

## **Information for PCC Advisors**

*Working with Students who experience Disabilities  
Presented by Kaela Parks, Director of Disability Services*



### **Important General Information**

- Roughly 1 in 15 postsecondary students disclose a disability.
- Not all individuals with disabilities need/want accommodations
- Most disabilities are hidden (Learning Disabilities, Health/Mental Health, etc.)
- Accommodations may be appropriate for temporary and/or permanent disabilities
- Documentation is the responsibility of the student and must support any request
- Accommodation is determined on an individualized basis
- Accommodation never fundamentally alters a program or lowers standards

### **Accommodation Process**

- 1) Student makes request to DS (syllabus statement is critical to increasing awareness)
- 2) DS works with student to determine reasonable adjustments (always individualized)
- 3) Student and faculty work together to implement adjustments (DS is available to help)

### **Examples of services and accommodations for students with documented need**

- Testing accommodations (time, environment, scribe/reader)
- Notetaking assistance (Peer notetakers are thanked with gift equivalent to \$25/credit, AT loans)
- Ergonomic Furniture (chairs with lumbar support, stools for labs, podiums, tables)
- Alternate format materials (e-text, large print, Braille, audio)
- Assistive Technology (hardware/software training and access on campus)
- Realtime access (ASL, CART, Transcribing, FM Listening Systems)
- Priority registration and/or reduced course load

### ***Reduced versus Balanced Course Loads***

**Reduced Course Load** is a programmatic accommodation – letter from DS can support a request but the program of study needs to sign off if full-time participation is typically required

**Balanced Course Load** is choice to take courses that demand efforts in different areas in effort to avoid being overtaxed (ex not all heavy reading/writing at once)

### ***Scheduling Needs and Priority Registration***

**Time of Day and Meeting Schedules** vary - not all course offerings are equally viable for all students – chronic health conditions, mobility limitations, side effects of medication, etc can impact appropriateness of distance ed, early morning, or tightly scheduled courses

**Priority Registration** is possible but students with disabilities can not bump others to get placed in classes that are already full – early planning is vital

### ***Technical Standards and Course Expectations***

**Technical Standards** are vital and students must understand the entry and exit criteria for any program they consider – all students will be held to a high standard and must be otherwise qualified to participate (with or without appropriate accommodation)

**Course Expectations** are very important and can vary from section to section so students should try to see the syllabus before registering – this is especially important if there is a potential that absences or grading policies could be impacted by disability

### ***Course Waivers and Substitutions***

**Course Waivers** are very seldom put in place because they tend to fundamentally alter programs

**Course Substitutions** may be reasonable if disability prevents completion of a course and there is another course that the academic program approves as a reasonable substitute

**Modified Course Delivery** through a directed study is an approach that can be helpful at times

### ***Library Resources***

There are hundreds of books and videos that are available for checkout through interlibrary loan. Some items are specifically related to postsecondary education, others are disability specific. Everything from academic journals and documentaries to first-person narratives, comedies, drama, and dance are available.

### ***Accessible Information Training and Support***

Adaptive computing stations are available for use across the district. We also offer individual and group training in how to use tools like voice recognition and text-to-audio. Workshop topics include voice recorders, accessible adobe, text to audio and voice recognition. Handouts are available.

### ***Informational Resource***

We work with individuals and groups who have particular questions or concerns. We are happy to provide department or division overviews, and actively participate in awareness building efforts such as National Disability Employment Awareness Month and collaborative High School Transition events.