regularly, for help with schoolwork and advice.	<b>2 Guidance</b>	FACULTY are the students' biggest resource and should project an approachable demeanor.
STUDENTS are entitled to confidentiality at every turn, in front of peers and faculty.	<b>3 Confidentiality</b>	FACULTY should never reveal a student's disability to anyone, at any time.
STUDENTS must provide Student Services (SS) current documentation in order to receive accommodations.	<b>4 Eligibility</b>	FACULTY should direct any students (not currently SS-registered) to the SS office.
STUDENTS may be eligible for a range of academic accommodations.	<b>5 Accommodation</b>	FACULTY, by law, must accommodate those students who are approved by SS.
STUDENTS, depending upon the nature of their disabilities, are often entitled to extended time.	<b>6 Exams</b>	FACULTY should be aware that students are not entitled to unlimited time on exams, only extended time (time and ½ or double time)
STUDENTS, depending upon the nature of their disabilities, are often entitled to peer notetaking.	<b>7 Notetaking</b>	FACULTY should aid in the process by soliciting able notetakers early in the term.
STUDENTS with disabilities are guaranteed certain rights under federal law.	<b>8 Rights</b>	FACULTY could become more familiar with regulations that affect people with disabilities.
STUDENTS should first try to solve conflicts with their professors, before all else.	<b>9 Grievances</b>	FACULTY should contact SS if mediation assistance is needed or desired.
SS staff encourages WCC STUDENTS to ask them questions about disability support.	<b>10 Advocacy</b>	SS staff encourages WCC FACULTY to contact them with questions and concerns.

## Culture of Disability

### PERSON FIRST:

#### A Lexicon of Affirming Those with Disabilities on College Campuses

As greater numbers of persons with disabilities take advantage of the opportunities open to them in higher education, it becomes increasingly important that colleges and universities promote an environment that is positive for persons with disabilities. One of the strongest and easiest ways is appropriate language usage.

The recommended manner is known as “person first” language. This means that the person is emphasized first, the disability second. For example:

Use...	Not...
Person with a disability .....	Disabled or handicapped person
Individual without speech.....	Mute, dumb
Woman who is blind or visually impaired.....	Blind woman or “the blind”
Man with paraplegia .....	Paraplegic
Woman who is paralyzed .....	Paralyzed woman
Individual with epilepsy .....	Epileptic
Student who has a learning or .....	Slow learner, retarded, or
specific learning disability .....	learning disabled
Person with a mental disability or .....	
cognitive impairment.....	Crazy, demented, insane
Person with a developmental disability .....	Mentally retarded
Congenital disability .....	Birth defect

It is important to describe the person, not the disability. Persons without disabilities should be referred to as “nondisabled”: not “normal” or “able-bodied.”

Rather than using words such as “confined,” “bound,” “restricted,” or “dependent,” the most appropriate phrasing is “a person who uses a wheelchair” or a “person who walks with crutches.” Again, the emphasis is on the person.

The word, “handicap” should only be used in reference to a condition or a physical barrier. Reference should not be made to the person as being handicapped. Examples include: “The stairs are a handicap for her,” or “He is handicapped by the inaccessible bus.”

# LEARNING DISABILITIES

## Students with Learning Disabilities

An individual who has difficulty processing written or spoken information such that it interferes with his or her ability to read, write, spell, listen, talk, or do math may be diagnosed with a specific learning disability. Like all students, each student with a learning disability has a distinct combination of abilities and deficiencies and therefore a unique profile. Some areas of functioning will be in an average or above average (even gifted) range, while deficiencies will vary from minimal to severe. It is important to note that students with specific learning disabilities will display some, but not all, of the characteristics of that disability. In addition, the student's ability to compensate for information processing difficulties will vary across time and with differing levels of stress.

Accommodations may include:

(Student will likely not need all of these accommodations. Specific accommodations are based on the diagnostic information that is on file in Student Services.)

### Registration

- Reduced course load
- Priority registration

### General

- Extended time to complete assignments
- Course substitution for nonessential requirements in major

### Testing

- Extended time
- Proctored testing in a quiet, separate area
- Test read to student
- Student responds orally to essay test
- Alternative type of exam
- Scribe
- Blank card or paper to assist in reading
- Calculator

### Notetaking

- Tape recorders
- Copies of class notes

### Reading

- Taped texts
- Reader

### Writing

- Extended time for in-class assignments to correct spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Word processors with spell check

### Math

- Calculator for a student with a disability in the area of math processing. (The SAT (College Board)) is now allowing the use of standard four function calculator as an accommodation)

*If you want to know more about learning disabilities...*

**Learning disabilities may vary from one person to another and are often inconsistent within an individual. Some of the terms associated with learning disabilities include:**

- Dyslexia- inability to read
- Dyscalculia- inability to do mathematics
- Dysgraphia- inability to write words with appropriate syntax
- Dysphasia – inability to speak with fluency or sometimes to understand others
- Figure ground perception- inability to see the differences in objects
- Auditory figure-ground perception- inability to hear one sound among others
- Auditory sequencing- inability to hear sounds in the right order

**Students may demonstrate one or more problem characteristics and the form may be mild, moderate, or severe:**

#### Study Skills

- Inability to organize and budget time
- Difficulty to taking notes/outlining material
- Difficulty following directions
- Difficulty completing assignments on time

#### Writing Skills

- Frequent spelling errors
- Incorrect grammar
- Poor penmanship
- Poor sentence structure
- Difficulty taking notes while listening to class lectures
- Problems with organization, development of ideas and transitions words

#### Oral Language

- Difficulty understanding oral language when lecturer speaks first
- Difficulty attending to long lectures
- Poor vocabulary and word recall
- Problems with correct grammar
- Difficulty in remembering a series of events in sequence
- Difficulty with pronouncing multi syllabic words

#### Reading Skills

- Slow reading rate
- Inaccurate comprehension
- Poor retention
- Poor tracking skills (skip words, loose place, miss lines)
- Difficulty with complex syntax on tests
- Incomplete mastery of phonics

#### Math Skills

- Computational difficulties
- Difficulties with reasoning
- Difficulty with basic math operations (multiplication tables)
- Numbers reversals, confusion or symbols
- Difficulty copying problems
- Difficulty with concepts of time and money

#### Social Skills

- Spatial disorientation
- Low frustration level
- Low self esteem
- Impulsive
- Disorientation in time
- Difficulty with delaying problem resolution

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF COMMON LEARNING DISABILITIES**

### **Reading**

For college students with dyslexia or other print related learning disabilities, reading is not automatic and fluid particularly when under time pressures. Difficulties are liable to be linked to slow reading rates and misreading what is written due to transposing of letters and skipping words altogether. Because of slow reading rates, it may take students with reading related disabilities longer than their colleagues to read books and articles, to locate a word in a dictionary, to find a passage that is part of a play and other writing, or to find their place in a scientific or mathematical table. With certain subject areas, these students may have more problems comprehending what is written in their texts, on the blackboard, in a test, or even in their own notes. Retaining the information that is read is therefore more difficult. A student with reading related learning disabilities may be especially concerned when he or she has large volumes of printed material to read or is under pressure to complete an examination.

Some students with reading disabilities may find improvement in both reading speed and comprehension if their texts are changed into an alternative format, such as books on audiocassette tape or electronic text. This reformatting can allow students who qualify for the service to take information in through two channels or senses (visual reading and auditory processing). A student with reading disabilities may wish to contact Student Services to determine whether or not they qualify for and could benefit from this service.

### **Writing**

Some college students with learning disabilities have problems communicating effectively through writing. Whether these difficulties are related to dyslexia or to the physical act of printing or writing (dysgraphia), the outcome is likely to manifest itself in written work that appears careless. Although it is appropriate not to lower academic standards, it can be helpful to understand that students with documented written language disabilities usually put equal or greater effort into their writing than do students who do not have disabilities. It may also help to know the types of errors you may encounter as you work with students who have written language disabilities. Sentences are sometimes incomplete with essential words and phrases missing. The organization of the paper can be choppy, jumping from one idea to the next and back again.

Vocabulary used may be less sophisticated than expected for college level work. The student may have difficulty monitoring his or her writing for errors in spelling, grammar, word order and word endings, subject-verb agreement, punctuation, and paragraph formation. Handwriting can be poorly formed or illegible with letters and words being unevenly spaced on the page. Students with writing disabilities sometimes use a mixture of printed and cursive writing and upper and lower case letters in the same document.

Some of the difficulties students with written language disabilities have may be mitigated by the use of a computer or word processor with spell check, grammar check, and cut and paste capabilities for in class essays and essay exams. A student with written language disabilities

may also benefit from working with a tutor in the Academic Resource Center (ARC).

## **Mathematics**

To be successful in understanding math concepts and in knowing when and how to apply them, the student must have strong language, memory, sequencing, and problem-solving skills. As the student approaches more complicated and abstract college level work, he or she also needs to be able to visualize the positioning of objects that are described and the spatial relationships between them, even when conceptually objects must be turned or moved. Students who have disabilities in math reasoning and calculation (dyscalculia) may make errors that seem to be dumb mistakes, e.g., reversing numbers, miscopying and/or misaligning columns of figures, and making errors when changing operational signs and performing other conversions. Some students with learning disabilities in mathematics have difficulty remembering and working through the sequence of steps required to solve a problem (so that steps may be repeated, performed out of order, or forgotten altogether). These students may also have problems figuring out calculations mentally, estimating what answers would be, and/or organizing a problem, especially when it is a word-problem or when the student must first remember and perform calculations to obtain missing data.

A student's confidence in his or her ability to be successful at mathematics adds another dimension to learning disabilities. Because mathematics is a cumulative subject with new concepts building on previously acquired information, some students, who have memory difficulties or who never completely mastered specific math concepts, may experience frustration and mounting anxieties. Teaching math also requires that a great deal of information be presented in a short period of time. Students with learning disabilities in mathematics may feel overwhelmed by the pace at which math is taught or feel they understand what is being taught, only to realize they cannot generalize math concepts to homework assignments or test questions. Thus, math anxieties may cause a student to freeze during testing.

Students with math disabilities and anxieties usually benefit from regular and frequent work with a tutor and clarification from the instructor, as needed. In addition, recommendation may be made by SS that the student be allowed to use extended time, a quiet room, and scrap paper for quizzes and tests. In some cases, a calculator may be permitted if computation is not the primary purpose/skill being measured on the exam/test.

## **Foreign Language**

Students who have disabilities that relate to distinguishing, processing, remembering, and expressing sounds and words may find learning a foreign language problematic. To successfully master a second language a student must be able to: hear and cognitively differentiate between the sound structures of words, comprehend and remember the meanings of words and differing meanings when words are combined, understand rules related to sentence structure and grammar, retrieve information easily, and mentally manipulate it to successfully communicate verbally or in writing.

Students who have disabilities that affect learning a foreign language may benefit when instruction is multi-sensory, when students are given sufficient oral practice, and when pressures of timed responses (oral and written) are removed. Some students you work with may experience extreme and persistent difficulties/failures in learning a foreign language, despite the student's conscientious effort.

### **Oral Language**

Some students are eloquent writers yet have extreme difficulty in formulating an immediate verbal response to a question. They may appear socially inept as they are unable to gather and express their ideas amidst the fast pace of active dialogue. During oral presentations, their thoughts may come out jumbled and chaotic and they may use many filler words, e.g., uh, er, um, as they struggle to express themselves. Reading aloud in class and taking oral quizzes and tests can be stressful and embarrassing. If oral expression is not a fundamental requirement of the course being taught, you may allow a student to complete an oral assignment using a different format. Some students with disabilities related to oral expression may benefit from video taping their presentation for viewing or delivering their presentation to the instructor privately.

Students who have a disability related to taking in oral information may have difficulty listening and taking notes at the same time. The problem may relate to difficulties in differentiating relevant from irrelevant details so that the student frantically tries to write down everything being said. Similarly, students with dysgraphia, who extend more than the normal focus and energy in actually writing words they are hearing, may fall behind in taking notes and miss examples and nuances of a lecture that aid other students in understanding and memory. Allowing students with disabilities to tape lectures often alleviates this problem. Many of the adaptive techniques that assist deaf students will also help these students - notetakers, films, role-playing, captioned videotapes, and other visual materials. Students with oral receptive language disabilities will also benefit if instructions and assignments are given both orally and in written form.

### **Sequential Memory**

Other students you may work with will have learning disabilities that affect sequential memory tasks such as spelling, mathematics, and following step-by-step instructions. Students with this area of disability benefit by learning how to break down tasks into smaller parts and by gaining clarity on how the authors of their texts and their instructors organize material for learning. Giving more opportunities for evaluation, relatively frequent quizzes, tests, writing assignments, can help all students learn how to successfully organize their study, how much memorization of detail is needed, and how to transfer their learning from facts to application. Tutoring may be required in subject areas that are more problematic for a student. In general, the student with learning disabilities and all students benefit when a multi-modal approach to teaching and learning is used (seeing, hearing, saying and doing).

## **Organization and Attention**

Success in college requires a reasonably sophisticated development of skills related to organization, focus or attention, and study. Students who have a disability due to Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), and certain learning disabilities may seem vulnerable or lacking in these skill areas. For instance, you may see from a student's participation in class discussions that he or she has completed the necessary reading and has a good grasp of course material. Yet the same student may misplace papers to be turned in or postpone starting projects so that the final product is rushed and less thorough than you would expect. The delayed start of papers and projects may relate to poor estimation of how long it will take to complete the task. A student may appear to have reasonable organization and study skills but have difficulty understanding how much detail to focus on during lectures or while reading, writing, and preparing for tests. Some students also have problems screening out sights and sounds in the classroom to maintain focus on class lecture. These difficulties can increase during longer lecture classes and peak stress times, such as during midterms and finals. It is important to note that for these problem areas to be termed as disabling they must meet criteria that go beyond mere developmental immaturity.

Students who have learning disabilities that affect organization and attention often have difficulty completing open-ended, unstructured, and last minute assignments. Therefore, they, like all students, can benefit from receiving a detailed syllabus that clearly states reading to be completed for each class period and gives due dates and clear descriptions for course papers and projects. Providing students with an outline of material to be covered for each class also helps them learn how to organize their listening, note taking, and studying. Some instructors make such outlines available at the beginning of each class, printed in a course pack, or available for downloading from the web so that students may spend more class time and attention understanding concepts and noting examples to aid memory.

# ORTHOPEDIC/ MOBILITY IMPAIRMENTS

## Orthopedic/Mobility Impairments

A variety of orthopedic/mobility related disabilities result from congenital conditions, accidents, or progressive neuromuscular diseases. These disabilities include conditions such as spinal cord injury (paraplegia or quadriplegia), cerebral palsy, spina bifida, 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. Accommodations vary greatly and can best be determined on a case-by- case basis.

Accommodations may include:

- Accessible location for the classroom and place for faculty to meet with student
- Extra time to get from one class to another, especially in inclement weather
- Special seating in classrooms
- Notetakers, use of tape recorders, laptop computers, or photocopying of peer notes
- Rest accommodations: extended time, separate place, scribes, access to word processors
- Special computer equipment/software: voice activated work processing, word prediction, keyboard modification
- Extra time for assignments to slow writing speed
- Adjustable lab tables or drafting tables for classes taught in lab settings
- Lab assistance
- Accessible parking in close proximity to the building
- Customized physical education class activities that allow the student to participate within their capabilities
- Course waiver or substitution for certain students
- Taped textbooks
- Advance planning for field trips to ensure accessibility

If the college provides student transportation, it must provide accessible transportation on a field trip.

*If you want to know more about orthopedic/mobility impairments...*

Students with orthopedic/mobility impairments may have any of the following conditions:

- Pain, plasticity, or lack of coordination
- Flare-ups of intensity of the symptoms
- Periods of remission in which little or no symptoms are visible
- Inability to walk without crutches, canes, braces, or walkers
- Ability to stand or walk but may use wheelchair to conserve energy or gain speed
- Inability to stand or walk and use wheelchair for total mobility
- Limited lower body use but full use of arms and hands
- Limited use of lower body and limited use of arms and hands
- Impairment of speech or hearing
- Limited head or neck movement
- Decreased physical stamina and endurance
- Decreased eye-hand coordination.

Disabilities that generally restrict mobility functioning:

#### Cerebral palsy

The term applies to a number of non-progressive motor disorders of the central nervous system. The effects can be severe, causing inability to control bodily movement, or mild, only slightly affecting speech or hearing. The term is a general classification for stable cerebral lesions that usually occur at or before birth.

#### Spinal Cord Injury

In damage to the spinal cord, the extent of the resultant paralysis and sensory loss is determined by the level of injury. Injuries below the first thoracic nerve root (T1) level result in paraplegia, a spastic paralysis of the lower extremities. Injuries above the T1 level result in quadriplegia, a spastic or flaccid paralysis of the lower and upper extremities. The injury may be complete or incomplete. Physical implications may result in complications with respiratory, skin, cardiovascular, neurological, psychological, sitting and skin tolerance, strength/endurance and spasticity.

#### Degenerative Diseases

Progressive diseases include muscular dystrophy and multiple sclerosis that may limit gross motor functions and/or fine motor activity.

# BLIND/VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

## Blindness/Visual Impairments

Visual impairments include disorders in the sense of vision that affect the central vision acuity, the field of vision, color perception, or binocular visual function. The American Medical Association defined legal blindness as visual acuity not exceeding 20/200 in the better eye with correction, or a limit in the field of vision that is less than a 20 degree angle (tunnel vision). Legal blindness may be caused by tumors, infections, injuries, retrolental fibrosis, cataracts, glaucoma, diabetes, vascular impairments, or myopia. Visual disabilities may vary widely. Some students may use a guide dog, others a white cane, while others may not require any mobility assistance.

Accommodations may include:

- Reading lists or syllabi in advance to permit time for transferring into alternate format
- Textbooks ordered in the preferred medium without glare from windows
- Tape recording of lectures and class discussions
- Notetaking devices such as pocket Braille computers
- Handouts in the medium that the student prefers
- Clear black print on white or pale yellow paper for student with visual impairments
- Testing accommodations: taped tests, reading of tests, scribe, extended time, separate place, enlarged print, computer word processing software with speech access
- Materials presented on the board or on transparencies read out loud
- Lab assistance
- Advance notice of class schedule changes.

### **Types of alternative format of printed material for students with blindness/visual impairments include:**

- Audio tape  
Most textbooks can be ordered from Recording from the Blind and Dyslexic (RB&D) (800-221-4792)
- Large print  
Standard sized materials can be enlarged on a copier using 11x17 paper
- Computer disk  
Convert the text of materials to ASCII format
- Braille  
Adaptive equipment will be necessary to provide alternate format in Braille; however, Braille is probably the least requested format for students with blindness.

*If you want to know more about blindness...*

Students with no light perception or no functional vision may rely on a white cane, a guide dog, or a sighted guide for mobility purposes. Guide dogs should not be petted. When serving as a sighted guide, let the student take your arm just above the elbow.

A lower noise level in the classroom is important for hearing. Students may require a reader for assignments and exams and may use a note taking device in class to take notes.

Passageways through the door and aisles should be kept clear. When furniture is moved students should be advised of the new arrangement. Any changes in class locations should be given to students in advance or a non disabled student assigned to wait at the door and guide the student with blindness to the new location.

It is helpful to identify yourself first when speaking with a student with blindness.

*If you want to know more about visual impairments ....*

Approximately 80% of all legally blind individuals have some useable vision. Students with visual impairments benefit from seating at the front of the class. Lighting is very important and should be discussed with the professor. Glare may be especially troublesome. Poor quality print or copies and written materials on colored paper may reduce legibility for the student.

Students with visual impairments may use individually prescribed low vision aids such as magnifying glasses or monoculars, large print books, enlarged screen reading programs for computers, and/or felt tip markers for note taking class.

The instructor should use a black felt tip marker when making remarks on written assignments or grading on exams to assist students with visual impairments to read the information.

ATTENTION-  
DEFICIT/  
HYPERACTIVE  
DISORDER  
AND  
TRAUMATIC BRAIN  
INJURY

## Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD)

ADD is officially called Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder and is a neurologically based medical problem. It is a developmental disability characterized by inattention, impulsivity, and sometimes hyperactivity. The results can lead to lifelong problems.

Students with ADD may demonstrate one or more problem characteristics and the form may be mild, moderate or severe:

- Concentrating
- Listening
- Starting, organizing and completing tasks
- Following directions
- Making transitions
- Interacting with others
- Producing work at a consistently normal level
- Organizing problems that involve multiple steps.

**Accommodations may include the accommodations for students with learning disabilities. See page 11.**

## Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Head Injury is one of the fastest growing types of disabilities especially in the age range of 15-28 years, Over 500,000 cases are reported hospitalized each year. There is a wide range of differences in the effects of a TBI on the individual, but most cases result in some type of impairment. The functions that may be affected include: memory, cognitive/perceptual communication, speed of thinking, communication, spatial reasoning, conceptualization, psychosocial behaviors, motor abilities, sensory perception, and physical abilities.

Students with TBI may demonstrate one of more problem characteristics and the form may be mild, moderate, or severe:

- Organizing thoughts, cause and effect relationships, and problem solving
- Processing information and word retrieving
- Generalizing and integrating skills
- Interacting with others
- Compensating for memory loss.

**Accommodations may include the accommodations for students with learning disabilities.**

*If you want to know more about ADD...*

**A student with an ADD may:**

- Perform better in morning classes
- Need to sit at the front of the class
- Need assignment organizers
- Need assignments in writing
- Experience difficulty following through with several directions at once
- Have problems organizing multi-step tasks
- Benefit from structure using lists, schedules.

*If you want to learn more about TBI...*

There are important differences which affect the educational program of a student with an acquired head injury as compared to students with learning disabilities.

**A student with a TBI may:**

- Need established routine with step by step directions
- Need books and lectures on tape
- Need repetition or some type of reinforcement of information to be learned
- Demonstrate poor judgment and memory problems
- Need a tutor
- Exhibit discrepancies in abilities such as reading comprehension at a much lower level than spelling ability.

DEAFNESS/  
HEARING  
IMPAIRMENT  
AND  
SPEECH AND  
LANGUAGE  
DISORDERS

## Deafness/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 or degree of auditory impairment while deafness is an inability to use hearing as a means of communication. Hearing loss may be sensorineural, involving an impairment of the auditory nerve; conductive, a mixed impairment, involving both sensorineural and conductive. Hearing loss is measured in decibels and may be mild, moderate, or profound. A person who is born with a hearing loss may have the language deficiencies and exhibit poor vocabulary and syntax. Many students with hearing loss may use hearing aids and rely on lip reading. Others may require an interpreter.

### Accommodations may include:

- Seating in the front of the classroom
- Written supplement to oral instructions, assignments and directions
- Visual aids as often as possible
- Speaker facing the class during lectures
- Speaker repeating the questions that other students in the class ask
- Notetaker for class lectures
- Test accommodations: extended time, separate place, proofreading of essay tests, access to work processor, interpreted directions
- Unfamiliar vocabulary written on the board or a handout
- Small amplification system called an FM loop system
- Interpreter seated where the student can see the interpreter and the lecturer
- Excess noise reduced as much as possible to facilitate communication.

The following website offers captioned video, DVDs, etc. for teachers to use with hard of hearing or deaf students. You may want to bookmark this site so that if you have a hard of hearing or deaf student in your class, and you use videos as part of the instruction, you may be able to obtain a captioned edition at no cost from this agency.

<http://www.captionedmedia.org/browsemain.asp>

## Speech and Language Disorders

Speech and language disorders may result from hearing loss, cerebral palsy, learning disability, or physical conditions. The disorder may result in stuttering, problems with articulation, voice disorders, or aphasia.

### Accommodations may include:

- Modifications or assignments such as one to one presentation or use of computer with voice synthesizer
- Substitutions for oral class report.

*If you want to hear more about deafness/hearing impairments....*

### Hearing aids and lip reading

Some students may use hearing aids and lip reading to assist in discriminating sounds; but only 30% of spoken words in the English language can lip read. It is important when speaking to a student with a hearing impairment to look at the student, keep hands away from the mouth, use shorter sentences, speak slowly, and use appropriate facial expressions and gestures. Technical and unfamiliar vocabulary should be written down for the student. Standing in front of a window or a source of glare may limit visibility for the student. It is not helpful to shout or exaggerate lip movements.

### Interpreters

If the student uses an interpreter remember to look at the student, not the interpreter. The interpreter should be seated so that the student can see the lecturer and the interpreter. If overheads or videos are used, some light should be left on so that the student can see the interpreter, a notetaker or copies of another student's notes may be necessary as the student can not watch the interpreter and take notes at the same time.

Interpreters are professionals with specialized training and they will not give opinions about the student progress in the course.

### Other considerations

In the classroom discussions are difficult and should be followed by summaries of the relevant information. Questions raised by other student should be repeated by the instructor. Videos without captions require a written summary or outline of the important points. Verbal assignments, due dates, changes in schedule and other information may be missed by the student and should be provided and can be solved by a written exam. The student may not hear what is said while the instructor writes on the board. The use of overheads and all types of visual aids provide better communication.

*If you want to know more about speech and language disorders...*

Speech and language disorders may be managed by computerized voice synthesizers or electronic speaking machines. Speech therapy is frequently used to improve certain disorders. Anxiety and stress often accompany oral communication and exacerbate the problem.

### Special considerations

The student may speak slower in class and should be given time to express his/her thoughts. Interrupting or completing a sentence for the student is not helpful and may lead to embarrassment. It is appropriate to ask the student to repeat the statement. Summarizing the message helps the student to check for accuracy of understanding. The instructor's acceptance and support of the student is important to facilitate communication and manage the speech disorder. If an oral presentation is required the instructor should discuss alternatives with the student.

# PSYCHOLOGICAL DISORDERS

## Psychological Disorders

Psychological Disorders are widespread and debilitating illnesses that affect as many as 41 million people in the United States. Research is beginning to reveal that many psychological disorders are physical (either chemical or neurological) in nature. The onset of major mental illness is often between the ages of 18-25. Psychological disorders are considered disabling when they affect one or more major life activities: Caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working.

### What is considered a Psychological Disorder?

There are a wide number of mental illnesses. Illnesses, which most often occur in student populations, fall into five major categories. These are:

**Thought Disorders:** loss of intermittent loss of contact with reality, manifested in hallucinations, disorganized speech, grossly disorganized behavior, and flat affect.

- Schizophrenia

**Mood Disorders:** severe erratic, and/or prolonged disturbances of mood.

- Major Depressive Disorder
- Dysthymia

**Anxiety Disorders:** overwhelming and unpleasant emotions, unrealistic fears, flashbacks, excessive worry, sleep disturbances, ritualistic behaviors.

- Panic Attacks
- Phobias
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

**Dissociative Disorders:** breakdown in the integration of a person's consciousness, memory, identity and perception.

- Dissociative disorders (formerly Psychogenic Amnesia)
- Dissociative Identity Disorder (formerly Multiple Personality Disorder)

**Personality Disorders:** a personality trait or coping mechanism which becomes inflexible and maladaptive causing impairment.

- Borderline Personality Disorder
- Antisocial Personality Disorder
- Passive-Aggressive Personality Disorder

Reasonable accommodations by definition are legally mandated alterations which remove barriers to equal participation in the institutions programs or classes. Based on existing knowledge and experience, the following accommodations have been found to be reasonable for students with psychological disorders.

**Accommodations may include:**

- Extended time for exams and quiet testing area for reduced distraction
- Notetakers, readers, or tape recorders in class
- Seating arrangements that enhance the learning experience of the student
- Incompletes or late withdrawals in place of course failures in the event of prolonged illness
- Assistance with time management and study skills
- Encouragement to use relaxation and stress reduction techniques during exams
- Flexibility in the attendance requirements in case of health related absences.

**Disorders Can Impair/Hinder:**

- Assignment deadlines
- Attending class
- Concentrating
- Daily living skills
- Dealing with social situations
- Financial aid
- Judgment/decision making
- Making and keeping appointments
- Parking in distant or specific locations
- Problem solving in new situations
- Registering for classes
- Studying/test taking

Other issues related to these disorders can include:

- Hospitalization, which can mean extended absences from class.
- Relapse of disorder, which can come very unexpectedly and cause great difficulty in course work.
- Psychiatric medication, which can have as many or more negative effects on learning and performance as the disorders themselves.

# OTHER DISABILITIES

## Other Disabilities

A large number of students have disabilities that do not necessarily fall into the major categories already discussed but are covered by Section 504/ADA. The degrees to which these disabilities affect students in the academic setting vary widely. At times it is not the condition itself but the medication that is required to control symptoms that impairs academic performance. Common side effects of medications include fatigue, memory loss, shortened attention span, loss of concentration, and drowsiness. In some cases the degree of impairment may vary from time to time because of the nature of the disability or the medication. Some conditions are progressive and others may be stable.

A partial list of other disabilities include:

- AIDS
- Arthritis
- Asthma
- Burns
- Cancer
- Cardiovascular disorders
- Cerebral palsy
- Chronic pain
- Diabetes mellitus
- Epilepsy
- Hemophilia
- Lupus
- Motor neuron diseases
- Multiple sclerosis
- Muscular dystrophy
- Renal –kidney disease
- Respiratory disorders
- Sickle cell anemia
- Stroke
- Tourette’s syndrome

Accommodations may include:

- Extended time for exams
- Enlarged printed materials
- Tape recorded course materials
- Readers
- Computers or other adaptive equipment
- Scribes
- Flexibility in attendance requirements in case of health related absences
- Other accommodations found elsewhere in this guide

A student is required to makeup missed assignments and tests.

## Tips that Facilitate Student Learning

Many teaching strategies that assist students with disabilities are known to also benefit non disabled students. Instruction that is provided in an array of approaches will reach more students than instruction using one method. The following are teaching strategies that will benefit students in the academic setting.

### Required Text

- Select a text that has a study guide

### Recommended Syllabus Statement

The following statement is recommended for use on course syllabi to encourage early self-disclosure:

“Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss specific needs. Please contact the Student Services office at 276-223-4754 in Bland Hall to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: [www.wcc.vccs.edu](http://www.wcc.vccs.edu). Go to current students, then students with disabilities.”

### Before the Lecture

- Write key terms on an outline on the board, or prepare a lecture handout
- Create study guides
- Assign advance readings before the topic is due in the class session
- Give students questions that they should be able to answer by the end of each lecture

### During the Lecture

- Briefly review the previous lecture use visual aids such as overheads, diagrams, charts, graphs
- Allow the use of tape recorders
- Emphasize important points, main ideas, key concepts
- Face the class when speaking
- Explain technical language terminology
- Speak distinctly and at a relaxed rate, pausing to allow students time for notetaking
- Leave time for questions periodically
- Administer frequent quizzes to provide feedback for students
- Give assignments in writing as well as orally.

### Grading and Evaluation

- Consider a variant grading system with multiple grades for various tasks weighted differently

- Work with the student to make arrangements early with the Student Services Office/Academic Resource Center (ARC) for extended time or proctors for exams

### **Tips for Disability Awareness**

#### Appropriate language

- People with disabilities are people first. The Americans with Disabilities Act officially changed the way people with disabilities are referred to and provided the model. The person first and then the disability.
- Do use the word disability when referring to someone who has a physical, mental, emotional, sensory, or learning impairment.
- Do not use the word handicapped. A handicap is what a person with a disability cannot do.
- Avoid using individuals as victims, or the disabled, or names of conditions. Instead, refer to people with disabilities or someone who has epilepsy.
- Avoid terms such as wheelchair bound. Wheelchairs provide access and enable individuals to get around. Instead, refer to a person who uses a wheelchair or someone with mobility impairment.
- When it is appropriate to refer to an individual's disability, choose the correct terminology for the specific disability. Use terms such as quadriplegia, speech impairment, hearing impairment, or specific disability

## Appropriate Interaction

- When introduced offer to shake hands. People with limited hand use or artificial limbs can usually shake hands. It is an acceptable greeting to use the left hand for shaking.
- Treat adults as adults. Avoid patronizing people who use wheelchairs by patting them on the shoulder or touching their head. Never place your hands on a person's wheelchair as the chair is a part of the body space of the user.
- If possible, sit down when talking to a person who uses a wheelchair so that you are at the person's eye level.
- Speak directly to the person with a disability. Do not communicate through another person. If the person uses an interpreter, look at the person and speak to the person, not the interpreter.
- Offer assistance with sensitivity and respect. Ask if there is something you might do to help. If the offer is declined, do not insist.
- If you are a sighted guide for a person with a visual impairment, allow the person to take your arm at or above the elbow so that you guide them rather than propel.
- When talking with a person with a speech impairment, listen attentively, ask short questions that require short answers, avoid correcting, and repeat what you understand if you are uncertain.
- When first meeting a person with blindness, identify yourself and any others who may be with you.
- When speaking to a person with a hearing impairment, look directly at the person and speak slowly. Avoid placing your hand over your mouth when speaking. Written notes may be helpful for short conversations.

## **Authorized Accommodations**

A copy of the following **Authorized Accommodations Form** will be emailed to you by Student Services (as a courtesy to help in planning) and the student will receive a copy to present to you once the student has requested and been found eligible for accommodations. This form notifies you of approved accommodations that may be used in your class based on documentation submitted to Student Services. Upon receiving this form you will want to discuss with the student questions you might have regarding their disability which may help the student successfully complete your class. The students will also receive an Agreement Form which instructors will sign for the receipt of the Authorized Accommodation Form.



Jenny Buchanan  
 Student Services  
 Academic Resource Center- Bland  
 Hall  
 (276) 223-4754 (voice)  
 (276) 223-4861 (fax)  
 wcbuchi@wcc.vccs.edu

## Student Authorized Accommodations

**Student:** SAMPLE

**Empl ID#:** SAMPLE **Semester:** SAMPLE

**Course:** SAMPLE

**Instructor:** SAMPLE

This certifies that this student has presented documentation of a disability and is legally entitled to the following accommodations. Implementation of accommodations should not compromise academic standards or alter the integrity of the course content. This information is CONFIDENTIAL and should not be shared with other faculty, staff, and students without this student's specific permission. If you need assistance to implement these accommodations, please contact Student Services. *This Student Authorization Accommodation Form is only valid for one semester. Requests for accommodations must be made prior to the start of each semester by the student for each semester which they require accommodations.* It is the student's responsibility to discuss their disability with their instructors and provide them a copy of this accommodation form.

### Approved Accommodations:

- \*Extended time on test (1 for test and 2 time for comprehensive final exams)
- \*Reader for test.
- \*Test in a distraction reduced setting.
- \*Copies of classroom notes and overheads
- \*Use of spell checker/ word prediction software.
- \*Use of screen reader software
- \*Audio version of textbooks.

### Note to Faculty & Students Regarding Testing

#### Accommodations:

- Students are required to request any needed accommodations at least 48 hours prior to each test by contacting the disability counselor and their instructor.
- If a reader or scribe is needed then the test will be administered on the main campus or at one of the WCC sites in order to provide the accommodation.
- For all testing accommodations the student is expected to take the test on the regularly scheduled day and provide advanced notice of needing accommodations.

*Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and ADA mandates institutions to provide appropriate and reasonable accommodations based on disability and individual need. The following designated accommodations have been requested to help the student successfully complete their studies. The Institute for Higher Education Policy stresses that accommodations which are a "fundamental alteration" of a program or which would impose an "undue" financial or administrative burden are not required. Please call Student Support Services, Jenny Buchanan at 223-4754, if you have any questions or if we can help in any way. Thank you for your cooperation!*

SSS Counselor: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ACCOMMODATION AGREEMENT FORM

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Semester:** \_\_\_\_\_

This certifies that the above student has presented the Student Authorized Accommodation Form to their instructors. The Student Authorized Accommodation Form is CONFIDENTIAL and should not be shared with other faculty, staff, and students without the student's specific permission. If you need assistance to implement these accommodations, please contact Student Services.

***The Student Authorized Accommodation Form is only valid for one semester.*** It is the student's responsibility to discuss their disability with their instructors and provide them a copy of the Student Authorized Accommodation Form.

By signing below I am acknowledging receipt of the Student Authorized Accommodation Form for my class.

Course:	Instructor Signature:

*Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and ADA mandates institutions to provide appropriate and reasonable accommodations based on disability and individual need. The designated accommodations on the Student Authorization Accommodation Form have been approved to provide the student the opportunity to successfully complete their studies.*

*Please call Jenny Buchanan at 223-4754 if you have any questions. Thank you for your cooperation!*

**\*THIS FORM IS TO BE RETAINED BY THE STUDENT FOR THEIR RECORDS\***

## **WYTHEVILLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISABILITY SERVICES PROCEDURES**

**The following office at Wytheville Community College will serve as the Contact Office for students with disabilities (students must self-identify):**

Student Support Services  
Jenny Buchanan, Counselor  
108A (Academic Resource Center) Bland Hall  
(276) 223-4754  
[wcbuchj@wcc.vccs.edu](mailto:wcbuchj@wcc.vccs.edu)

### **Procedure for Informing Students and Potential Students about Support Services:**

- Instructors are asked to place the following statement on syllabus and Blackboard class websites: "I Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss specific needs. Please contact the Student Services office at 276-223-4754 in Bland Hall to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: [www.wcc.vccs.edu](http://www.wcc.vccs.edu). Go to current students, then students with disabilities.."

### **Procedures for Requesting Disability Services:**

- Students with disabilities need to present a written request for reasonable accommodations (applications are available in Student Services also on the WCC website at the following location: <http://www.wcc.vccs.edu/currstudents/disabilities.php> ) and the supporting documentation to Student Services. In order to ensure adequate time to process requests for accommodations by the first class meeting, it is necessary that you follow this timeline:
  - In order to efficiently provide all accommodations it is suggested that the Disabilities Counselor review the student's supporting documents and schedule at least 2 weeks prior to the start of classes.
  - Students requesting an interpreter are asked to request accommodations at least 3 weeks prior to the start of classes. This is done in order for arrangements to be made for the interpreter to be made available by the first day of classes.
  - Students requesting books and/or videos in alternate formats are asked to do so as soon as possible. Books and/or video in alternate formats may take up to 6 weeks to receive.
  - Students requesting accommodations later than the recommended timeframes, will be served as quickly as possible, however the Disability Counselor cannot assure that all accommodations will be available prior to the start of classes.
- An Informational Meeting for Disability Services is held in August prior to the start of the fall semester which provides information regarding applying for disability services.

### **Documentation Should Include:**

These general guidelines have been developed to assist WCC students in working with their treating professional(s) to prepare the information needed by WCC to verify eligibility and to support requests for accommodations, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids requested. WCC has utilized guidelines developed by the Associations of Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD) and the Educational Testing Service (ETS). All documentation should adhere to the following guidelines:

**1) Qualifications of Evaluator:** The name, title and professional credentials of the evaluator, including information about license or certification (e.g., licensed psychologist), as well as the area of specialization, employment and state/province in which the individual practices should be clearly stated in the documentation. Please note that diagnosing professionals shall not be family members or others with a close personal relationship with the individual being evaluated. Professionals conducting assessments, rendering physical diagnoses, offering opinions about physical disabilities and making recommendations must be qualified to do so. A list of acceptable evaluators is provided under criteria related to each disability type. Documentation prepared for specific non-educational venues (i.e. Social Security Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Rehabilitative Services, etc.) may not meet the required criteria.

**2) Age of Documentation:** The documentation should have been completed within the last year for psychiatric disabilities, or last 3 years for LD, ADHD and all other disabilities (NOTE: this requirement does not apply to physical or sensory disabilities of a permanent or unchanging nature). A new assessment at the student's expense may be necessary to determine the current need for accommodation(s) if the existing documentation is outdated, inadequate in scope or content, or if the student's observed performance indicates that significant changes may have occurred since the previous assessment was conducted.

3) **Specific Diagnosis and Clinical Documentation:** A diagnostic statement identifying the disability, date of the most current diagnostic evaluation, and the date of the original diagnosis. Documentation must be in narrative format. Documentation must be typed on official letterhead and signed by the evaluator. Documentation written on prescription pads will not be considered sufficient. A diagnosis alone is typically not sufficient information to establish eligibility or provide accommodations. IEP or 504 plans will not be considered sufficient documentation unless accompanied by a current and complete evaluation. A description of the diagnostic tests, methods, and/or criteria used including specific test results (including standardized testing scores) and the examiner's narrative is required.

4) **Describe Current Impact of Disability on Learning:** A description of the current functional impact of the disability. This may be in the form of an examiner's narrative, and/or an interview, but must have a rational relationship to diagnostic assessments. For learning disabilities, current documentation is defined using adult norms. A statement indicating treatments, medications, or assistive devices/services currently prescribed or in use, with a description of the mediating effects and potential side effects from such treatments. There must also be evidence of a "substantial limitation" in a major life activity, such as walking, seeing, hearing, learning, breathing, etc. (For example, evidence could be a description of the diagnostic tests, methods, and/or criteria used in establishing the diagnosis, the specific results of the diagnostic procedures, and when available, both summary and specific test scores.) *When a student's functioning demonstrates a "relative weakness" or "low average functioning", it is typically an indication that a substantial limitation is not present.*

5) **Recommendations and Support for Accommodations:** Describe the specific accommodation requested and adequately support each of the requested accommodations.

#### **Procedures for Students who have been approved for Disability Service to Use Reasonable Accommodations:**

- Students who have been approved for disability services will sign an accommodation form that will then be given to the student to present to their instructors to notify them of the need for accommodations. The specific approved academic adjustments will be communicated to the instructor on this accommodation form.
- Students working with Student Services should **request preparation of their Academic Accommodation Form prior to the beginning of each semester**. Forms will be produced within three business days. Accommodation forms for students who have been approved will then be sent via email to their instructors (as a courtesy to aid in planning) and the student will be given a copy to provide to their instructors.
- Students are encouraged to make an appointment with each of their instructors. At that time, the student should discuss with their instructors academic adjustments they have been approved for in that particular class and how they will be carried out.

#### **Testing Modifications:**

Extended-time (time and a half or double time) and/or "quiet room" tests shall be provided by the Student Services staff. Students must contact Jenny Buchanan in Student Services and their instructor at least 48 hours prior to the test to request the accommodation. The Test Accommodation Request and Form must be completed and submitted to Student Services. This form is available in Student Services or online at <http://www.wcc.vccs.edu/currstudents/disabilities.php>.

- Written instructions from the instructor are required if the student may use a calculator, formula sheet, or open book.
- Faculty may send or bring their tests to Student Services (ARC) where they will be kept under strict security. After completion, the faculty member may pick up the test in the ARC or arrange for delivery under secure conditions.
- Proctors who act as scribes or readers will read test items/written responses exactly as given. Proctors will not provide additional information, interpretation, or definitions about test items unless specifically included as part of the modification provided to the student.
- Tests will be administered in accordance with written instructions from the instructor.
- Tests for distance education classes shall be addressed to meet the needs of student to ensure that testing accommodations are provided. This may require that test be taken in the Academic Resource Center or at one of the other WCC locations depending upon the required accommodation.
- If a student is found cheating, the professor will be called and the student will lose their testing privileges for that semester (to be restated with permission by the Dean of Student Services).

**Tape Recording of Classes:**

Each student for whom taping lectures is an appropriate academic adjustment will be required to sign a Tape Recording Agreement. (Attachment I)

**Note-takers, scribes, and sign-language interpreters:**

- Note-takers and scribes will write down what is said and nothing more.
- Interpreters will translate only.
- Note-takers will be provided if found in the class. If a note-taker is not found, a tape recorder will be provided.

**Aides/Personal Assistants:**

The College **does not** provide personal assistants or services of a personal nature (including assistance with eating, toileting, dressing, or locomotion around campus).

**Equipment:**

- WCC does not provide personal devices such as wheelchairs or individually prescribed devices such as hearing aids.
- Information on modified or specialized equipment available at the college may be obtained from the Student Services.

**Building and Room Location:**

- When necessary, classes may be moved to an accessible location to accommodate a student with a mobility disability, or under documented special circumstances
- This determination shall be made by the appropriate professional in Student Services in conjunction with the faculty member and the head of the department for that course.

**Course Substitution:**

- Course substitution may be considered as a last resort after a good-faith effort by the student, provided the substitution does not alter the nature of the program in which the student is enrolled or excuse the student from courses that are integral to the program in which the student is enrolled. The student's documentation must support the accommodation.
- This decision shall be made by the Dean of the Division of the student's major field in consultation with appropriate department chair-people and/or faculty after review of a recommendation made by the appropriate professional in the Student Services.

**Field Trips:**

- If a field trip is scheduled for a class in which a student with a disability is enrolled and transportation is provided by WCC, that transportation will be accessible.
- Field trips and field experiences for courses in which students with disabilities are enrolled must be made to accessible sites, or alternative field trips/experiences must be offered to the entire class unless the field trip or experience in question is an essential component of the course and no reasonable alternative exists.

**Online Courses:**

Students who have requested disability accommodations and that are taking courses online may be required to receive accommodations on campus or at one of the campus sites for the class. For example, students requesting that test be read would have test read on campus or at one of the campus sites. This requirement is reviewed on a case by case basis given the individuality of each situation.

**Procedures for Disposition of Records:**

Students with disabilities who have requested accommodations but have not attended WCC for a period of five (5) years, may need to provide new documentation.

**Disability Services Complaints:**

Wytheville Community College has adopted an internal procedure which provides for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action prohibited by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Americans with Disabilities Act states, in part, that "no otherwise qualified disabled individual shall, solely by reason of such disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits, of, or be subjected to discrimination" in programs or activities sponsored by a public entity.

Complaints should be addressed to the Dean of Student Services, who has been designated to coordinate disability services for students.

- A complaint should be filed in writing, contain the name and address of the person filing it, and briefly describe the alleged violation of the regulations.
- A complaint should be filed within 10 calendar days after the complainant becomes aware of the alleged violation.
- An investigation, as may be appropriate, shall follow the filing of a complaint. The investigation shall be informal but thorough and afford all interested persons and their representatives, if any, an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the complaint.
- A written determination as to the validity of the complaint and a description of the resolution, if any, shall be issued and forwarded to the complainant no later than 10 calendar days after its filing.
- The complainant can request a reconsideration of the case in instances of dissatisfaction with the resolution. The request for reconsideration should be made to the Dean of Student Services within 10 calendar days.
- The ADA coordinator shall maintain the files and records relating to the complaints filed.
- The right of a person to a prompt and equitable resolution of the complaint filed hereunder shall not be impaired by nor shall the use of this procedure be a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies.

\*Other remedies include the filing of an ADA complaint with the federal EEOC or other responsible federal agency. State employees may also file a complaint with the state EEO or initiate a grievance under the state grievance procedure.

## Accessibility Checklist

This checklist is designed to be used in planning stages for college sponsored events by professional staff, student workers, and volunteers.

### Campus

Yes No

Wheelchair accessible location (elevators with lowered controls, wide hallways, lowered fountains and phones, ramps, automatic doors)

\_\_\_\_\_

Restrooms with wide stalls and grab bars

\_\_\_\_\_

Frequently used materials on lower shelves or staff available to assist

\_\_\_\_\_

Equipment used by students in a wheelchair accessible area

\_\_\_\_\_

Accessible parking nearby

\_\_\_\_\_

Accommodations available at planned events such as interpreters, rooms arranged for visibility of speaker, handouts in alternate format, and adequate space for wheelchairs

\_\_\_\_\_

### Media

Statement regarding availability of accommodations on all advertising

\_\_\_\_\_

Videos/films with captions

\_\_\_\_\_

Statement that alternate formats are available upon request

\_\_\_\_\_

TTY/VDD

\_\_\_\_\_

### Inclusive Policy

Appropriate attitudes of the program staff toward individuals with disabilities

\_\_\_\_\_

Appropriate language to refer people with disabilities

\_\_\_\_\_

Appropriate attitudes of non disabled students toward individuals with disabilities

\_\_\_\_\_