

SUGGESTIONS FOR HELPING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES SUCCEED IN THE CLASSROOM

Establish a climate in the classroom that is accepting of individual differences.

Provide students with a detailed course syllabus. Make it available before school begins. **NOTE ON THE SYLLABUS THAT STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS/CONCERNS ARE INVITED TO MEET WITH YOU EARLY IN THE SEMESTER TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE ACCOMMODATIONS.**

Clearly spell out expectations (grading, material to be covered, due dates) at the beginning of the course. This is especially critical for disabled students who need lead time in order to arrange support services (recorded textbooks, enlarged print, interpreter services, etc.).

Minimize distractions in the classroom: erase the board when you enter, close the door to reduce noise, etc..

Use Multisensory Teaching: Learning disabled students learn more readily if material is presented in as many modalities as possible: visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactile. Use visual aids to reinforce what you say. Present new vocabulary in both spoken and written form. Describe orally any diagrams, charts, etc. used during lectures. Give opportunities for hands-on learning whenever possible.

New concepts need to be taught in as concrete a way as possible. It is often easier for learning disabled students to learn the theory **after** its practical application.

Provide adequate opportunities for questions and answers, including review sessions.

If possible, select a textbook with an accompanying study guide for optional student use.

Give assignments both orally and in written form to avoid confusion.

Help students break long assignments into smaller, more manageable parts and give feedback after each part.

Be sensitive to the fact that some students are very uncomfortable reading aloud.

Encourage students to use current technology to enhance learning: tape recorders, computers, calculators, electronic spellers, etc.

Provide study questions for exams that demonstrate the format, as well as the content, of the test. Explain what constitutes a good answer and why.

Allow students with disabilities to demonstrate mastery of course material using alternative methods (extended time limits, taped exams, oral exams, etc.). Be aware that scantrons are very difficult for some students to use.

Encourage students to use campus support services available through Disability Resource Services, Counseling Services, the Tutoring Center and Student Support Services.