



# Indian River State College

## Student Accessibility Services Handbook

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\*Original document can be found in the Office of Student Accessibility Services.

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## Introduction

This handbook provides information about IRSC and the wide range of programs, facilities, services, accommodations, and equipment available to students with disabilities. Indian River State College provides equal access to quality education and is dedicated to meeting the current and future needs of the diverse populations of St. Lucie, Indian River, Martin and Okeechobee counties. IRSC encourages prospective students with disabilities to visit, call or email Student Accessibility Services for further information.

IRSC Student Accessibility Services (SAS) provides auxiliary aid services, equipment, reasonable accommodations and academic advisement to students who self-identify as a person with a documented disability. SAS is located on the Main Campus in Fort Pierce at Crews Hall (W-bldg.) - Advising Department.

### Contact Information

#### Student Accessibility Services Contact Information

AccessibilityServices@irsc.edu

### Non-Discrimination/Non-Harassment Policy Statement

Information regarding the Non-Discrimination/Non-Harassment Policy can be found in the IRSC Student Handbook/Planner or online at [www.irsc.edu](http://www.irsc.edu). Visit Employment then Equal Access/Opportunity.

### Equal Access/Equal Opportunity Statement

Indian River State College is an equal opportunity/equal access institution. It is the policy of the District Board of Trustees to provide equal opportunity for employment and educational opportunities to all (including applicants for employment, employees, applicants for admission, students, and others affiliated with the College) without regard to race, color, national origin, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status, or genetic information.

### Equity Coordinator and ADA-504 Compliance Officer

Equity Coordinator and ADA-504 Compliance Officer	
Aдриене B. Jefferson Equity Officer & Title IX Coordinator Phone: 772-462-7156 Email: <a href="mailto:ajeffer@irsc.edu">ajeffer@irsc.edu</a>	Sera Fini Phillips Executive Director of Human Resources Phone: 772-462-7221 Email: <a href="mailto:sfphilli@irsc.edu">sfphilli@irsc.edu</a>

## **Confidentiality**

As directed in state and federal laws and, in strict compliance with the Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), all disability information is confidentially maintained. FERPA is a federal law that protects the privacy of students' educational records. Students have specific, protected rights regarding the release of such records. FERPA guidelines only provide for disclosure of disability information to faculty and staff on a *need-to-know* basis. Guidelines can be viewed at: <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/ferpa>

Disclosure of a student's disability is the personal preference of the student. A student may elect to share information regarding his/her disability. If so, faculty and staff must remember to maintain confidentiality. All confidential information should only be discussed with the student in private. Further, this information should only be discussed with other college faculty and staff for educational purposes on a need-to-know basis. At no time should the class be informed that a student has a disability, and, when documenting concerns, staff and faculty should focus on the specific behavior, not the disability, and should refrain from diagnosing an individual.

Student Accessibility Services requests permission to inform instructors of the accommodations needed by students with disabilities. Students may also sign a release of records, giving a third party (i.e., parents, spouse, doctor, agency, etc.) permission to contact college personnel to discuss disability, accommodations, and educational progress. It is not required of college personnel to initiate contact with a third party.

Students wanting a copy of their documentation on file in SAS will also be required to sign a release of information and provide copy of photo ID.

## **Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

The federal laws applicable to post-secondary students with disabilities are:

- The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA)
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)
- The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504

### **ADAAA/ADA**

Title II of The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) prohibits discrimination and requires that State and local governments give people with disabilities an equal opportunity to benefit from all telecommunications, programs, services, and activities.

The Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA) revised and expanded these protections and, in the process, lowered the bar for establishing a disability. The ADAAA emphasizes that the definition of disability should be construed in favor of broad coverage of individuals to the maximum extent permitted by the terms of ADA without the requirement of extensive analysis. The requirements regarding the provision of reasonable accommodations, auxiliary aids and services in post-secondary institutions described in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, are included in the general provisions for non-discrimination under Title II of the regulation.

## **The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504**

Federal Register/Vol. 45, No. 92, Pg. 30937-30944

Public Law 93-112, Section 504 states, "No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States, as defined in section 7(6), shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Students with disabilities must be afforded an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from all post-secondary education programs and activities.

The Americans with Disabilities Act as define a qualified person with a disability:

"A person who has a physical and/or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment or, a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment."

### **Student Accessibility Services, Student and Faculty Responsibilities**

Any institution of higher learning, SAS, the student, and faculty must all share in the responsibilities associated with the successful promotion of equal educational access for students with disabilities.

#### **Student Accessibility Services has the responsibility to:**

- Evaluate students based on their abilities and not their disabilities
- Determine the appropriateness of disability documentation and to assist the student in understanding how to procure that documentation
- Determine eligibility for accommodations on a case-by-case basis
- Provide or arrange reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services for students with disabilities in courses, programs, activities and facilities
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality of records and communication
- Collaborate with faculty, staff and students
- Provide relevant and appropriate support to all parties as needed

#### **Students have the responsibility to:**

- Adhere to institutional policies and procedures
- Provide Student Accessibility Services with appropriate documentation of his or her disability
- Communicate privately with faculty to discuss needed accommodations and any other concerns prior to or during the first week of class
- Initiate requests for alternate format textbooks and publisher materials. The student should understand that these could take 3 to 4 weeks to prepare and will be requested by the student in a timely manner. The student will understand that if he/she does not request alternate format textbooks and publisher materials in advance of class start, the student cannot be guaranteed provision. All alternate formats require a receipt of purchase.
- Request assistance immediately when issues and/or concerns arise and exercise due diligence to make the accommodations process work.
- Engage in a fair, objective, and respectful dialogue concerning accommodation options and not transfer or abdicate the student's role to parents or agents/advocates.
- Arrange testing accommodations implementation with each instructor and/or Assessment Center staff in advance of testing due date.
- Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) may be necessary to address the personal needs of a student with a disability so he/she can participate in the college activities, services, and programs. The college does not assume coordination of, financial responsibility for, or legal liability for the PCA chosen by the student. The student should make arrangements to provide and pay for his/her own impartial personal care attendant prior to attending classes. PCAs are obligated to follow the same code of conduct as the campus community, and they should not interfere with the learning environment, nor should the student abdicate their roles and responsibilities as a college student to the PCA or any other entity. The PCA should not participate in class discussions, and should not ask or answer questions unless specifically directed to do so by the student who employs the PCA.

**Faculty have the responsibility to:**

- Adhere to institutional policies and procedures.
- Review student accommodations upon official notification from SAS office.
- Engage in a fair, objective, and respectful dialogue concerning accommodation options.
- When a student requests implementation of the note-taker accommodation it is important to ask for a volunteer note-taker in your class while respecting the confidentiality and the anonymity of the student needing the accommodation.
- Testing accommodations of reading/scribing or private room will coordinate with the Assessment Center for testing appointments. All tests should be dropped off prior to the date (with a testing instruction sheet). The student with private testing needs should make an appointment with the Assessment Center prior taking the test.
- If you have an adjustable desk and chair in your classroom, it may be reserved for a student who has requested it through our office due to his/her disability. Please make sure that the students who require adaptive furniture have it available. Sometimes, other students who do not need this furniture choose to sit in the space which could potentially present a conflict.
- Please take notice of any student who may need assistance in the case of emergency evacuation from your classrooms. For additional information on emergency procedures please contact:

Donald Bergmann  
Chief of Campus Safety  
[dbergmann@irsc.edu](mailto:dbergmann@irsc.edu)  
772-462-7860

- Please have the accessibility statement listed in your syllabus in the first class meeting.

**Student Accessibility Services Syllabus Statement**

Indian River State College provides reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities through the Student Accessibility Services (SAS) Office. The rights of students with disabilities which pertain to post-secondary education are provided under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Students who wish to request an accommodation for a documented disability may contact Student Accessibility Services at [lhayes@irsc.edu](mailto:lhayes@irsc.edu), 772-462-7809 or [shamamly@irsc.edu](mailto:shamamly@irsc.edu), 772-462-7396

## Transition from high school to college for student with disabilities

### Different laws apply

IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are very different, and this has led to miscommunication between college and high school staff. Under IDEA, high school special education program procedures may apply primarily to a precise list of disabilities such as “specific learning disability.” In post- secondary institutions, accommodations must be made on a case-by-case basis according to a current functional impairment. In high school, students who use wheelchairs may be considered under a subpart of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and be referred to as their “504” students. However, Section 504 does not create a requirement for IEPs in either high school or post-secondary institutions. Misunderstanding comes from the assumption that a “504 Plan” or an IEP developed at a high school will be binding on a college or university. It does not.

High School:	Post-Secondary:
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	IDEA no longer applies
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Americans with Disabilities Act	Americans with Disabilities Act

### At the post-secondary level, student responsibilities change as follows:

#### Students have a responsibility to:

- Self-identify or disclose the disability to the designated office for disability services if they want to receive accommodations. At Indian River State College, this office is Student Accessibility Services.
- Obtain and Provide documentation such as psycho-educational test results, or physician’s report. The documentation should verify the disability, describe the extent of the impairment, and provide information that supports the need for specific accommodations.
- Take specific action to request those accommodations for their disabilities.
- Act as independent adults; use appropriate self-advocacy strategies.
- Contact their instructors to activate accommodations for each class.
- Arrange for and obtain their own personal attendants, individual tutoring and specifically fitted or designed assistive technologies.

#### Post-secondary institutions are not required to:

- Provide specialized personal equipment (i.e., wheelchair, crutches, etc.)
- Substitute or waive any of the essential requirements of a course or program.
- Conduct testing and assessment of learning, psychological, or medical disabilities.
- Provide personal attendants.
- Provide personal or private tutors (but tutoring services normally available to persons without disabilities must be accessible to persons with disabilities who are otherwise qualified for those services).
- Prepare “Individual Education Plans” (IEPs).
- Provide transportation between home and college or around campus

<b>In high school, the school has responsibilities which include the following:</b>	<b>The post-secondary level institutional role changes as follows</b>
Identify students with disabilities	Protect a student's right to privacy and confidentiality
Provide assessment of learning disabilities	Provide access to programs and services, for persons with disabilities
Classify disabilities according to specified diagnostic categories	Inform students of office location and procedures for requesting accommodations
Involve parents or guardians in placement decisions	Accept and evaluate verifying documentation
Provide certain non-academic services	Determine that a mental or physical impairment causes a substantial limitation of a major life activity based on student- provided verifying documents
Place students in programs where they can benefit (in any way) by placement committee with parent participation and approval	Determine for students who are otherwise qualified for participation in the program or service, with or without accommodations, whether reasonable accommodations are possible
Structure a large part of the student's weekly schedule	Make reasonable accommodations for students who meet the above qualifying criteria
Modify educational programs	Provide reasonable access to programs and service choices equal to those available to the general public
Prepare Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)	Suggest reasonable adjustments in teaching methods which do not alter the essential content of a course or program
Provide a free and appropriate education	Assure that off-campus and contracted program facilities also comply with Section 504 (Subpart E) and ADA
Provide appropriate services by the school nurse or health service	Inform students of their rights and responsibilities.

Other differences exist for post-secondary institutions that provide housing programs, health services, psychological counseling services and extensive international programs.

Remember:

**Privacy** – Students in colleges and universities are considered adults, with privacy and confidentiality protections. College staff cannot talk with parents and guardians about a student's academic activities as was typical in K-12, unless the student has given consent by signing a Release of Information form.

**Eligibility** – Special education services in high school are diagnosis driven (i.e., the students must be diagnosed as having one of eleven specified conditions). Eligibility for reasonable accommodations in post-secondary institutions is driven by severity of impact on a major life activity.

**Preparedness** – College students must structure and plan their own study time; colleges do not arrange study periods or provide for time to do homework during classes. Professors and classes may differ regarding attendance requirements, scheduling assignment due dates and exams. The student must study each professor's syllabus for each class to determine the requirements and what will be expected.

## Requesting Services at IRSC

In order to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities, Indian River State College asks for voluntary self-identification of students with a documented disability. This information is kept confidential and is used to provide equal access to all programs, courses and facilities at IRSC. To ensure that services are available on the first day of classes, the student needs to:

1. Complete the Student Accessibility Services Application and the Voter Registration Form
2. Submit required documentation and medical professional per diagnosis (within the past 5 years) on letterhead from a licensed or certified physician, psychologist, school psychologist, psychiatrist, audiologist, or speech-language pathologist. This must include a diagnosis and reasonable assessment of the academic accommodations needed, based on the disability.
3. Make contact with Student Accessibility Services (SAS)
4. If needed, a verification letter from a state agency (i.e., Division of Vocational Rehabilitation or Division of Blind Services), indicating whether or not the student is a client and whether or not the agency will be responsible in providing the student with services and/or equipment.

The Student Accessibility Services office is a State designated voter registration agency that provides assistance to applicants with disabilities in completing voter registration application forms and accepts completed voter registration application forms for transmittal to the appropriate election official.

It is the student's responsibility to discuss accommodations with the instructor to coordinate implementation. Accommodations are not retroactive, so it is very important to complete the process for accommodations as early as possible.

If a diagnosis worsens or symptoms become more severe students may submit additional documentation supporting the need for added accommodations. SAS personnel may request additional documentation if the documentation does not meet minimum guidelines as outlined in the SAS application.

Indian River State College provides reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities through the Student Accessibility Services office. Services available to eligible students may include note takers, testing accommodations, use of equipment and assistive technology, readers and scribes, sign language interpreters, and alternative text.

Post-secondary institutions are not required to provide specialized personal equipment (i.e., wheelchair, crutches, etc.); substitute or waive any of the essential requirements of a course or program; conduct testing and assessment of learning, psychological, or medical disabilities; provide personal attendants; provide personal or private tutors (but tutoring services normally available to persons without disabilities must be accessible to persons with disabilities who are otherwise qualified for those services); prepare "Individual Education Plans" (IEPs); or provide transportation between home and college or around campus.

For details, refer to the U.S. Department of Education Transition of Students with Disabilities to Postsecondary Education: A Guide for High School Educators (<https://www.ed.gov/teaching-and-administration/supporting-students/transition-of-students-with-disabilities-to-postsecondary-education-a-guide-for-high-school-educators>)

## Categories of Disability Types

\*\* Please see Student Accessibility Services Application for documentation requirements \*\*

**Specific Learning Disability** - A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological or neurological processes involved in understanding or in using spoken or written language. Disorders may be manifested in listening, thinking, reading, writing, spelling, or performing arithmetic calculations. Examples include dyslexia, dysgraphia, dysphasia, dyscalculia, and other specific learning disabilities in the basic psychological or neurological processes. Such disorders do not include learning problems which are due primarily to visual, hearing, or motor handicaps, to mental retardation, to emotional disturbance, or to an environmental deprivation.

**Deaf/Hard of Hearing** - A hearing loss of thirty (30) decibels or greater, pure tone average of 500, 1000, 2000, and 4000 (Hz), unaided, in the better ear. Examples include, but are not limited to, conductive hearing impairment or deafness, sensorineural hearing impairment or deafness, and high or low tone hearing loss or deafness, and acoustic trauma hearing loss or deafness.

**Visual Impairment** - Disorders in the structure and function of the eye as manifested by at least one of the following: visual acuity of 20/70 or less in the better eye after the best possible correction, a peripheral field so constricted that it affects one's ability to function in an educational setting, or a progressive loss of vision which may affect one's ability to function in an educational setting. Examples include, but are not limited to, cataracts, glaucoma, nystagmus, retinal detachment, retinitis pigmentosa, and strabismus.

**Orthopedic Impairment** - A disorder of the musculoskeletal, connective tissue disorders, and neuromuscular system. Examples include but are not limited to cerebral palsy, absence of some body member, clubfoot, nerve damage to the hand and arm, cardiovascular aneurysm (CVA), head injury and spinal cord injury, arthritis and rheumatism, epilepsy, intracranial hemorrhage, embolism, thrombosis (stroke), poliomyelitis, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, congenital malformation of brain cellular tissue, and physical disorders pertaining to muscles and nerves, usually as a result of disease or birth defect, including but not limited to muscular dystrophy and congenital muscle disorders.

**Speech/Language Impairment** - Disorders of language, articulation, fluency, or voice which interfere with communication, pre-academic or academic learning, vocational training, or social adjustment. Examples include, but are not limited to, cleft lip and/or palate with speech impairment, stammering, stuttering, laryngectomy, and aphasia.

**Emotional or Behavioral Disability** - Any mental or psychological disorder including but not limited to organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, or attention deficit disorders.

**Autism Spectrum Disorder** - Disorders characterized by an uneven developmental profile and a pattern of qualitative impairments in social interaction, communication, and the presence of restricted repetitive, and/or stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, or activities. These characteristics may manifest in a variety of combinations and range from mild to severe.

**Traumatic Brain Injury** - An injury to the brain, not of a degenerative or congenital nature but caused by an external force, that may produce a diminished or altered state of consciousness, which results in impairment of cognitive ability and/or physical functioning.

**Intellectual Disability** - A disorder significantly below average general intellectual and adaptive functioning manifested during the developmental period, with significant delays in academic skills. Developmental period refers to birth to eighteen (18) years of age.

**Other Health Impairment** - Any disability not identified above, except those students who have been documented as having an intellectual disability, deemed by a disability professional to make completion of the requirement impossible.

## Suggestions for Supporting Student with Disabilities

\*\* You may not know and may not ask an individual's specific disability. The descriptions and interventions outlined below are informational resources; however, the best approach to reach all learners is Universal Design.

### General Information

- People with disabilities are people first. The disability is only one part of that person that makes them unique.
- Treat students with disabilities with respect and consideration.
- Ask a student with a disability if he/she needs help before providing assistance.
- Talk directly to the student with a disability, not through the student's personal care attendant, reader, scribe, interpreter, real-time captionist or note-taker.
- Refer to the student's disability only if it is relevant to the conversation. When referring to a student with a disability, emphasize the person first and then the disability. "The student who is blind" is better than "the blind student".
- Never mention the disability of a student in front of other students, draw undue attention to a student with a disability or share information about a student with disability.
- Avoid negative descriptions of a student's disability, such as "a student who uses a wheelchair" is more appropriate than "a student confined to a wheelchair".
- Do not segregate students with disabilities from the rest of the class, except when taking tests in the Assessment Center.
- Avoid stereotyping. Offer instruction and support based on student performance and not on assumptions of disability types.
- Making a statement on the class syllabus inviting students with disabilities to discuss accommodations needed and provide referral information regarding Student Accessibility Services.
- Use multiple modes of instruction to motivate and engage students. Make each instructional method accessible and provide the same means of participation to all students.
- Allow SAS students to record class lectures. Many students with disabilities are eligible to record course lectures and all sign a statement through SAS, stating that the material is to be used solely for their personal academic enrichment and cannot be distributed, copied or sold, without the written permission of the instructor.
- Assist in finding a note-taker in class for students with disabilities that are eligible for this accommodation.
- Arrange for testing material to be placed in the Assessment Center for students with disabilities who take their tests there. It is the student's responsibility to contact the assessment center to make sure a reader or scribe is available for testing. SAS provides sign language interpreters.
- All classroom and online videos must have captioning.

## **Students with Specific Learning Disabilities**

“A Specific Learning Disability is a disorder in one or more of the central nervous system processes involved in perceiving, understanding and/or using concepts through spoken/written language or non-verbal means. This disorder manifests itself with a deficit in one or more of the following areas: attention, reasoning, processing, memory, communication, reading, writing, spelling, calculation, coordination, social competence, and emotional maturity.” (Rehabilitation Services Administration, 1985).

- Offer directions/instructions both verbally and in writing. You may need to repeat directions or information to make sure the student has processed it. Have student repeat directions.
- Summarize major points, give background/contextual information, provide outlines, class notes, summaries and study guides.
- At the beginning of each term, encourage documented students to discuss modifications that will facilitate their learning.
- Provide a detailed course syllabus, assignment list, and reading list early so they are available, should they be requested before the class begins. These materials may need to be read onto audiotape or digitized, or the student may need additional preparation time.
- Begin lectures and/or discussion with written and oral overview of topics to be covered.
- Use multiple formats: Visual aids, three-dimensional models, charts or graphics, group projects, visual stimuli, audio and video content to accommodate different learning styles.
- Pause and ask questions during lecture to check for understanding.
- If possible, provide presentations or lecture materials on line. Make statements that emphasize important points, main ideas, and key concepts when lecturing.
- Accept oral presentations in place of written assignments, when possible.
- Consider that students with reading disabilities may not wish to read out loud in class.
- Allow audio recording of lectures.
- Allow early drafts of papers or projects to be turned in for feedback.
- Provide a study guide or practice exams that familiarize students with the format of the test.

## **Speech/Language Disorders**

- Students may experience a myriad speech impairments that range from stuttering, speech articulation or voice problems to complete speechlessness. These challenges include difficulties in projecting, as in chronic hoarseness and esophageal speech; issues with fluency, as in stuttering and stammering as well as dysarthria that alters articulation of particular words or terms.
- Accommodations for students with impairments of speech are relatively easy to provide. Address these students naturally. Give them voluntary opportunities to speak in class. Calling on a person who stutters instantaneously increases the demands for speech and is not helpful. Permit them the time necessary to express themselves without filling the gaps in their speech. Ask students to restate or clarify verbal communication as necessary. Do not assume their challenges with speech extend to their ability to hear or comprehend.
- Modify assignments such as, one-to-one presentations or allow use of computer with voice synthesizer
- Allow more preparation or substitutions for oral class reports
- Support inclusiveness in classroom
- Be patient, allow the student time to complete statements

## **Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders (ADD/ADHD)**

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is characterized by a persistence of inattention and/or hyperactivity that is more frequent and severe than is typically observed in individuals at a comparable level of development (DSM-V). Symptoms are divided into two categories: inattention and, hyperactivity and impulsivity. These categories include behaviors like failure to pay close attention to details, difficulty organizing tasks and activities, excessive talking, fidgeting, or an inability to remain seated in appropriate situations, and they may have difficulty “screening out” unimportant stimuli in the environment.

- Encourage selective scheduling of classes. Scheduling classes so that students have a break between them provides an opportunity for the student to review and organize notes, and prepare materials for the next class. Medication is another factor for course time planning.
- Clearly outline course requirements and due dates.
- Communicate classroom rules and behavioral expectations such as punctuality or phone use.
- Utilize different teaching methods. Include hands-on, interactive and small group activities when possible.
- Emphasize organization and time management. Encourage the organization of study groups.
- Keep instructions as brief as possible. Provide instructions for exams and assignments in print as well as orally.
- Provide hard copies of lecture materials and class notes.
- Allow audio recording of lectures.

## **Emotional or Behavioral Disabilities**

Emotional or Behavioral disabilities can affect individuals of any age, gender, and intellectual group. These illnesses include, but are not limited to: bipolar, anxiety disorders, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), schizophrenia, and social disorders. The onset of many of these illnesses commonly occur between the ages of 18-25. As this is the approximate age of a traditional college student, please consider this as you work with students to support them through classes.

- Provide information in clear, calm, respectful tones.
- Allow opportunities for addressing specific questions.
- Focus on the content of what the student says not the tone. The tone could be misleading.
- Allow for breaks from the classroom for the student to reset.
- Allow early access to syllabus and reading assignments. Allowing the student to get organized ahead of time and begin reading assignments early may help the student stay on track in case of later absences.
- Allow student to record lectures.
- Allow beverages in class. Some medications cause extreme thirst as a side effect.
- Offer alternative ways of completing assignments. For example, a student with severe anxiety might perform better with a written assignment.
- Provide regular feedback on performance and assignments.
- Consider allowing students to make up work as appropriate.
- When you notice signs of depression, a student mentions being depressed, having a crisis, or being anxious about something, please provide resources for them. Please direct them to Health and Wellness for resources and support.

## **Autism Spectrum Disorders**

Autism Spectrum Disorder, (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder ranging from mild to severe and characterized by core features of social/communication deficits, repetitive/restrictive behaviors, and a lack of emotional exchange. While all people with ASD share the core features of the disorder, specific manifestations in developmental, cognitive, emotional, and/or behavioral areas are unique to each individual. Individuals with ASD may appear naïve and clueless, suggesting that social awareness and perception are impaired. There may be problems recognizing, interpreting, and responding to cues sent in conversation especially in unstructured or unfamiliar situations. Individuals with ASD may seem uninterested, withdrawn, peculiar, or just different. Individuals with ASD may experience co-occurring psychiatric manifestations such as anxiety, depression, learning disabilities, etc. and may be prescribed psychotropic medications which may cause side effects.

- Structure the class, provide handouts and try not to deviate from routine.
- Incorporate multiple modes of delivery into teaching lessons.
- Maintain physical space boundaries, avoid close contact or touching.
- Be very specific with directions, projects and assignments
- Repeat instructions and check for understanding
- Set explicit guidelines for classroom behavior
- Avoid overstimulation
- Avoid sarcasm, they may not understand expressions and slang
- Get to know the student so he/she will feel comfortable coming to you with problems
- Help connect students to tutors who they can use as a resource

## **Orthopedic Impairments**

- When speaking alone with a student using a wheelchair, position yourself at the same approximate height, if possible.
- Assure that activities, materials and equipment are safe, physically accessible to, and usable by all students.
- Talk directly to the student with a disability, not through the student's personal care attendant, scribe, reader or note-taker. Never lean on a wheelchair or pat a student using a wheelchair on the head.
- Students may need to drink fluids in class, stand and stretch, leave the classroom periodically, or miss class due to health reasons. (SAS will note this on Instructor Notice when applicable.)
- Be aware of emotional discomfort that often accompanies chronic pain.

## **Traumatic Brain Injuries**

- Provide student with written directions for assignments/tasks with many steps.
- Have consistent routines and exercise patience.
- Give demonstrations and examples; may need to repeat.

## **Speech/Language Impairments**

- Listen carefully. Repeat what you think you understand, and then ask the student to clarify and/or repeat the portion that you did not understand.
- Never act like you understand what the student is saying when you do not. Do not be afraid to ask the student to repeat.
- May resort to communicating using paper and pencil. Communicate outside of class via email.
- Do not force the student to read out-loud in class. May submit a written speech as an alternative to giving an oral speech in class.

## **Visual Impairments**

- Be descriptive by saying "the computer is about three feet to your left", rather than "the computer is over there."
- When guiding people with visual impairments, offer them your arm rather than grabbing or pushing them.
- Give handouts in large print.
- Ask permission before you interact with a student's service animal.
- Allow partially sighted students to sit near the front of the room or other optimum locations.
- Provide textbook titles in advance so that audible formats can be ordered.
- Accept a tape recording of written assignments.
- Photocopies of class handouts or course packets should be of good quality and should not be reduced below original size.
- Allow students to record lectures.
- Be aware that some students may choose to use note-taking services.
- Consider impact of lighting on the student's ability to see.
- Consult with Accessibility Services staff on any lecture materials, assignments, or tests that can be converted for the student. Blind students may need peer assistance to complete labs or interactive in-class assignments. Assistance for labs or interactive coursework may be coordinated through the instructor or Accessibility Services.

## **Deaf/Hard of Hearing**

- Face students with hearing impairments so they can see your lips. Deaf or Hard of Hearing students that do not lip read can still obtain useful information from facial expressions.
- Talk directly to the Deaf students and not through the student's interpreter, real-time captionist or note-taker.
- Speak clearly at a normal volume, speaking more loudly only when requested to do so.
- Use paper and pencil to communicate when the Deaf student does not read lips or have an interpreter or real-time captionist present.
- Communicate outside of class via email.
- Have students in class raise their hand to be recognized, so the Deaf student knows who is speaking.
- Instructors may be asked to wear a lapel microphone and transmitter to aid students using a personal FM listening device or remote real-time captioning.
- All classroom and online videos must have captioning.

## **Disruptive Behaviors**

Although most students with psychological disabilities never draw attention to themselves by behaving disruptively, a few, because their symptoms are more persistent and/or cyclical, may experience periods in that "holding it together" becomes more difficult. Disciplinary issues should not be confused with mental health issues. All students, including students with psychological disabilities, have the responsibility to meet the code of conduct by adapting behavior to the educational environment. If disruptive behavior persistently occurs or a student code of conduct is violated, the issue should not be defined as a health issue. It should be defined as a disciplinary issue and the Student Conduct Reporting Protocol should be followed.

## **Communication Strategies for students who utilize Sign Language Interpreters**

### **What is the role of the interpreter in the classroom?**

- Simply stated, the role of the interpreter in the classroom is to faithfully convey the spirit and content of the communication occurring in the classroom. Interpreters are not teacher's aids nor assistants. Unless specifically arranged, interpreters do not serve as tutors and are not responsible for the student's attendance and classroom effort.
- The interpreter's job does not start and end in the classroom. The interpreter must become familiar with the course content that will be discussed—a task that may involve additional research on topic related words and phrases—and the signs needed to convey them.
- A good ASL interpreter does not start interpreting immediately after a person begins communicating; rather they take time to cognitively process the content and message being delivered. Consequently, interpreters follow at a pace approximately one or two sentences behind the person who is actively communicating. This is true whether the communicator is deaf or hearing.
- While a lack of student effort and poor performance may appear to be linked to student apathy, it may also be a byproduct of ineffective interpreting. Interpreters have a professional and ethical obligation to inform the instructor, the student and, when available, Student Accessibility Services when they believe effective communication is not occurring. Never assume poor performance is student apathy, nor an inability of the student to learn.
- Conversely, never assume that poor performance is an ineffective interpreter. It may be one or the other, both, or a host of other factors. Instructors should check in periodically with the student to ascertain if their communication needs are being met.

### **What can I do to make the class rewarding for the student and manageable for the interpreter?**

- Share course materials and teaching aids: If possible, meet with the interpreter prior to the first class to share the class syllabus, textbook, handouts, PowerPoints, etc.
- Allow the student and the interpreter to choose the seat that provides the best visual vantage point.

### **Sign Language Interpreters: In the Classroom**

- Speak at natural or reasonable pace: Too slow of a pace is as difficult to interpret as too fast of a pace.
- Build in time for Visual Information: The visual learner cannot watch the interpreter and look at a any visual information at the same time. After introducing the visual information, allow time for the student to obtain the information conveyed and then focus on the screen.
- Refrain from talking during written class work: For all of the same reasons described above.
- Have all videos/films captioned: Many new videos/films are already captioned. Nevertheless, always check to make sure: 1) they are indeed captioned; and 2) you know how to turn on captions should the media be "closed captioned."
- Know how to orchestrate an interpreter and student friendly class discussion: Always ask all students to raise their hands and be recognized before speaking. Wait until the interpreter has finished interpreting the entire chunk of information (i.e., a discussion question), so that the student has time to process the chunk of information and raise their hand to participate in the discussion. Remember, the interpreter is usually one to two sentences behind the speaker. There is nothing more frustrating for a student who is deaf or hard of hearing than not being able to participate in class because the instructor is moving too quickly to acknowledge someone else's raised hand.
- Plan breaks: Visual learning is physically challenging and can cause eye fatigue. The task of interpreting is cognitively and physically challenging. The allowance of breaks is especially important when there is only one interpreter.
- Talk in the first-person: When talking to your student, look directly at the student, and not at the interpreter. Use "I" and "you" rather than such third person statements as "ask her" or "tell him." Using this simple communication strategy will strengthen your instructor/student relationship.

## Seizure Disorder Procedures

An uncomplicated convulsive seizure is not considered a medical emergency, according to the Epilepsy Foundation of America, even though it may look like one. Everyone is different and the way a seizure presents itself will vary from person to person. A grand mal or convulsive seizure will typically present itself in the same way in the same person and usually last from two to five minutes with complete loss of consciousness and muscle spasm.

### **Symptoms of a grand mal seizure may include:**

- A sudden cry or a sudden fall
- Muscle rigidity followed by muscle contractions (or jerks)
- Shallow breathing and/or a bluish color to the skin and lips
- Possible loss of bladder or bowel control

### **Post seizure:**

- Confusion
- Amnesia
- Severe fatigue/need to sleep

### **First Aid Measures:**

- Remain calm and reassure others.
- Protect the person's safety; make sure he/she is not near any hazards.
- Ease him/her to the floor while protecting the head from injury. Cushion the head if possible. Remove hazards/objects from the area.
- Place him/her on their side. This position keeps the airway open and prevents choking should the person vomit.
- Loosen any restrictive clothing, especially around the neck.
- Notify emergency contact person as soon as possible.
- After the seizure has stopped, provide the person with a quiet area where he/she can rest. Most people are unable to resume normal activities immediately afterwards.

### **What NOT to Do:**

- Never restrain or hold the person down.
- DO NOT place any object in the person's mouth.
- Do not give liquids to the person during or just after a seizure.

### **Reasons to Call EMS (Emergency Medical Services):**

- The seizure has lasted more than five minutes.
- A second seizure starts shortly after the first one ends.
- The person has difficulty breathing and/or his/her color remains blue.
- Any sign of injury or other illness. For example, if the person fell at the beginning of the seizure and hit his/her head or sustained any other type of injury.

Faculty members should follow the guidelines outlined in the IRSC Faculty Handbook and the Safety/Security manual when facing a crisis situation. The emergency should be reported to IRSC Security 772-462-4755.

## **Considerations in the Evacuation of Students with Disabilities**

### **Students with Visual Impairments**

Most students with visual impairments will be familiar with the immediate area they are in. Tell the student the nature of the emergency and offer to guide him/her to the nearest emergency exit. When you have reached safety, orient the student to where he/she is and ask if any other assistance is needed.

### **Deaf/Hard of Hearing Students**

Students with impaired hearing may not perceive emergency alarms, so an alternative technique is required. Two methods of warning are:

1. Writing a note telling what the emergency is and the nearest evacuation route. For example: "Fire - out rear door to the right and down. NOW!"
2. Turning the light switch on and off to gain attention, then indicating through gestures or in writing what is happening and what to do.

### **Students Using Crutches, Canes or Walkers**

For evacuation purposes, such students should be treated as if they were injured. Carrying option includes using a two person lock-arm position or having the student sit in a sturdy chair, preferably one with arms that can be transported safely.

### **Students Using Wheelchairs**

Most non-ambulatory students (wheelchair users) will be able to exit safely without assistance if on the ground floor. Some have minimal ability to move, and lifting them may be dangerous to their well-being. Non-ambulatory student needs and preferences will vary. Always ask the student's preference for how to be removed from the wheelchair.

Some students in wheelchairs may have electrical artificial respirators attached. They should be given priority assistance if there is smoke or fumes because their ability to breathe is seriously jeopardized.

## **IRSC Students with Disabilities Requesting Substitutions or Exemptions**

Reasonable substitutions of requirements for admission to the College, admission into a program of study, upper division entry, or for graduation, in addition to exemption of college preparatory and basic skills exit requirements (TABE), shall be provided to eligible students with documented disabilities in accordance with Sections 1007.264 and 1007.265 Florida Statutes and Florida State Board Rules 6A-10.040 and 6A-10.041. Each request will be considered on an individual basis.

### **Requesting Waiver of TABE Exit Requirements**

In accordance with Rule 6A-10.040, Basic Skills Requirements for Postsecondary Vocational Certificate, FAC: Adult students with a documented disability who are completing a postsecondary adult vocational program, but have been unsuccessful in obtaining the designated exit criteria on the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education), may have this requirement waived based on the following procedures.

The student must test and remediate. If scores have not reached the designated exit criteria after remediation, a meeting with the remediation instructor (ASC), the vocational instructor, the appropriate administrator and the student will take place to review exemption of the exit criteria. If the committee agrees that the student possesses the skills and knowledge to be successful in the workplace, and has met all other program requirements, an appropriate certificate will be awarded.

### **Requesting Reasonable Substitutions and Exemptions**

#### **Persons Eligible for Reasonable Substitutions and Exemptions:**

A student self-identified through Student Accessibility Services with a documented disability in accordance with 1007.264 and 1007.265 Florida Statutes and 6A-10.041 Florida Administrative Code Rule, may be eligible for reasonable substitutions and/or college preparatory exemption for any requirement for admission to the College, admission into a program of study, upper division entry, or for graduation. The Student Accessibility Services counselor or advisor and the student shall determine if a request for substitution or exemption is appropriate. The student shall formally submit to Student Accessibility Services a written request for substitution and/or preparatory exemption, and provide documentation of a disability, which includes evidence that the failure to meet the requirement is related to the disability. A student desiring to address the Review Committee regarding his or her eligibility for substitution and/or preparatory exemption must include such a request in the written letter to the Committee. The Vice President of Academic Affairs chairs the Review Committee, which includes four additional members appointed by the President from the Departments of Mathematics and English, a Department of another discipline, and the Institutional Test Administrator.

#### **Documentation of Disability**

The student shall present a written request for substitution and/or preparatory exemption and documentation from a certified or licensed professional qualified to diagnose the disability, which documents the nature and degree of the disability, including evidence that the failure to meet the requirement is related to the disability as outlined in 6A-10.041, 1007.264 and 1007.265.

The counselor or advisor submits the request for substitution and/or preparatory exemption and supporting documentation to the Student Accessibility Department, who forwards the completed file to the Review Committee for consideration. The Committee shall approve or deny all requests for substitutions or exemptions. If a request is denied, the student may file an appeal as indicated in the section titled, Student Appeal Process.

### **Identifying Reasonable Substitutions**

The Review Committee identifies reasonable substitutions for admission to the College, admission to a program of study, admission to the upper division, or graduation related to each disability on an individual basis.

### **Making Substitution and Exemption Regulation and Procedure Known to Students**

A statement regarding substitution and/or preparatory exemption requirements has been placed in the online College Catalog, other College publications and on the IRSC website in an effort to make students with disabilities aware of Sections 1007.264 and 1007.265, Florida Statutes, and Florida Administrative Code Rule 6A-10.041.

### **Making Substitution and Exemption Decisions on an Individual Basis**

The counselor or advisor directs and guides students individually and the Review Committee considers each case and makes decisions on an individual basis. In making a determination, the Committee considers if the student's failure to meet the requirement is related to the disability and that the failure to meet the requirement does not constitute a fundamental alteration in the nature of the program. The recommendation of the Review Committee is submitted to the IRSC President for final approval. The Committee shall notify the student in writing whether the request is denied or approved. For requests that are approved, the letter will state the designated reasonable substitution and/or preparatory exemption made for admission to the College, a program of study, or graduation.

### **Student Appeal Process**

If the student's request is denied they may file an appeal by submitting a letter to the Assistant Dean of Enrollment & Student Services. The letter must request a hearing before the Appeals Committee and clearly state in writing the reasons for the appeal. Material witnesses, resource persons, and the student making the appeal may be present during the hearing. Refer to Administrative Procedure AP-7.26, Student Grievance Procedure.

### **Determining Acceptance of Substitution or Waiver by Receiving Institutions**

The student shall obtain information from the college or university to which they will transfer, as to whether each substitution or exemption requested would be accepted by the receiving institution.

### **Accepting Substitutions Granted by State Postsecondary Institutions**

In accordance with Rule 6A-10.041, FAC, at a minimum, all substitutions previously granted by a state post-secondary institution will be accepted. However, the College takes into consideration the following factors:

1. Availability of evidence or documentation to support the disability.
2. The substitutions granted by another institution do not constitute a fundamental alteration in the nature of the College program.
3. The student has submitted official transcripts and has successfully completed the substitution requirements granted by the other institution.

## Service Animals

In accordance with IRSC Board Policy 6Hx11-8.52 and Administrative Procedure AP-8.52 regarding service animals, the College shall not require documentation, such as proof that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed as a service animal, nor shall the College ask about the nature or extent of a person's disability. The College may make two inquiries to determine whether an animal qualifies as a service animal:

- Is the animal is required because of a disability?
- What work or task the animal has been trained to perform?

Service animals are defined by the U.S. Dept. of Justice, Civil Rights Division (March 15, 2011) as dogs trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability. In addition to dogs, the ADA has established regulations to include miniature horses that have been trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability. Dogs and other species of animals also known as 'therapy' dogs/animals (including reptiles, birds, etc.) whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support, do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.

Students with disabilities shall be permitted to use service animals in all College facilities where allowed to go, except where service animals are specifically prohibited due to health, environmental, or safety hazards (e.g., certain research laboratories, mechanical rooms, custodial closets, areas where protective clothing is necessary, or areas where there is a danger to the animal).

Pursuant to F.S. 413.08, any trainer of a service animal, while engaged in the training of such an animal, has the same rights and privileges with respect to access to the College facilities and the same responsibility for damages as other persons accompanied by service animals.

The service animal must be harnessed, leashed or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the student's disability prevents using these devices. In that case, the student must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls. (ADA)

## Understanding Universal Design (UD)

The goal of universal design (UD) is to create products and environments to maximize learning for all students, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. The creators of the UD concept developed principles that may be applied to the evaluation of existing designs as well as used to guide new designs.

### The Principles of UD:

- **Equitable Use.** The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.
- **Flexibility in Use.** The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.
- **Simple and Intuitive Use.** Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.
- **Perceptible Information.** The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.
- **Tolerance for Error.** The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.
- **Low Physical Error.** The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.
- **Size and Space for Approach and Use.** Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.

Awareness of UD principles is a great beginning in the effort to maximize learning, however, to apply UD, instructors must be intentional in their consideration of the variations presented in individual learning styles and preferences, culture, gender, disabilities, non-native-English Speaking Students, etc., as content and instructional delivery is considered in designing course activities and resources. Several practices should be adopted that apply to all aspects of instruction. Specifically, instructors should:

- Specify the details of the course, its learning objectives, and its overall content.
- Consider the varying representation of the students eligible for the course in terms of gender, age, race, language, and possible abilities and learning styles.
- Contemplate the diverse perspectives of each potential student.
- Integrate learning and teaching methodologies with UD in a full blown effort to promote academic inclusion.
- Incorporate UD strategies into good instructional practices, lecture, materials, and activities.
- Learn campus procedures for attending to accommodation requests from potential students with special needs and include the information within the body of the course syllabus.
- Monitor the effectiveness of instruction through observation and feedback

Source: ([http://www.ncsu.edu/www/ncsu/design/sod5/cud/pubs\\_p/docs/poster.pdf](http://www.ncsu.edu/www/ncsu/design/sod5/cud/pubs_p/docs/poster.pdf))

## Universal Design of Instruction (UDI) Tips

When designing classroom instruction or a distance learning class, strive to create a learning environment that allows all students, including a person who happens to have a characteristic that is termed "disability," to access the content of the course and fully participate in class activities. Universal design principles can apply to lectures, classroom discussions, group work, handouts, web-based instruction, fieldwork, and other academic activities.

Below are examples of instructional methods that employ principles of universal design. They are organized under eight performance indicator categories, with a goal statement for each. Applying these strategies can make your course content accessible to people with a wide range of abilities and disabilities, ethnic backgrounds, language skills, and learning styles.

- **Class Climate.** Adopt practices that reflect high values with respect to both diversity and inclusiveness. Example: Put a statement on your syllabus inviting students to meet with you to discuss disability-related accommodations and other special learning needs.
- **Interaction.** Encourage regular and effective interactions between students and the instructor and ensure that communication methods are accessible to all participants. Example: Assign group work for which learners must support each other and that places a high value on different skills and roles.
- **Physical environments and products.** Ensure that facilities, activities, materials, and equipment are physically accessible to and usable by all students, and that all potential student characteristics are addressed in safety considerations. Example: Develop safety procedures for all students, including those who are blind, deaf, or wheelchair users.
- **Delivery methods.** Use multiple, accessible instructional methods that are accessible to all learners. Example: Use multiple modes to deliver content; when possible allow students to choose from multiple options for learning; and motivate and engage students-consider lectures, collaborative learning options, hands-on activities, Internet-based communications, education software, field work, and so forth.
- **Information resources and technology.** Ensure that course materials, notes, and other information resources are engaging, flexible, and accessible for all students. Example: Choose printed materials and prepare a syllabus early to allow students the option of beginning to read materials and work on assignments before the course begins. Allow adequate time to arrange for alternate formats, such as books in audio format.
- **Feedback.** Provide specific feedback on a regular basis. Example: Allow students to turn in parts of large projects for feedback before the final project is due.
- **Assessment.** Regularly assess student progress using multiple accessible methods and tools, and adjust instruction accordingly. Example: Assess group and cooperative performance as well as individual achievement.
- **Accommodation.** Plan for accommodations for students whose needs are not met by the instructional design. Example: Know campus protocols for getting materials in alternate formats, rescheduling classroom locations, and arranging for other accommodations for students with disabilities.

Employing UDI principles does not eliminate the need for specific accommodations for students with disabilities. However, applying universal design concepts in course planning will assure full access to the content for most students and minimize the need for specific accommodations. For example, designing web resources in accessible format as they are developed means that no re-development is necessary if a student who is blind enrolls in the class; planning ahead can be less time-consuming in the long run. Letting all students have access to your class notes and assignments on an accessible website can eliminate the need for providing materials in alternate formats.

Source: (<http://www.washington.edu/doi/Faculty/Strategies/>)

## Electronic Accessibility Considerations

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 covers a wide range of recommendations for making web content more accessible.

### Video

Creating accessible video involves both creating captions for your video and delivering your video through an accessible interface.

**Captions:** Creating captions for recorded video is a three-step process.

- Create a text transcript of the audio portion of the multimedia.
- Incorporate the time stamped transcript back into the multimedia. This process is dependent upon the delivery platform, so there is no one way to describe this process. Read more about the caption creation process in our Captioning Guide.

### Microsoft Word

Files, either .doc or .docx, have become a near universal standard for word processing formats. Fortunately, a Word document can be made mostly accessible quite easily as long as some basic principles are kept in mind.

- Before beginning, ask yourself if this particular document needs to be ultimately delivered as a Word doc, or could it be delivered as a more flexible and universal HTML file.
- When designing Word documents, use the built-in styles like Heading Level 1, Heading Level 2, etc. to provide a semantic structure to your document. This will help provide a consistent layout and make the document easier to for users of certain assistive technologies to navigate. The default styles in Word can be customized to meet your own needs.
- Avoid using text boxes as they make it difficult for screen readers to read the contents of the text box in the proper context of the page.
- Be sure to include textual descriptions of images.
- When creating lists, use the built-in bulleted or numbered list feature instead of manually inserting asterisks, numbers, or tabs.
- In Office 2010 you can use the new built-in Accessibility Checker to check for common accessibility issues. Some of the warnings it gives will be subjective, so discernment must be used in some cases.
- The Institute of Applied Information Technology at Zurich University has created a
- Microsoft Word add-in to check for accessibility issues and create accessible PDFs.
- This tool is also available in the VCL as "Microsoft Office Document to Accessible PDF Tool".
- Be sure to include a link to the free Word Viewer from Microsoft so users who don't have Microsoft Word installed can view your Word documents.

## Microsoft PowerPoint

Microsoft PowerPoint is a popular way to make presentation for traditional face-to-face slide shows and it is also the basis for many other applications to create recorded narrated online presentations. When designing PowerPoint presentations here are some issues to keep in mind.

- When designing a presentation, use the built-in slide layouts instead of drawing custom text boxes on the slide. This will make a consistent design for all of your slides and make it far easier for users of assistive technologies to navigate your presentation
- Be sure to add alternate text to the images.
- Older versions of the Macintosh version of Microsoft PowerPoint do not have as many accessibility features as newer versions or the Windows version, like the ability to add alternative text to images. Only the 2011 version of PowerPoint on Mac supports this functionality.
- If you want to create a Web based version of the presentation, do not use the “Save as Web Page” feature. You will need to use another tool like LecShare Lite or the Virtual508 Accessible Wizard for Microsoft Office.
- One of the easiest ways to share an accessible PowerPoint presentation with others is to simply provide the user with the original PowerPoint file. This works if the presentation uses the standard slide layouts and other best practices outlined below have been followed.
- In PowerPoint 2010 and 2012 (Windows only) you can use the new Accessibility Checker to check for common accessibility issues.
- The Institute of Applied Information Technology at Zurich University has created a Microsoft PowerPoint add-in to check for accessibility issues and create accessible PDFs.
- Be sure to include a link to the free PowerPoint Viewer from Microsoft so users who don't have Microsoft PowerPoint installed can view your PowerPoint files.

## Google Docs

In general, a Google Docs file is not accessible to many people with certain disabilities, whether in the Editing mode, the Viewing mode or, to a degree, the Publish to the Web option selected from the File menu.

### Best sharing options

The best option for sharing a Google Docs file is one of the following:

- Copy and paste it into another application that can create online documents; e.g., an HTML editor such as Dreamweaver.
- Download it to a Microsoft Word document.

With either option, you may need to add accessibility information (e.g., alternative text for images, table row and column headers) to the resulting document with a tool such as the accessibility checker in Microsoft Word.

### Using the Publish to the Web option

- A Google Docs file containing only the following elements is basically accessible:
  - o Plain text with headings denoting each section
  - o Links
  - o Ordered or unordered lists having only one nesting level (no indented sub- lists)
  - o Only English text and your audience's default assistive technology language is English. Google Documents does not allow you to correctly set the language of the document. [No longer true? From the File menu, select Language and pick one.]
- A Google Docs file containing images, data tables or lists with multiple levels cannot be made accessible.

## Accessibility Features

Google Documents lets you denote major document sections with headings that carry over to most other applications; e.g., Microsoft Word.

## Notable Problems

In Google Documents, it is not possible to

- add alternative text to an image
- add headers to rows and columns in a data table
- define the language of the document [No longer true? From the File menu, select Language and pick one.]
- publish correctly coded nested lists to the Web.

## Adobe Acrobat (PDF)

The Portable Document Format (PDF) is a popular format for sharing content on the Web, especially when the precise formatting of the document is essential. PDF files are also common for creating forms and providing a downloadable version of content. Even with the ease of creating PDFs and the near ubiquity of end users being able to read PDF files, they do introduce a number of accessibility issues that need special attention. Here are a couple of things to keep in mind when creating PDF documents.

- Ask yourself if the file needs to be delivered as a PDF. Could it be adequately delivered as an HTML document? HTML documents provide more flexibility in terms of delivery and are often easier to make accessible.
- Make sure the software you are using to create the PDF document is capable of creating an accessible PDF. The most common work flow is to use Microsoft Word to create PDFs. In this case it is important to create your Word document correctly to make the process of creating an accessible PDF format as simple as possible. It is significantly easier to make an accessible PDF when the document is created correctly in the authoring software.
  - o In Microsoft Word, this means using things like the built-in styles for providing a semantic structure to your document, like using Heading 1 and Heading 2, instead of simply making certain text bigger and bolder to denote a heading.

In Microsoft Word, only the Windows version of Word supports creating accessible PDFs. PDFs created in the OS X version of Word will not be accessible. In this case you will need to either

- Simply give the user the original Microsoft Word document which has been authored according to best practices
- Use Adobe Acrobat to retrofit the necessary accessibility information. It is essential that you make a “tagged” PDF document to make it accessible. Within products like Microsoft Word, there is often an option for creating the PDF as a tagged document. Tags can also be added with Adobe Acrobat after the PDF is made, but it is easier to do it in the original authoring software.
- If your document uses tables you will need to manually add the appropriate tags into the PDF document using Adobe Acrobat.

## Technical Standards and Essential Program Requirements

### Admissions and Continuation in Programs:

- Academic Standards – academic criteria required to get in and participate in a program
- Technical Standards – skills, attitudes, experiences, and physical requirements to get in and participate in a program (non-academic criteria)

### Completion of the program:

- Graduation Competencies – course requirements to successfully complete the program.
- Essential Program Requirements – program requirements (academic and non-academic) to successfully complete the program.
- Students must meet the academic and technical standards requisite to admission or participation in the institution's program including any directly related licensing requirements

### What are Technical Standards?

- All essential non-academic standards (They mirror the ADA's essential functions in the workplace)
- Avoid discrimination on the basis of disability and do not base a decision on prejudice, stereotypes or unfounded fears
- Reasonable accommodations should be afforded to the student to enable equal opportunity to all the college's programs, activities, services, and clinical placements
- Careful decision making and counseling deciding whether modifications would give the student opportunity to complete the program without fundamentally or substantially modifying institutional standards
- Wong V. Regents of the University of California
- Programs should not implement the requirement in such a way that it serves as an absolute block to students with a particular disability

## ADA Terminology

The definitions used in this glossary were taken from the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), EEOC guidelines, and other reference materials. They are commonly used terms and may have various definitions depending on their context.

**ACCESS.** An independent federal agency devoted to accessibility for people with disabilities. The Access Board developed the accessibility guidelines for the ADA and provides technical assistance and training on these guidelines. The agency also is referred to as the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board.

**ACCESSIBLE.** Refers to a site, facility, work environment, service, or program that is easy to approach, enter, operate, participate in, and/or use safely and with dignity by a person with a disability.

**AFFIRMATIVE ACTION.** A set of positive steps that employers use to promote equal employment opportunity and to eliminate discrimination. It includes expanded outreach, recruitment, mentoring, training, management development and other programs designed to help employers hire, retain and advance qualified workers from diverse backgrounds, including persons with disabilities. Affirmative action means inclusion, not exclusion. Affirmative action does not mean quotas and is not mandated by the ADA.

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA).** A comprehensive, federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disabilities in employment, state and local government programs and activities, public accommodations, transportation, and telecommunications.

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT AMENDMENTS ACT (ADAAA).** Enacted on September 25, 2008, and becoming effective on January 1, 2009, making a number of significant changes to the definition of “disability” and directing the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to amend its ADA regulations to reflect the changes made by the ADAAA. The final regulations were published in the Federal Register on March 25, 2011.

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT ACCESSIBILITY GUIDELINES (ADAAG).**

Scoping and technical requirements to be applied during the design, construction, and alteration of buildings and facilities covered by titles II and III of the ADA to the extent required by regulations issued by federal agencies, including the Department of Justice and the Department of Transportation.

**AUTISM.** A developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age 3 that adversely affects a student’s educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences.

**AUXILIARY AIDS AND SERVICES.** Under titles II and III of the ADA, includes a wide range of services and devices that promote effective communication or allows access to goods and services. Examples of auxiliary aids and services for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing include qualified interpreters, note-takers, computer-aided transcription services, written materials, telephone handset amplifiers, assistive listening systems, telephones compatible with hearing aids, closed caption decoders, open and closed captioning, telecommunications devices for deaf persons (TDDs), videotext displays, and exchange of written notes. Examples for individuals with vision impairments include qualified readers, taped texts, audio recordings, Brailled materials, large print materials, and assistance in locating items.

Examples for individuals with speech impairments include TDDs, computer terminals, speech synthesizers, and communication boards.

**CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1991.** Federal law that capped compensatory and punitive damages under title I of the ADA for intentional job discrimination. The law also amended the ADA's definition of an employee, adding "with respect to employment in a foreign country, such term includes an individual who is a citizen of the United States."

**COVERED ENTITY.** Under the ADA, "covered entity" is an entity that must comply with the law. Under title I, covered entities include employers, employment agencies, labor organizations, or joint labor-management committees. Under title II, covered entities include state and local government instrumentalities, the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, and other commuter authorities, and public transportation systems. Under title III, covered entities include public accommodations such as restaurants, hotels, grocery stores, retail stores, etc., as well as privately owned transportation systems.

**DEAF-BLINDNESS (DB).** The combination of hearing and visual impairments, which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs.

**DEAFNESS.** A hearing impairment that is so severe that the ability to process linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, is not possible.

**DIRECT THREAT.** A significant risk to the health or safety of a person with a disability or to others that cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation.

**DISABILITY.** With respect to an individual: a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual; a record of such an impairment; or being regarded as having such an impairment.

**EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION (EEOC).** The federal agency charged with enforcing title I of the ADA.

**ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS.** The fundamental job duties of the employment position that the individual with a disability holds or desires. The term essential functions does not include marginal functions of the position.

**EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY.** An opportunity to attain the same level of performance or to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment as are available to an average similarly-situated employee without a disability.

**EXISTING FACILITY.** Refers to buildings that were constructed before the ADA went into effect. A public accommodation's building constructed before the effective date of title III does not have to be fully accessible unless the removal of barriers, including structural ones, is readily achievable.

**HEARING IMPAIRMENT (HI).** An impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects an individual's educational performance but may be assisted with the appropriate devices.

**IMPAIRMENT.** Term used in the ADA definition of disability. Includes any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more body systems, such as neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory (including speech organs), cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genitourinary, immune, circulatory, hemic, lymphatic, skin, and endocrine; or any mental or psychological disorder, such as an intellectual disability (formerly termed "mental retardation"), organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities.

**LEARNING DISABILITY (LD).** A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken, or written, which manifests itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia.

**MAJOR LIFE ACTIVITY.** Term used in the ADA definition of disability. It refers to activities that an average person can perform with little or no difficulty. Major life activities include, but are not limited to: caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, sitting, reaching, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, interacting with others, and working; and the operation of a major bodily function, including functions of the immune system, special sense organs and skin; normal cell growth; and digestive, genitourinary, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, cardiovascular, endocrine, hemic, lymphatic, musculoskeletal, and reproductive functions. The operation of a major bodily function includes the operation of an individual organ within a body system.

**INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY (ID)** Significantly sub-average general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period that adversely affects a student's educational performance.

**MARGINAL JOB FUNCTIONS.** Functions that are not considered essential to a job. Employers must consider removing marginal job functions as an accommodation under the ADA, but do not have to remove essential functions as an accommodation.

**MEDICAL EXAMINATION.** A procedure or test that seeks information about an individual's physical or mental impairments or health. The following factors should be considered to determine whether a test (or procedure) is a medical examination: (1) whether the test is administered by a health care professional; (2) whether the test is interpreted by a health care professional; (3) whether the test is designed to reveal an impairment or physical or mental health; (4) whether the test is invasive; (5) whether the test measures an employee's performance of a task or measures his/her physiological responses to performing the task; (6) whether the test normally is given in a medical setting; and, (7) whether medical equipment is used. In many cases, a combination of factors will be relevant in determining whether a test or procedure is a medical examination. In other cases, one factor may be enough to determine that a test or procedure is medical.

**OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENT (OHI).** Limited strength, vitality or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment that is due to chronic or acute health problems such as, asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, rheumatoid fever, and sickle cell anemia.

**ORTHOPEDIC IMPAIRMENT (OI).** A severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects an individual's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by congenital anomaly (clubfoot, absence of some member, etc.), impairments caused by disease (bone tuberculosis, etc.), and impairments from other causes (cerebral palsy, amputation, and fractures or burns which cause contractures).

**PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS.** Entities that must comply with title III. The term includes facilities whose operations affect commerce and fall within at least one of the following 12 categories: places of lodging (e.g., inns, hotels, motels) (except for owner-occupied establishments renting fewer than six rooms); establishments serving food or drink (e.g., restaurants and bars); places of exhibition or entertainment (e.g., motion picture houses, theaters, concert halls, stadiums); places of public gathering (e.g., auditoriums, convention centers, lecture halls); sales or rental establishments (e.g., bakeries, grocery stores, hardware stores, shopping centers); service establishments (e.g., laundromats, dry-cleaners, banks, barber shops, beauty shops, travel services, shoe repair services, funeral parlors, gas stations, offices of accountants or lawyers, pharmacies, insurance offices, professional offices of health care providers, hospitals);

public transportation terminals, depots, or stations (not including facilities relating to air transportation); places of public display or collection (e.g., museums, libraries, galleries); places of recreation (e.g., parks, zoos, amusement parks); places of education (e.g., nursery schools, elementary, secondary, undergraduate, or postgraduate private schools); social service center establishments (e.g., day care centers, senior citizen centers, homeless shelters, food banks, adoption agencies); and places of exercise or recreation (e.g., gymnasiums, health spas, bowling alleys, golf courses).

**PUBLIC ENTITY.** Entities that must comply with Title II. The term is defined as: any state or local government; any department, agency, special purpose district, or other instrumentality of a state or local government; or certain commuter authorities as well as AMTRAK. It does not include the federal government.

**QUALIFIED INDIVIDUAL.** An individual who satisfies the requisite skill, experience, education and other job-related requirements of the employment position such individual holds or desires, and who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of such position. The ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability against a qualified individual.

**READILY ACHIEVABLE.** Easily accomplishable and able to be carried out without much difficulty or expense. In determining whether an action is readily achievable, factors to be considered include nature and cost of the action, overall financial resources and the effect on expenses and resources, legitimate safety requirements, impact on the operation of a site, and, if applicable, overall financial resources, size, and type of operation of any parent corporation or entity. Under Title III, public accommodations must remove barriers in existing facilities if it is readily achievable to do so.

**REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION.** Under Title I, a modification or adjustment to a job, the work environment, or the way things usually are done that enables a qualified individual with a disability to enjoy an equal employment opportunity. Reasonable accommodation is a key nondiscrimination requirement of the ADA.

**SPEECH OR LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT (SI).** A communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment or a voice impairment, that adversely affects an individual's educational performance.

**SUBSTANTIALLY LIMITS.** A comparative term used in the ADA definition of disability. An impairment is a disability if it substantially limits the ability of an individual to perform a major life activity as compared to most people in the general population. An impairment need not prevent, or significantly or severely restrict, the individual from performing a major life activity in order to be considered substantially limiting.

**TITLE V OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973.** Title of the law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of a disability by the federal government, federal contractors, by recipients of federal financial assistance, and in federally conducted programs and activities.

**TRANSITION PLAN.** Refers to a requirement that state and local governments employing 50 or more people have plans detailing structural changes necessary to achieve program accessibility.

**TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY (TBI).** An acquired injury to the brain caused by an external force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both that adversely affect educational performance. The term includes open or closed head injuries from certain medical conditions resulting in mild, moderate or severe impairments in one or more areas, including cognition, language, memory, attention, reasoning, abstract thinking, judgment, problem solving, sensory, perceptual and motor abilities, psychological behavior, physical functions, information processing, and speech.

**UNDUE BURDEN.** With respect to complying with Title II or Title III of the ADA, significant difficulty or expense incurred by a covered entity, when considered in light of certain factors. These factors include: the nature and cost of the action; the overall financial resources of the site or sites involved; the number of persons employed at the site; the effect on expenses and resources; legitimate safety requirements necessary for safe operation, including crime prevention measures; or any other impact of the action on the operation of the site; the geographic separateness, and the administrative or fiscal relationship of the site or sites in question to any parent corporation or entity; if applicable, the overall financial resources of any parent corporation or entity; the overall size of the parent corporation or entity with respect to the number of its employees; the number, type, and location of its facilities; and if applicable, the type of operation or operations of any parent corporation or entity, including the composition, structure, and functions of the workforce of the parent corporation or entity.

**UNDUE HARDSHIP.** With respect to the provision of an accommodation under Title I of the ADA, significant difficulty or expense incurred by a covered entity, when considered in light of certain factors. These factors include the nature and cost of the accommodation in relationship to the size, resources, nature, and structure of the employer's operation. Where the facility making the accommodation is part of a larger entity, the structure and overall resources of the larger organization would be considered, as well as the financial and administrative relationship of the facility to the larger organization. Employers do not have to provide accommodations that cause an undue hardship.

**UNIFORM FEDERAL ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS (UFAS).** One of two standards that state and local governments can use to comply with title II's accessibility requirement for new construction and alterations. The other standard is the ADA Accessibility Guidelines.

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.** Federal agency that is responsible for enforcing titles II and III of the ADA.

**VISUAL IMPAIRMENT (VI).** Visual impairment including blindness means an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects an individual's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.

Legally blind. An individual with visual acuity of 20/200 or less even with correction or has a field loss of 20 degrees or more.

Low vision. A person who is still severely impaired after correction, but whom may increase functioning through the use of optical aide, non-optical aids, environmental modifications and/or techniques.

**Sources:**

The American with Disabilities Act: ([www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov))

U.S. Department of Education ([www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov))

Pepnet2: Interpreting for Postsecondary Deaf Students: ([www.dcmp.org](http://www.dcmp.org))