

Faculty Guide for Supporting Full Access for All Students

National Louis University is committed to ensuring that all of its programs and activities are fully accessible for all students by removing all barriers to access within the learning environment.

What does this all mean to me, the faculty member? What are my responsibilities toward the student, the curriculum? What are the student's responsibilities? What if anything should I say to the student? To whom do I go for answers to my questions? What about the varying modes and rates at which students learn? What are some chronic illnesses I should be aware of that may warrant an academic accommodation?

The following are meant to be helpful guidelines to perhaps answer some of your concerns.

FACULTY ROLE

Due to the very personal and private nature of some types of disabilities, it may be extremely difficult for some students to ask for an accommodation. Often, students struggle through classes and may never identify for fear of discrimination. Therefore, it is important that faculty create an atmosphere where students feel comfortable about coming forward to discuss any of their needs that cannot be met within the current framework of the learning environment. Faculty can demonstrate openness and willingness to help students by drawing attention to the statement on their syllabi directing students to the Library & Learning Support Specialist for academic accommodations' requests. It would also be most helpful if faculty would announce to students at the first class meeting their willingness to help with accommodations because a student will be then be more likely to seek the assistance he or she needs sooner than later. Helpful communication and accommodation guides follow on pages 2 through 5 of this document under each specific category of disability.

It is strongly recommended that faculty let students know that they are willing to set up a time to meet with student(s) to: (1) make certain the student is aware of services available and is registered through the Library & Learning Support Specialist which includes responsibility for overall coordination of services for students with disabilities, (2) ask the student what course accommodations the student(s) need in terms of fulfilling course requirements, (3) ask the student if he or she would like you to announce that a note-taker is needed if pertinent, (4) ask the student if a study group would help; then, announce that study groups would be beneficial to students. (5) If it becomes apparent the student needs a tutor, help identify upper level or graduate students in the pertinent area of study. Contact Peter Ploegman, NLU's Library & Learning Support Specialist, for further information, questions, or assistance.

STUDENT ROLE

While it is the responsibility of faculty to create an academic environment that is fully accessible, the student must bear some responsibility as well. Generally, a student is responsible for:

- Registering with the Library & Learning Support Specialist, who is responsible for overall coordination of services for students with disabilities,
- Obtaining special equipment such as FM amplification systems with the assistance of the Library & Learning Support Specialist,
- Initiating contact with readers or tutors in the pertinent area or through the assistance of the Library & Learning Support Specialist,
- Keeping up with assignments, if having difficulty, talking with you to see what strategies or alternatives there might be,

- Arranging with faculty to have an exam taken in an alternate room or proctored by someone at the Learning Support Department,
- Arranging changes to classrooms for accessibility purposes through the Library & Learning Support Specialist with the assistance of the campus' Facilities Manager as needed,
- Arranging access to transportation to and from class with the assistance of the Library & Learning Support Specialist as needed
- Arranging for orientation and mobility training by Lighthouse for the Blind through the Library & Learning Support Specialist, and
- Finding, training, and employing attendants if necessary.

POSSIBLE ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

Two very important facts to remember are the following: no two students are alike, even with the same disability; and each student is an expert concerning his or her own specific disability and in some cases has a lifetime of experience at creating accommodations. Therefore, communicating with the student is essential to discovering methods of accommodation. In thinking about necessary accommodations, faculty should consider a student's physical accessibility to the classroom as well as the student's ability to fully participate in all course activities. Accessibility and communication are key to removing any potential barriers within the learning environment to provide the student with an equal opportunity to realize his or her academic potential.

The following are some general tips for positive communication and some suggested accommodations that may be made to aid in achievement of the student's academic potential:

Students with Deaf/Hard of Hearing Students

Communication:

- Provide a clear view of your mouth. Waving your hands or holding something in front of your lips, thus hiding them, makes lip reading impossible. (Even completely deaf individuals often lip read.) Don't chew gum.
- Speak with a clear resonant voice, but don't exaggerate. Use normal speed unless asked to slow down.
- Speak directly to the person, if possible, instead of from the side or back of the person.
- Speak expressively. Because deaf persons cannot hear subtle changes in tone that may indicate sarcasm or seriousness, many will rely on your facial expressions, gestures, and body language to understand you.
- If you have trouble understanding a deaf person's speech, feel free to ask him/her to repeat. If that doesn't work, use paper and pen or if the person has a sign language interpreter or real-time captioner, ask that person to repeat.
- If a deaf person is with an interpreter, speak directly to the deaf person - not to the interpreter.
- Encourage other students to be considerate of those who may not be able to hear.
- Consider learning sign language, either by taking a class offered through one of the departments or from the deaf person.

Accommodation:

- Attempt to arrange to be in a classroom with proper acoustics.
- Reduce as much as possible interfering sounds emitted from lights, vents, air conditioning units, etc.
- Close doors and windows to reduce interference from outside noise.
- Offer to seat the student close to you.

Students with Visual Impairments/Legally Blind

Communication:

- Introduce yourself and anyone else who may be with you when speaking with the student.
- Do not avoid using words such as see or look with the student. Blind and visually impaired persons use these words in their vocabulary also.
- If you are helping the student, and are not sure what to do, ask the person.
- A gentle touch on the elbow will indicate to a visually impaired person that you are speaking to him/her.
- Blind is not deaf. Don't shout. Nor is Blind dumb. If you have a question for the visually impaired person, ask him/her, not the companion if one is present.
- When walking with the student, allow him or her to take your arm just above the elbow. Let him or her set the pace or walk in a natural manner and pace.
- When offering a seat to the student, place the student's hand on the back or arm of the seat and allow the student to seat him/herself.
- If the student is accompanied by a guide dog, do not pet or distract the guide dog when the dog is on duty.
- Inform the student when furniture is rearranged.

Accommodation:

- Offer to seat the student close to the blackboard. This will enable him or her to see and hear class discussions more easily.
- Offer to seat the student in appropriately lit areas, avoiding areas where there are shadows or glare.
- Keep pathways clear of obstructions.
- Use verbal descriptions to supplement use of visual aids.
- Try to make sure that printed material is readable, avoiding poor quality copies and illegible inks.
(*Blue ink is very difficult for a low vision person to see.*)
- Select textbooks early so the student will have time to acquire matter in large print, in an electronic, screen-readable version, or in Braille.
- Discuss special emergency evacuation procedures if there are any.

Students with Mobility Disabilities

Communication:

- Offer help but wait until it is accepted before giving it. Giving help before it is accepted is rude and can sometimes be unsafe.
- Accept the fact that a disability exists. Not acknowledging a disability is similar to ignoring someone's gender or height.
- Ask personal questions regarding the disability would be inappropriate until a closer relationship develops in which personal questions are more naturally asked.
- Talk directly to the person who is disabled, not to someone accompanying him/her.
- Do not lean or hang on the wheelchair, as this is an invasion of personal space.
- Don't use automatic doors reserved for persons with a disability. Each time you use the door, that is one less time it will operate for someone who needs it.
- Treat a person with a disability as a healthy person. Just because a person has a functional disability does not mean the individual is sick.
- Students who cannot raise their hands to answer or ask question may feel isolated or ignored. Ask the student how he or she wishes to be recognized in class. (Some may wish you to call on them; others may prefer to meet with you periodically before or after class to discuss the course

content.)

- For lengthy conversations, sit down and speak to the student at eye level.
- Keep in mind that persons with disabilities have the same activities of daily living as you do. Many persons with disabilities find it almost impossible to get a cab to stop for them or to have a clerk wait on them in stores. Remember that individuals with disabilities are customers and patrons, and deserve equal attention when shopping dining, or traveling with you.
- Consult with the Facilities Manager for emergency building evacuation plans on each campus.

Accommodations:

- Keep the classroom free from physical barriers and obstructions.
- If possible, make all materials and equipment accessible before the student is called upon to use them.
- Minimize the amount of movement required to complete tasks.
- Allow for the use of adaptive tools and methods that the student find helpful such as blocks under a desk or lab area.
- Allow extra time for exams if necessary.
- In laboratory classes, allow the student to instruct his or her aid in detail for completion of the assignments.
- Give advance notice of field trips to allow the student time to plan his or her transportation.
- If the final exam is scheduled in another room, make certain that the room is accessible and make certain that the student is reminded so he or she can plan for transportation.

Students with Speech Impairments

Communication:

- Speak directly to the student and not to an interpreter.
- Be attentive to gestures and facial expressions.
- Accept and respond to all attempts at communication.
- Avoid the temptation to complete words or phrases for the student.
- Acknowledge when you do not understand the student's response and ask the student to try again.

Accommodation:

- Try to reserve a front row seat for the student (and if accompanied by an interpreter, for that person as well.)
- Consider replacing verbal assignments with written assignments.
- Allow students who are unable to communicate orally to use a typewriter, word processor, sign board, sign language interpreter or real-time captioner in class.
- Some students with speech impairments may wish to give oral presentations without assistance and should be encouraged to do so. It may be helpful to request an outline as a record of the organization of the student's concepts and to assist in understanding difficult speech patterns.

Students with Learning Disabilities

Communication:

- Repeat information and/or answer questions patiently.
- Provide the student with timely feedback to correct errors as soon as possible.
- Give praise to the student where merited (hopefully you do this with all students) to build confidence.

Accommodation:

- Prepare syllabus and textbook information in advance so the student can audio record assignments if needed.
- Break assignments, exercises, and exams into smaller components.
- Recommend alternative methods of taking notes, e.g., audio recording, photocopying, posting to D2L etc.
- Provide written copies or time-stamped outlines of lectures.
- For written assignments or tests, allow the student to use a computer or recording device, or to dictate answers into a tape recorder or to another person.
- Provide alternative conditions in which to complete a course exam (extra time, oral or written examination with oral response or written response [with no difference in equivalency], dictation to a scribe, a room with no distractions, essay or short answer instead of multiple choice, etc.). Contact the Library & Learning Support Specialist for appropriate suggestions for alternate test taking and if other arrangements are needed.
- Recommend tutoring via Library & Learning Support

INFORMATION on SPECIFIC CONDITIONS CAUSING DISABILITIES

Cerebral Palsy

A congenital brain damage resulting in motor, sensory, and perceptual difficulties. The most common functional limitations are coordination impairments of limbs, speech and/or sight, and limitations in functional activities, especially mobility. Accommodations should be sought according to the student's specific resulting impairment.

Cystic Fibrosis

An inherited disease of the exocrine glands, which pour secretions into or out of the body instead of into the blood. This disease causes respiratory distress and blockage of formation of many organs. It is recommended that faculty discuss the nature of the student's impairment and work with him or her accordingly with respect to his or her individual condition.

Diabetes Mellitus

A chronic disorder in which the pancreas produces an inadequate supply of insulin. This lack of insulin causes a disorder of the metabolism that transports glucose into the cells of the body. Due to special dietary restrictions, diabetics may be required to eat during class. If food does not correct the situation immediately, the student is experiencing "diabetic shock," and the faculty member should keep the student warm and still until medical assistance arrives.

Dyscalculia

A learning disability characterized by severe difficulty with math.

Dysgraphia

A learning disability characterized by severe difficulty with written expression.

Dyslexia

A learning disability, which causes a student to read letters but not words or to read words but not understand them. The most common functional limitation of this disorder is the inability to read or read at a normal rate. Students with this condition may require more time to complete exercises. They may also require verbal instructions and examinations as opposed to traditional written formats.

Epilepsy

Epilepsy is one of the most common neurological disorders (4th most common). It is characterized by often unpredictable seizures that may cause other health problems as well (e.g., impaired cognitive function, physical immobility, etc.). There are many types of Epilepsy and they are manifested in different ways, but largely by the effected individual experiencing seizures. Seizures also take many forms ranging from tonic-clonic (previously known as grand mal) to partial and absence seizures. One in 26 people will develop Epilepsy in their lifetime. Students with this disorder may experience a seizure during a class and, if so, should be helped to a flat surface and turned on their side; nothing should be placed in their mouth. A seizure lasting more than five minutes should result in a 911 call for emergency seizure medication administration by a medical professional. Someone recovering from a seizure should be allowed to rest and may not be able to speak or walk upon awaking. Students suffering from cognitive or immobility issues as a result of their Epilepsy may require accommodations that allow them additional time to complete assignments and/or exams.

Fatigue

The result of many chronic medical problems including cardiac illness, respiratory illness, AIDS, and various medication side effects. Typical signs of fatigue include chronic absenteeism, sluggish appearance, poor endurance, and an inability to concentrate. If a student is missing class, encourage him or her to copy a classmate's notes. If he or she is unable to take adequate notes, allow him or her to record lectures. Allow the student to attend other sections of the course to prevent him or her from missing important material. Provide a rest period for students during exams.

Hypoglycemia

A disorder, which causes the body to utilize too much blood sugar, leaving a sugar deficiency, which can result in fatigue, lightheadedness, and dizziness. Monitoring activity and diet can control these effects. Students with this disorder may require sustenance and/or rest before they are able to function at their normal capacity and may also require additional time to complete assignments and/or exams.

Multiple Sclerosis

Usually a progressive degeneration of the myelin sheath that surrounds the central nervous system. This disorder can affect sight, speech, hearing, coordination, ambulation, or general activity. When determining what accommodations are necessary, the faculty member should discuss with the student the nature of the student's impairment.

Muscular Dystrophy

Usually a progressive degeneration of the body's muscle fibers that are replaced by fatty and fibrous tissue. This disorder affects strength, mobility and physical activity.

Narcolepsy

A disease characterized by brief attacks of deep sleep. Through medication, this disease is usually controllable.

Paraplegia

Paralysis involving both legs and the trunk. The most common functional limitations are limited physical activity or ambulation.

Quadriplegia

Paralysis involving parts or all of the four limbs and the trunk. The most common functional limitations are limited physical activity or ambulation.

Respiratory Problems

Usually chronic in nature, the most common of which are bronchial asthma and emphysema. Respiratory problems are characterized by attacks of shortness of breath and difficulty in breathing, sometimes triggered by stress, either physical or mental. Fatigues and difficulty climbing stairs may also be major problems, depending on the severity of the attacks. Frequent absence from class may occur and hospitalization may be required when prescribed medications fail to relieve the symptoms.

Sickle Cell Anemia

A hereditary disease that reduces the blood supply to vital organs and the oxygen supply to the blood cells. Adequate classroom ventilation is an important concern for students with this disability. Because many vital organs are affected, the student with sickle cell anemia may also suffer from eye disease, heart condition, lung problems and acute abdominal pain. At times, limbs or joints may be affected. The disease is characterized by severe crisis periods with extreme pain, which may necessitate absence from class and even hospitalization. Completing academic assignments during these periods may not be possible.

Specific Learning Disability

A disability that affects one or more of the psychological processes involved in understanding. Specific learning disabilities can affect a student's ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, and do math.

Spina Bifida

A failure of the spinal column to fuse properly, leaving one or more neural elements of spinal cord unprotected. A student with this disorder may experience temporary or permanent limited physical movement or ambulation.

Traumatic Brain Injury

Is becoming increasingly prevalent. The person often exhibits one or more of the following symptoms: short-term memory problems, serious attention deficits, auditory dysfunction, cognitive deficits, behavior problems, problems of judgment, and serious anxiety attacks.

RESOURCES

For general questions, contact Peter Ploegman, NLU's Library & Learning Support Specialist, Chicago campus, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60603-6119. Voice: 312/261-3188 or 312-261-3329 (voicemail box only); Email: pploegman@nl.edu or ADA@nl.edu.

The Library & Learning Support Specialist coordinates the following services with regard to students with disabilities:

- Alternate exam arrangements
- Securing classroom note takers
- Finding alternative format textbooks
- Enlarging text
- Securing classroom furniture

Library & Learning Support:

Found on each campus, Library & Learning Support Department functions to help develop the academic potential of each NLU student. Tutoring appointments can be made by phone at 312-261-3374 or by completing the online request form at <http://www.nl.edu/librarylearningsupport/requestanappointment>.

Students with Disabilities Grievance Procedures (as printed in 2015-2016 Student Guidebook)

A student or applicant who decides to file a formal complaint should contact the University Ombudsman, 312.261.3461. If the grievance concerns the actions of the University Ombudsman, contact the Vice President of Student Services at 847.947.5409. All other grievances will be promptly investigated and reviewed by the University Ombudsman. The purpose of the review is to determine if University policy and applicable federal and local law have been followed and, if not, to address the consequences that may have resulted and take appropriate corrective action. Information relevant to the matter may be requested from the involved parties. The University Ombudsman will provide a response notifying the student or applicant of the findings and recommendations.

A student or applicant who uses the complaint procedure must not be retaliated against for doing so. The student or applicant may choose another student, faculty or staff employee to accompany him or her through the procedure. The other student or employee may help to express the complaint. A student or applicant who finds that a complaint is not resolved to his or her satisfaction may appeal to the Director of Student Experience or Vice President of Student Services. The finding and response from either of these officers is the final response for the University. Additionally, a student or applicant who believes that s/he has been harassed or discriminated against because of a disability can file a Charge of Discrimination at their regional U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. The Illinois and Wisconsin regional office is located at 500 W. Madison St., Chicago, IL, 60661. The Florida regional office is located at 61 Forsyth St. W, Ste. 19T10, Atlanta, GA 30303.