

## **Faculty Handbook**

To All Faculty and Staff:

Counseling and Access Services Office is proud to be making this handbook available to you. The handbook is divided into the different types of disabilities for which students may require accommodations. The design of the handbook is intended to increase awareness of the various disabilities and how accommodations can be implemented throughout the campus. This handbook is by no means all-inclusive. One primary goal of the handbook is to express our belief in the need for communication between students, faculty and our office. We encourage you to print this handbook for future reference.

### **Accommodation**

The word "accommodation" is many times misunderstood in relation to its application to students with disabilities. Accommodation provides a method whereby a disabled student can demonstrate his or her knowledge and abilities when traditional methods are inadequate. Accommodation in no way implies giving someone an unfair advantage over other students. Students with disabilities are required to meet the same academic standards as other students. Each student has a specified plan designed to illustrate accommodations that can be provided for their particular disability. Communication with the Counseling and Access Services is always recommended if clarification is needed about the terms of accommodation.

Any student eligible for an accommodation will have completed the process and you will have received a letter from Counseling and Access Services Office stating the current accommodations required. If a student approaches an instructor about accommodation, but you have not received a letter, please refer that student to the Counseling and Access Services Office. Some of the most common accommodations utilized are listed below:

- Classroom relocation for those with physical disabilities and motor impairments
- Note takers for students with particular kinds of physical and learning disabilities
- Interpreters for students who are deaf or hearing impaired
- Enlargement of reading material for students with visual impairments
- Alternative testing
- Tutors. Each student has access to university- sponsored tutors. Students must pay for individual/private tutors
- Adaptive Equipment
- Time management/organizational support

## Alternative Testing

Alternative testing is offered to students with varying disabilities who are currently registered with the C&AS. Alternative testing encompasses many different kinds of accommodations. Some examples of alternative testing accommodations include extended test-taking time, a quiet environment, and use of readers, scribes or computers.

The C&AS and each student take responsibility for arranging for accommodations before each individual test. The most common type of accommodation offered to students is a quiet environment with extended test-taking time. Generally, students with disabilities who are approved for extended test-taking time are given time and a half. For example, if the class is given 50 minutes to take the test, the student with accommodation will be given 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Readers are sometimes used in certain kinds of alternative testing. Having a test read for students with disabilities such as visual impairment and learning disabilities, is a form of accommodation. Students with physical disabilities limiting hand function or students with visual impairment may choose to use scribes when there is a difficulty with writing assignments and exams.

The advancement of technology has been incorporated within alternative testing. Some students with severe learning disabilities in written language use computers for essay examinations. Students with disabilities, especially significant disabilities, may use assistive devices within the classroom and during testing.

## Requests for Testing Accommodations

The student is responsible for initiating the process to request a reader or scribe for testing accommodations. Students are to contact the C&AS office no less than **48 hours or 2 business days** prior to the test date. This request can be made in person or by calling the C&AS office at 293.5246.

## Visual Impairments

The degrees of visual impairment vary and will determine the types of accommodations needed for each individual. Some individuals will be able to read with enlarged print, while others who are completely blind will need their textbooks and tests read for them.

The most common accommodations for individuals with visual impairments are listed below:

- Readers and/or scribes for examinations
- Readers and/or scribes for text books
- Extended test time
- Taping of classes
- Enlarged print and Braille tests (if available) and handouts
- Assignment of another student to assist with laboratory experiments or other classroom activities

Following are tips for instructing students with visual impairments:

- Talk while you teach. As you move around the classroom or point particular things out, verbalize what you are doing.
- Use concrete examples. When trying to teach abstract concepts that might be difficult for someone with a visual impairment to grasp, couple those concepts with examples from real life experiences.
- Do not raise your voice with students with visual impairments. It is common for many people to raise their voices when speaking to someone who is blind. Unless otherwise noted, these individuals have normal hearing.
- Ask the student what they need. It is acceptable and advisable to speak individually with a student with a visual impairment.

### **Hearing Impairments**

Students who are deaf or hearing impaired may require the different types of services. Some students are able to verbalize while others rely on some form of sign language and interpreters.

The most common accommodations for students who are deaf or have hearing impairments are note taking during class, tutoring sessions, and interpreters during class. Occasionally, deaf students will request extended test time because of difficulties in comprehending written English. It is important for deaf and hearing impaired students to choose their seats in the classroom to ensure their ability to hear or see the interpreter.

As interpreters are frequently assisting students with hearing impairments in the classroom setting, the following guidelines are necessary:

- Speak directly to the student, not to the interpreter
- Do not discuss problems or concerns about a student with the interpreter
- If there is a concern or question about the interpreting situation, talk to the interpreter before or after the class
- When requesting questions/comments from the class, please allow additional time for the student(s) to receive the interpreted message
- It is important not to speak too fast and to make sure that there is only one speaker at any given time
- Students may also utilize note takers and tutors

For more information on working with the deaf and interpreter, please contact the OSU-Okmulgee interpreter, Trish Sims, at 293.4948.

### **Learning Disabilities**

A learning disability can be best described as an inability to acquire or relate specific information. A student's learning disability (or disabilities) can create a discrepancy between their ability and their achievement. Learning disabilities can exist in any number of areas such as math, reading, or written language.

Because no two student's learning disabilities are exactly the same and each may vary in intensity and degree, it is important to consider each student individually. The most common types of accommodation provided are a quiet environment, extended test-taking time, and a reader or scribe.

Following are some suggested teaching strategies for students with learning disabilities. However, there is no one specific teaching strategy that works best for all students with learning disabilities. In general, students with LD perform better when they have clear-cut objectives, a structured classroom environment and an outcome-oriented class.

- Provide a syllabus with course objectives and important dates so that students can pace themselves
- Structure assignments into segments that are easier to manage
- Allow students to tape lectures and make copies of any overhead projections
- Give detailed feedback to students about their performance on tests or projects
- Be clear about the objective of assignments and the exact manner in which the assignments are to be completed

### **Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder**

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder is generally characterized by an inability to pay close attention to detail, difficulty sustaining attention, forgetfulness in daily activities and other related symptoms. Although this disorder is usually spoken of in reference to children, ADHD does carry over into adulthood. Students who are diagnosed with ADHD may require some accommodation to accomplish academic requirements.

There are many different strategies that an instructor may use within the learning environment to address Attention Deficit Disorder such as visual aids, structured assignments, and clear outlines of requirements. As is often the case, communication can best clarify the specific needs of accommodation of each student with ADHD. The most common accommodations provided for students with ADHD are quiet environments during testing, extended test-taking time, and note takers. Other accommodations may include:

- Provide a syllabus with course objectives and important dates so that students can pace themselves
- Extended test time
- Note taker
- Taping class lecture

### **Orthopedic and Mobility Impairments**

The orthopedic and mobility impairment group is composed of a multitude of disability types. Spinal cord injuries, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, arthritis, AIDS, and amputated limb are examples of these types of impairments. Because of the wide range of function within this group, accommodation is different for each individual.

Many students who have orthopedic and mobility impairments may use some sort of orthotic, prosthetic, or mobility aid such as wheelchairs, scooters, canes and braces. Service dogs are also included as an aid to mobility with the visually impaired. It is important to ensure that these students

are given ample room for any adaptive equipment they may need to bring to class and to modify the environment as needed.

There are no specific teaching techniques for working with this disability group, but special consideration should be given with regard to each individual's needs. Communication with instructors is essential for providing accommodation for each individual. Instructors are encouraged to contact the C&AS officer if there are any questions about accommodations.

Some of the most common accommodations provided are the following:

- Classroom relocation to an accessible building
- Extended test-taking time
- Note takers in class
- Recording of class lectures
- Scribes and readers for exams
- Tables brought into the classroom in place of a desk
- Assistants for lab experiments

### **Psychological Disorders**

Some types of psychological disorders include depression, anxiety disorders, personality disorders, mood disorders, and other forms of psychosis. Each psychological disorder varies in degree and intensity and some may be cyclical.

The social stigma attached to persons with psychological disorders may sometimes be the greatest obstacle to overcome. Understanding that treatment and medication can enable a person with a psychological disorder to function in a learning environment is essential in providing accommodations. Accommodations vary for each student and therefore, each student should be considered individually. Sustaining attention and/or focusing in the classroom and during tests are common problems that may affect a student with a psychological disorder. Side effects of medications should also be taken into consideration.

The most common accommodations provided for students with psychological disorders are

- Extended testing time
- Testing in a quiet environment
- Use of tape recorders in class
- Note takers

### **Summary**

Counseling and Access Services goal is to provide OSU-Okmulgee students with information and appropriate accommodations to make their educational experience a success. We trust this handbook can be of assistance in providing services to our students with disabilities. Please feel free to contact our office at 293.5246 or 293.4988.