**California State University MONTEREY BAY**
Student Disability and Accessibility Center

# FACULTY HANDBOOK
## Supporting Students with Disabilities

CSUMB Student Disability and Accessibility Center (SDAC)
Health & Wellness Services (Bldg. 80)
Phone: 831.582.3672
Fax: 831.582.4024
Email: sdac@csumb.edu
https://csumb.edu/SDAC

Follow us on Instagram @csumb_SDAC
Find us on FACEBOOK at facebook.com/SDACCSUMB

*For alternative formats of this handbook, please contact sdac@csumb.edu*

# STUDENT DISABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY CENTER
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**[Mobility and Physical Disabilities](#)**

**[Psychological Disabilities](#)**

**[Blindness and Low Vision](#)**

# SAMPLE SDAC ACCOMMODATION LETTER

**California State University**
**MONTEREY BAY**
Student Disability and
Accessibility Center

Student: Monte Rey

Student ID: 00000000
Semester: Winter 2024
Course: SDAC 100.01 - Intro to SDAC (CRN:00000)
Date: Wednesday, January 10, 2024

To the Faculty,

The Student Disability & Accessibility Center (SDAC) has verified that CSUMB student, has a federally recognized disabling condition. This student is authorized for the following accommodation(s) in the course listed above to manage their respective disability-related condition during the specified semester above.

Both the student and faculty are to continue engaging with the SDAC Advisor for guidance on implementation, approach, and timing through scheduled appointments or via email at sdac@csumb.edu.

1. **Test-Taking Facilitation**

   o *Test-Taking Facilitation - Time and a half and Reduced Distraction Environment*
   This student has been recommended for reasonable accommodations, as documented and verified by the Student Disability and Accessibility Center.

   We are requesting this student be allowed the use testing accommodation noted above.

   Faculty: To implement test-taking accommodations, please visit Test Center - Instructor Information

   Student: Please review and following the next steps for test-taking accommodations here: Test Center - Student Information

   If you have any questions or concerns about this accommodation, please contact us at sdac@csumb.edu, x3672.

CSU MONTEREY BAY
Student Disability and Accessibility Center, (formerly Student Disability Resources)
Health and Wellness Services (Bldg 80, Rm 110)
Voice (831) 582-3672
Fax (831) 582-4024

# GENERAL INFORMATION FOR FACULTY

**Student Disability and Accessibility Center**

The Student Disability and Accessibility Center (SDAC) promotes the empowerment, wellness, and full integration of students with disabilities into campus life and the campus community. SDAC provides academic and personal support services to students with disabilities in order for them to attain success at California State University, Monterey Bay.

SDAC, as part of Health and Wellness Services, assists students and faculty in the arrangement of accommodations, advocacy, study and time management skills, disability-related advising pertaining to academics, referral to on- and off-campus resources, and assistive technology resources and training.

**SDAC supports the concept of self-advocacy in all students.** Requests for academic accommodations are requested by the student, and supported by SDAC and CSUMB faculty/staff.

CSUMB makes every effort to approve reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities, while respecting the integrity of the academic programs in which students enroll. CSUMB does not waive (exempt) courses that are required as an essential component of any curriculum.

The delivery of the accommodation email by the student to the faculty is usually the first notice to the faculty of a verified disability and authorization of a reasonable accommodation. Faculty may consult with SDAC and CAT for assistance in fulfilling the accommodation.

If you have a question or a concern about an accommodation, please contact SDAC. We highly encourage faculty to meet with students in a confidential environment to discuss implementation of their specific accommodation needs.

**Student Eligibility**

To receive accommodations, students must identify themselves to SDAC, present adequate documentation of their disability, and complete an interactive process. SDAC advisors are specially trained professionals in determining reasonable accommodations based on information received during the interactive process, and in alignment with CSU Policy for documentation and accommodations.

Information is protected by FERPA and is to be kept confidential. Faculty will only be provided information related to the accommodation needed.

**Disability is a dimension of diversity and a protected status.**

A "person with a disability" means "any person who has a physical or mental impairment which limits one or more of such a person's major life activities… (including walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working); has a record of such impairment; or is regarded as having such an impairment."
*Source: https://www.ada.gov/topics/intro-to-ada/*

Access to university education for students with disabilities has been assured through Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which states that no qualified person with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity which receives or benefits from federal assistance.
*Source: https://www.ada.gov/topics/intro-to-ada/#state-and-local-government-services*

Thank you for your help to ensure equal access and inclusion of students with disabilities at CSUMB.

**Fundamental Alteration Process**

CSUMB has developed a process when there is a concern by faculty that the authorized accommodation may cause a fundamental alteration to the course outcome.

Please see the Fundamental Alternation Review and Determintion Process for more information.

**Types of Disabilities and Limitations**

CSUMB enrolls students with varying disabilities and functional effects of disabilities. SDAC serves students who have disabilities such as, and not limited to, the following:

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)
- Blindness or visual impairments
- Chronic illness
- Deafness or hard of hearing
- Environmental illness or multiple chemical sensitivities
- Epilepsy or seizure disorders
- Intellectual disabilities
- Motor skill disabilities
- Learning disabilities
- Orthopedic disabilities
- Psychological disabilities
- Speech and communication disabilities
- Traumatic brain injury

Cognitively, most students with disabilities at CSUMB are competitive with their collegiate peers without disabilities.

**Types of Services and Accommodations**

Student Disability and Accessibility Center supports CSUMB in maintaining compliance by completing the confidential, interactive process with the student to verify the disability and the accommodation request. Additionally, SDAC provides students with a variety of accessibility and support services.

Accommodations are not automatically applicable to all students with a particular condition. Services and accommodations are offered to students consistent with their verified disability documentation and the student's respective interactive process with SDAC. Not all students with the same disability diagnosis will need or request the same accommodations.

Common accommodations include but are not limited to the following:

- Textbooks in audio and alternate formats e.g. for reading
- Note-taking or note-sharing services
- Readers and/or scribes
- Audio recording of lectures
- Test-taking facilitation (e.g. extended time in a reduced distraction environment)
- Use of adaptive equipment or furniture
- Course substitutions
- Remote attendance
- Transportation and parking liaison

Student support services provided by SDAC include:

- Disability-related advising pertaining to academics (time management, accommodations selection, organization, study skills, course load and balance, priority registration for classes, etc.)
- Advocacy and liaison with faculty and staff
- Adaptive equipment loan and training
- Assistance with course selection, type of instruction, or registration (e.g. reduced course load)
- Disability management advising including on-campus housing and transportation issues
- Referral to campus and community services such as the CSUMB Clinic for Educational Supports or the California Department of Rehabilitation
- Self-advocacy skill building

CSUMB has a wide range of adaptive equipment housed throughout the campus for SDAC-registered student use. Currently available equipment includes:

- Audio recorders (digital)
- Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs) and/or noise canceling headphones
- Closed Captioned capability and video transcription for people who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- Adaptive hand cycle and beach wheelchair (through the Otter Cycle Center)
- Speech Recognition software (Dragon Naturally Speaking)
- Screen reading software (JAWS & Kurzweil 3000)
- PC Text Enlarger (Zoomtext)
- Braille Embosser
- Document cameras with settings for different visual impairment needs

Also, consult CSUMB's Assistive Technology website at https://csumb.edu/cat/digital-accessibility/.

**Encouraging Students to Discuss Disability-Related Needs**

Invite students with disabilities who need accommodations for your course to contact the Student Disability and Accessibility Center, as well as make an appointment to meet with you during office hours to discuss ways to make effective academic adjustments.

The impact of disabilities often change and course requirements vary. Even if faculty have taught the student before and know about their needs, conditions and needs may change. Students should be referred to SDAC if changes to their implemented accommodations are needed

There are a few specific ways you can support your students:
1) Encourage students to discuss disability-related accommodations with you is the preparation of your course syllabus. Having your syllabus available at least 6 weeks prior to the semester is helpful for planning for accommodations. Please include the sample statement:

<div align="center">

**SAMPLE SYLLABUS STATEMENT**
https://csumb.edu/SDAC/syllabus-statement

</div>

If you are a student with a disability that may impact your performance in this course, please make an appointment with the Student Disability and Accessibility Center (SDAC) as soon as possible to discuss your needs. Upon receiving an authorized SDAC accommodation, please schedule an appointment with me to review your accommodations. For any questions, please contact Student Disability and Accessibility Center at (831) 582-3672 or sdac@csumb.edu

Please note that you may encounter approved service/assistive animals in the classroom, housing, and campus environment. For more information

2)    Create a welcoming and responsive climate by letting students know how to request accommodations from SDAC by:
- announcing in class meetings
- posting the syllabus statement on the learning management system (such as Canvas)
- including in the course web materials.

Repeat the information two weeks before each test regarding how students can request accommodations.


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Back to Contents Page

# REQUIREMENTS & PRIVACY

**Can I require a student to contact me?**

Yes, in most cases faculty may require students to contact them to discuss their disability accommodations in a timely manner. The student has a responsibility to follow SDAC procedures, meet with professors and advisors to confirm accommodations, and schedule appointments for clarification or extra support. The faculty member has the responsibility to follow through with providing the specific accommodations authorized by SDAC in the accommodation letter, and to contact SDAC immediately with questions.

Your syllabus may specify a date by which they must contact you, after the Add/Drop date. While students have a right to wait to disclose their requests to faculty for disability accommodation, SDAC urges students to request their accommodations prior to or very early in each semester, and to contact faculty upon enrollment with their authorized accommodations. In general, SDAC does not support retroactive accommodations. Faculty and students are advised to promptly reach clear agreements.

**What is required of faculty?**

When a student identifies an accommodation need to faculty, the faculty are to request the SDAC accommodation letter. If the student does not have a letter, faculty do not need to begin implementing the accommodation and are to inform the student to immediately contact SDAC to fulfill their responsibilities in submitting the appropriate documentation and meeting with an SDAC Advisor.

Upon receiving the accommodation letter, faculty must respond promptly with approval of accommodations with intention to implement as soon as possible to support the student remaining in the course. Any unresolved issues regarding the implementation of an accommodation should be addressed within **5 business days.** Faculty are to contact SDAC with any questions about the accommodation request and how to best implement an accommodation:

- Confirm expectations and arrangements with the student in writing.
- Use the appropriate **Testing Facilitation Form** found on this webpage to confirm test logistics with each student for each test, quiz or assessment, and coordinate with CSUMB's Test Center.
- After accommodations have been provided, get feedback from your student about the effectiveness of the accommodation, and make appropriate adjustments.  Consult SDAC as needed.

**How do students with disabilities learn how to access academic and supportive programs?**

Prospective students complete standard admissions application processes through the Office of Admissions. The disclosure of a disability on the application is not required but information about services for students with disabilities are included in application brochures and at informational events. Also, faculty and academic staff often refer prospective students to SDAC.

The CSUMB Catalog includes information about SDAC, and the SDAC and Assistive Technology web pages augment the campus-wide resource fairs in which SDAC provides extensive information on university services for students with disabilities. Persons with disabilities admitted to CSUMB are encouraged to meet by appointment with the SDAC Advisors to begin the interactive process, and discuss specific accommodations and adjustments for required campus activities and projected course registration.

SDAC serves as an advocate for students, ensuring that they have the physical and programmatic access to all university programs that will support their participation in the campus community.

Faculty are encouraged to discuss students' needs when they self-identify (not their diagnoses, which are confidential) and refer them to SDAC to go through the accommodation process; SDAC is available to  provide consultation and support to faculty.

**Can faculty review or obtain a student's documentation?**

Information obtained by SDAC related to the disability, including diagnostic or evaluative information, is strictly confidential and will not be released to others without the student's written permission. This is the student's legal right, and also supports required federal, state, and medical privacy laws.  SDAC encourages faculty to refer students to SDAC.

A breach of confidentiality may subject CSUMB and/or faculty to personal liability.

**Tips for Meeting with Students with Disabilities**

- Ensure confidentiality by meeting during office hours or other private time.
- Request your student's permission to discuss needs via email and to talk with appropriate staff  about how to accommodate.
- Only disclose disability-related information with those who need to know in order to accommodate the student.
- Do not put disability-related information in academic records or in letters written about the student.

**How do I respond to students who do not appear to have disabilities but request an accommodation?**

The majority of student disabilities at CSUMB are non-apparent.

One of the most concerning statements reported by students with non-apparent disabilities involves people who say the student "looks fine to me."

Rather than challenge a student who confides in you regarding a disability, listen to ways the condition functionally impacts the student's learning and course objectives. Ask how the disability affects their learning, and what the student thinks will be helpful. Refer the student to SDAC to go through the accommodation process so that the appropriate documentation can be requested and reasonable accommodations identified. **Never ask for information related to diagnosis**.

**Am I expected to change academic objectives or standards to accommodate students with disabilities?**

No. Students with disabilities expect equal access and opportunities, not alterations in academic expectations. Clear academic requirements and course objectives are essential. Modifications may need to be made in the way a student demonstrates knowledge, but not in the academic proficiency standards.

CSUMB has a [Fundamental Alteration Review and Determination process](#).

[Back to Contents](#)

## TEST-TAKING ACCOMMODATIONS

The Student Disability and Accessibility Center works in collaboration with the CSUMB Test Center to provide space for CSUMB instructors and the Student Disability and Accessibility Center (SDAC) to administer exams in a reduced distractions environment due to accommodations.

Questions about how to implement authorized Test Accommodations? Please consult:

- https://csumb.edu/SDAC/information-about-student-accommodations/faculty-info---test-taking-/

- SDAC-Alternative-Testing@csumb.edu

- University Test Officer, Kara Skinner, via email at test_center@csumb.edu or kskinner@csumb.edu.

  - For test proctoring options, go to https://csumb.edu/testcenter

- CSUMB Center for Academic Technologies https://csumb.edu/cat for how to adjust your online test to 1.5 time (or 2x in some cases) for authorized SDAC students.

Back to Contents Page


## PEER NOTE SHARING ACCOMMODATIONS

Some disability conditions may interfere with the note taking process; therefore, a Note Sharer may be approved by SDAC for your student after a careful, confidential discussion with the student regarding learning needs. The peer note sharer, or in some cases an online speech-to-text note taking service or the use of specialized software such as Glean, is provided to supplement the student's own notes. In a lab situation, the student may need written instructions and/or diagrams of activities in order to master the processes and the learning objectives.

Common Faculty Concerns:

- "My class is purely a discussion class. Notes are not necessary. Why does the student still need a note sharer accommodation?"
- "My class is a hands-on lab class. Students are engaged in activities and don't take notes."

- "Why is a note sharer or permission to audio-record for speech to text notes necessary?"
- "A notetaker might inhibit discussion and learning or be disruptive! Our class discussions are confidential."

Just as an American Sign Language interpreter transliterates information from you to your students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, the voluntary peer note sharer or the remote, online service summarizes information for an individual who is unable to access the information in a "traditional" manner without accommodations.

All SDAC note sharers are peer students who complete on-line training and to submit a written agreement to maintain confidentiality in all aspects of service provision.

Back to Contents Page

**DESIGNING ACCESSIBLE WEBSITES**

**How do I design accessible web pages/sites for students?**

Designing instructional web pages accessible to students with disabilities/users of adaptive technologies is both a challenge and responsibility faced by all segments of public post-secondary education here in California, as well as the nation.

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 mandates that a public entity, such as CSUMB, "take appropriate steps to ensure that communications with persons with disabilities are as effective as communications with others." Similar language is present in Sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and amendments, which govern public postsecondary institutions.

SUPPORT RESOURCES AND TIPS:

- [Center for Academic Technologies at CSUMB](#)
- Follow the CSU Accessible Technology Initiative guidelines at: http://calstate.edu/accessibility
- Provide textual content that, when presented to the user, conveys essentially the same function or purpose as auditory or visual content. (ALT tags for all images; descriptor links for complex or integral images; "redundant" text links for image maps; closed captioning of audio and video files).
- If your site contains documents in PDF format (which may be inaccessible to blind users) place a URL pointer to the Adobe Access Plugin at http://www.adobe.com/accessibility.html

When providing links, write out the web address (Universal Resource Locator, or URL) in case the link is 'down' at that time and your visitor wants to make a note of the link for a later visit. If your visitor is using a screen reader, the link will automatically be read aloud.

Also, avoid the "here" syndrome—write out the URL:

> EXAMPLE:
> DON'T: "Learn more about [learning disabilities](#)"
> DO: "Learn more about learning disabilities at http://www.ldonline.org"
> DON'T: "Read more about dyslexia [here](#)."
> DO: "Read more about dyslexia at http://www.ldonline.org"

Use features that enable activation of page elements via a variety of input devices – mouse, keyboard voice, head wand, or other. If, for example, a form can only be filled out with a mouse or other pointing device, someone who is using the page is blind, uses voice input, uses a keyboard or who is using some other non- pointing input device will not be able to use the form. Generally, pages that allow keyboard interactions are also accessible through speech input or a command line interface.

Ensure that moving, blinking, scrolling, or auto-updating objects or pages may be paused or stopped.

Provide high contrast between background/background color and text.

Provide clear and consistent navigation mechanisms -- orientation information, navigation bars, a site map, etc. -- to increase the likelihood that a person will find what they are looking for at a site. Having consistent "road signs" is especially important for users with cognitive disabilities.

Until browsers allow users to control flickering, people with photosensitive epilepsy can have seizures triggered by flickering or flashing, as well as quick changes from dark to light (similar to strobe lighting).

[Back to Contents Page](#)

# ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY AT CSUMB

**What kind of assistive technologies are available to students?**

CSUMB has a variety of assistive technologies (AT) available to students with disabilities throughout campus. CSUMB AT is constantly being evaluated and upgraded to ensure equal access for students with disabilities by SDAC and the Center for Academic Technologies. For information, training, and/or availability, students should contact SDAC at 582-3672.

The CSUMB Accessible Technology Initiative reviews policy, new information, and campus needs. Information is available at https://csumb.edu/ati.

Faculty may also contact CSUMB's AT Specialist for training at https://csumb.edu/cat/digital-accessibility/.

- Assistive listening devices amplify sound through use of a small microphone to transmit audio to a receiver.

- The Reading Machine, located in the AT lab of the campus library, scans pages of text, converts them to computer files, and then reads the text aloud. The user can listen to the text via headphones and read along in the text, or plug in a recording device to record the text.

- Zoomtext is software found on the PC computer in the Assistive Technology Lab in the Library and various campus locations. It can enlarge and read text aloud. Zoomtext can be used together with the Reading Machine if a student needs enlarged text and text-to-speech assistance to read a textbook or printed handout.

- Screen reading software JAWS (Job Access with Speech) for Windows, a screen reading program for users with low vision and/or blindness, is available in the Library and elsewhere on referral from SDAC.

- Speech recognition programs, such as Dragon Naturally Speaking, are available in the library and in SDAC.

- Demonstrations of assistive software are available for students with disabilities registered with SDAC in order to complete in class writing assignments, to take notes, etc. SDAC may refer students for introductory training offered in small group and one-on-one formats.

**Is assistive technology available to faculty with disabilities?**

Yes. CSUMB's Assistive Technology Specialist may offer AT curriculum information to faculty, depending on the situation. If you are a CSUMB employee and have a disability

for which you would like to request accommodation, please contact the Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator for employment accommodations in University Personnel at 831-582-3584. You may also consult https://csumb.edu/up/your-rights-responsibilities.

Back to Contents Page

# DISABILITY LANGUAGE

Words are powerful and can have an impact on the way someone feels, thinks, acts, and believes they are perceived. The words used when communicating with students with disabilities can have a positive or negative effect on their participation in the classroom and campus environment.

Language matters to students with disabilities. It is important to raise awareness about language that it is appropriate to use when talking to, referring to, or working with students with disabilities. When speaking to or about someone with a disability, it is important to understand which terms are offensive, outdated, inappropriate, or ableist (discriminatory against disabled people). Using inappropriate language can make students feel excluded, offended, or discriminated against, which can be a barrier to full and meaningful participation. Disability is a part of life and it should not be dramatized or portrayed as inspirational, which implies that someone with a disability is not likely to succeed and have a fulfilling life. Use language that is accurate, neutral, and objective.

## Person-first Language vs. Identity- first Language

*Person-first language* puts "person" before "disability," which separates the person from the disability. People with disabilities are, first and foremost, people. They are not their disability, condition or diagnosis; they **have** a disability, condition, or diagnosis. Person-first language says *"people with disabilities"* and *"people with intellectual disabilities"* rather than *"the disabled" or "handicapped."* The goal of person-first language is to decrease the focus that is placed upon diagnosis and increase the focus on the person.

*Identity-first language* places the disability first, as in "disabled people." Identity-first language is a way of referring to individuals who emphasize their disability as a core part of their identity (e.g., autistic person, Deaf person, blind person). Identity-first language is often used as an expression of disability pride and identity, or simply because someone wants to reclaim a disability that once was viewed as negative. It is generally preferred by self-advocates in the autistic, Deaf, and blind communities.

It is important to note that while person-first language is often used, many people with disabilities are choosing to use identity-first language. How someone chooses to self-identify is up to them. Do not minimize a disability or make it invisible. On the contrary, include disability in your work, have conversations about it, raise awareness, and make disability inclusion a priority.

If you are unsure as to whether you should use people-first or identity-first language in order to be respectful, the best thing to do is to ask the person what language they prefer.

Resources:
[National Center on Disability and Journalism, Disability Language Style Guide](#)
[Stanford Disability Initiative: Disability Language Guide](#)

[Back to Contents Page](#)

# LEARNING DISABILITIES

"Learning disabilities" is a term that describes a heterogeneous collection of difficulties related to the reception, process, or expression of information that is not the result of lack of intelligence, past experience, or sensory difficulty. Different schools of thought consider the origin of learning disabilities to be either the result of interaction between an individual and the environment, or in a neurological disorder within the learner.

For purposes of protection under federal legislation, students who have documentation supporting the presence of difficulty with receiving, processing, or expressing information could be considered to have a learning disability. For purposes of your academic course requirements and expectations, and as with other disabilities, students are expected to meet all accommodation request requirements with SDAC. However, modification may be necessary in areas involving the delivery of information. Such modifications include the use of a designated note sharer to supplement the student's own notes, the time required to complete an examination or assignment, or the presentation of an assignment (word processed as contrasted to handwritten assignments).

**What type of difficulties do students with learning disabilities have?**

**Auditory Processing:** Many students with learning disabilities have a history of difficulty with auditory processing. Students who have difficulty processing extensive auditory information may have problems accurately and consistently understanding lecture material. In some severe situations, a student may not be able to follow simple directions regarding an assignment without repetition, or written notes/diagrams.

Although a student may be articulate in the use of vocabulary, the same student may be unable to accurately sequence a series of words or digits, or to form generalizations. In foreign language classes, auditory processing difficulties are particularly problematic for students needing to memorize words, translate into another language, and process information simultaneously.

With your prior consent, students with learning disabilities may be permitted to use a sheet of information (formulas, frequently misspelled words) during an examination or assessment, providing it does not interfere with the essential requirements of the course.

**Visual Processing:** Students with visual processing disorders may have difficulty processing extensive visual data quickly and efficiently. This may include diagrams or overhead presentations but could also include interpretation of texts. Students can sometimes miss essential parts of directions printed on a page or they may require extensive time to read articles presented in class. A student with visual processing difficulties

may need more time to copy notes from the board, or to review information or may require auditory input to process, comprehend, and generalize the data.

By the time a student successfully gains admission to CSUMB, they have usually developed personalized compensation techniques, but others may still struggle with the transition to a university setting where the previous strategies may not continue to work.

Making your texts available in advance can aid your students with disabilities, as well as SDAC staff, in getting the material converted to alternative formats. SDAC's Alternative Media Coordinator is a resource for the conversation of material.

**Expressive Skills:** Although a student may be most articulate orally, written work may suggest a severe discrepancy. Spelling or grammar errors along with frequent omissions in written work suggest the need for added proof reading and word processing. Students who have difficulty with handwritten assignments may do better in activities where extended time is allowed and the work can be prepared on a computer with appropriate grammar and spell checking features. Some students may need to use a voice output system (electronic or human) to "hear" their writing and catch errors.

Providing a voice output system does not interfere with the essential requirements of your course, flexibility in presentation, such as allowing "poor writers" to express information orally, or conversely, allowing poor speakers to present information visually/in writing, is an adaptation that can enrich the learning experience of all.

These difficulties do not suggest the inability to learn the subject matter; however, they do indicate the need for innovative ways to write or present information.

Orally, some students may be unable to express their ideas fluently and quickly. If the same students have adequate writing skills, they may be able to demonstrate academic proficiency. It is important for instructors to recognize that poor verbal performance may be the result of language processing difficulty rather than intellectual incapacity.

**Should I expect a student with a writing disability to do term papers / long written assignments?**

Yes, if this is part of your standard course requirements. Given the opportunities to use word processing and editing programs, assistive technologies through the Library or through SDAC, as well as the availability of tutorial assistance through the Cooperative

Learning Center, a student with a writing disability should be able to organize and appropriately complete written assignments. On rare occasions, it may be necessary to acknowledge the need for a student to take more time to complete extensive written assignments to an acceptable academic level. Expect the student to fulfill the requirement with the accommodation that best supports them.

**How do students with auditory memory problems compensate in lecture class material?**

Many students who have difficulty with memory may be authorized by SDAC to use audio recorders so they can replay information later, if appropriate. Students are required to read and complete the **Academic Senate of the California State University and Colleges Policy on Student Taping of Lectures** and have it signed by the professor prior to recording course lectures. Often the same students may request a copy of a classmate's notes or utilize note sharing services through SDAC so they can check and compare their notes with more comprehensive peer notes.

**Suggestions for Your Students with Learning Disabilities**

1. Start each lecture with an outline of materials to be covered; summarize key points at the conclusion.
2. Clearly spell out expectations before the course begins.
3. Give assignments both orally and in writing to avoid confusion.
4. Allow audio recording to aid notetaking. For Zoom class sessions, allow video recording.
5. Provide, in advance, study questions for exams that illustrate the format as well as the content of the test. Explain what constitutes a good answer and why.
6. Present new or technical vocabulary on the board or in a student handout. Terms should be used in context to convey greater meaning.
7. Encourage students to use campus support services, such as the Cooperative Learning Center.

    (Adapted from "College Students with Learning Disabilities" brochure, AHEAD 1991)

Back to Contents Page

# NEURODIVERGENCE

The terms "neurodiverse" and "neurodivergent" were introduced by Australian sociologist Judy Singer as an alternative to deficit-based language such as "disorder." The neurodiversity movement emerged during the 1990s, aiming to increase acceptance and inclusion of all people while embracing neurological differences. The word "neurodiversity" refers to the diversity of all people, but is often used in the context of autism spectrum disorder (ASD), as well as other neurological or developmental conditions such as ADHD or learning disabilities.

A neurodivergent person is someone whose brain processes information in a way that is not typical of most individuals. Someone who is neurodivergent may be on the autism spectrum, have learning disabilities, have communication challenges, have attention deficit and/or anxiety disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorder, or Tourette's syndrome.

**How can faculty and staff make their learning environments more inclusive of students who are neurodivergent?**

- Accommodate a variety of sensory needs:
    - Allow for tinted glasses in a setting with bright lighting
    - Allow for the use of hearing protection (such as noise-cancelling headsets)
    - Establish fragrance-free environments
    - Allow access to therapeutic manipulatives such as fidget spinners or stress balls
    - Build in breaks for students to attend to self-care needs
    - Offer flexible seating
    - Encourage students to attend office hours to ask questions for clarity

- Use a clear communication style:
    - Avoid sarcasm, euphemisms, and implied messages
    - Being literal is very helpful
    - Provide concise verbal and written instructions for tasks
    - Break tasks down into small steps

- Remind students about conduct expectations and community standards, and don't assume someone is deliberately breaking the rules or being rude.

- Try to give advance notice if plans are changing, and provide a reason for the change.

- Don't make assumptions – connect with students to discuss their needs and goals.

- Be kind, be patient.

Resources:

[University of Washington DO-IT: What do "neurodiverse" and "neurodivergent" mean?](#)

[*Adapted from Harvard Health Publishing: What is Neurodiversity?*](#)

[Back to Contents](#)

# DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

"Deaf" refers to a person with nonfunctional hearing. "Hearing Impairment" or "Hard of Hearing" on the other hand refers to any type or degree of hearing loss. Often, in such cases, speech is poorly developed. "Hard of Hearing" is used to define a hearing-impaired person for whom the sense of hearing is somewhat functional, and whose English skills have been developed through an auditory base. Hearing impairments can be difficult to discern. Some students with this disability use hearing aids or have learned to lip-read or sign as adaptations.

Students who are deaf, just like hearing students, vary to some degree in their written language and communication skills. Not all people who are deaf know how to sign; and not all use interpreters. Some prefer to communicate through lip reading while others prefer sign language or real-time captioning. Not all people with hearing impairments find lip reading effective; however, lip reading skill has no correlation to a person's intelligence.

Some students with hearing impairments find it helpful to use an Assistive Listening Device (ALD) to amplify sound. Using this device, a student may request an instructor use a small microphone to transmit audio to the receiver. For more information, contact SDAC at 582-3672 or SDACDeafServices@csumb.edu.

As with other disabilities, students should be expected to meet all academic requirements, although modification may be necessary in areas involving the delivery of information.

**Some Facts about Persons Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing**

1. An estimated 21 million Americans (or 8.8 percent of the population) have some degree of hearing loss. An estimated 2.5 million are congenitally deaf or lost their hearing before the age of five. Few people are completely deaf.
2. A deaf student's English skills are not related to intelligence but are similar to those experienced by foreign-language speaking students.
3. Only 26 to 30 percent of spoken English can be lip-read.

**Interacting with Students Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing**

Each student functions differently and is the best source of information about communication tips:

- Get the student's attention before speaking. Arrange with the student how this should be done before class.
- Do not hesitate to ask the student to repeat what was said if you do not understand. If that is not effective, suggest that they communicate in writing and e-mail. Communication is the goal; the method is often less unimportant.

- Speak naturally and clearly. Slowing down slightly may help. Do not exaggerate lip movement; do not shout.
- It is impossible to lip-read a word that the student has never seen before. If time permits, it helps to write the word and then let the student see how it looks on the lips.
- Short sentences are easier to understand than longer sentences with several clauses. Do not be alarmed if a student does not understand and you cannot understand them. If the student does not understand, try repeating; if the student still does not understand, rephrase or use a different word order rather than again repeating the same words. You may be surprised as to how quickly you will become accustomed to each other in time. Written communication may be used if the need arises.
- Look at the person when you speak.

**What should I know about American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters in my class?**

A student who is deaf or has a hearing loss in your class will require accommodation and understanding. An American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter may be scheduled for your class.

- The interpreter will usually sit or stand near you so the student will be able to watch you and "read your words" at the same time.
- If the student or the interpreter does not understand something you say, you may be asked to repeat or restate information.To enhance your communication with the student, watch the student but listen to the voice of the interpreter. If you address the student and not the interpreter, you should have better communication flow.The interpreter facilitates communication. It is inappropriate to address student-directed questions to the interpreter if the intention is to discuss something with the student.
- Interpreters may request a desk copy of texts that are being used so they can be better able to learn course-specific vocabulary.

If you have a meeting with the student outside the regular class time, please advise SDAC to arrange interpreter service. Similarly, call SDAC if you are not planning to have class or intend a change in location, such as a field trip. As interpreters are hired on an hourly basis, planned changes could help reduce costs and permit better use of interpreter skills.

SDAC web page regarding Sign Language Interpreters:
https://csumb.edu/SDAC/information-about-student-accommodations/faculty-info---deaf--hard-of-hearing/

Back to Contents Page

# CHRONIC HEALTH DISABILITIES

In general most students with chronic health problems will try to schedule classes based on how they best manage the conditions of their disability. For example, students who have difficulty waking early are encouraged to select late morning or afternoon classes. People who have regular hospitalization/treatments are encouraged to schedule classes on days when they are not being treated.

On occasion, there may be times when a student is unable to attend class because of health related impacts from a chronic condition, or from side effects stemming from its treatment.

In these situations, with medical verification, it may be necessary to remember that unexpected or prolonged absences may result, which would require some accommodation. SDAC encourages faculty to investigate alternative strategies for assignment completion with the student, such as with flexible deadlines or opportunities to make up missed work.

## What To Do During an Epileptic Seizure

- **Call 911**. Let trained first responders assess if this is a medical emergency.
- **Remain calm**. Nothing can be done to stop the seizure once it has begun.
- **Do not try to restrain the individual**.

  **Convulsive/"Grand Mal" seizures:** Lower the individual to the ground or floor, if possible, and clear the immediate area of furniture or obstructions to avoid injury. Try to loosen a tie or shirt collar, and place something soft under the person's head. Do not interfere with convulsive movements in any way. Do not place objects in the mouth or try to force anything between the teeth. When the individual regains consciousness, reassure him or her and ask what additional assistance is needed.

  **Nonconvulsive/"Petit Mal" seizures:** No medical action is typically needed during these instances. Stay with the person, gently guiding him or her away from obvious hazards, until complete awareness is restored. Speak calmly and reassuringly. Do not grab the person or try to restrain him or her in any way. After the episode, offer to provide additional assistance if needed. Non-convulsive seizures are often mistaken for daydreaming, lack of attention, ignoring instructions, poor coordination,

intoxication, or clumsiness. Most pass without incident; however, instructors and staff should be prepared to take action if needed. Be considerate of the student.

**Should I grade a student with a health problem differently?**

No. Students with chronic health difficulties are expected to complete course requirements appropriately to receive passing grades for a course. Although it is necessary that the student completes requirements for grading, accommodations such as extended time to complete course requirements, or entering into an Incomplete Grade Contract with an arrangement for the student to complete the course as soon as possible, may be necessary.

In situations where class attendance is a component of grading and the student has legitimately been unable to attend class because of ill health (and sufficient confidential information is on file with SDAC), instructors may want to review policies. Reasonable alternatives or suggestions might include alternate "make up" activities, extra credit projects, or possibly encouraging the student to review and revise course planning schedules and retake the course at another time when absence may be less problematic.

Back to Contents Page

# MOBILITY AND PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

Mobility impairments range in severity from limitations of stamina to paralysis. Some mobility impairments are caused by conditions present at birth (congenital) while others are the result of illness or physical injury (acquired).

Injuries to the spinal cord cause different types of mobility impairments depending on the areas of the spine that are injured. Paraplegia refers to the loss of function to the lower extremities and the lower trunk. Students with paraplegia typically use a manual wheelchair and have the full movement of arms and hands. Quadriplegia refers to the loss of function to arms, legs, and trunk. Students with quadriplegia have limited or no use of their arms and hands and often use motorized wheelchairs. Hemiplegia is another type of functional loss where the limbs of one side of the body are affected; students may use a wheelchair or a walking aid.

Mobility impairments vary over a wide range, from temporary (e.g., a broken arm) to permanent (e.g., a form of paralysis or muscle degeneration). Other impairments, such as respiratory conditions, may affect coordination and endurance. These can also affect a student's ability to participate/perform in class.

Below are brief descriptions of other causes of mobility impairments:

- Amputation
- Arthritis
- Back disorders (degenerative disc disease, scoliosis, and herniated discs)
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (wrist and arm limitations from repetitive strain/injury)
- Cerebral palsy (damage to the brain prior to or shortly after birth that may prevent or inhibit walking, and cause a lack of muscle coordination, spasms, and speech difficulty)
- Fibromyalgia (muscular rheumatism causing constant pain in muscles and ligaments)
- Morbid obesity (medically verified)
- Neuromuscular disorders (including degenerative conditions, such as muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, and ataxia)

Students with mobility impairments may require a wide range of adaptations and accommodations.

**What are some of the accommodations for students with mobility impairments?**

Physical access to a class is often the first barrier a student with mobility impairment may face, but it is not the only accessibility concern. Common accommodations for students with mobility impairments for students registered with SDAC include:

- Priority registration
- Note sharing support
- Accessible classroom/location/furniture
- Mobility management involving late arrival to and/or early departure from class
- Adaptive equipment loan e.g. off-road beach wheelchair
- Extensions for assignments and exams
- Alternative ways of completing assignments
- Parking access
- Transportation assistance through Monterey Salinas Transit e.g. MST RIDES

Students should meet with SDAC Advisors as early as possible, preferably before the academic term begins, in order to arrange accommodations.

Students may benefit from reading the Mobility Access Guide to CSUMB available at https://csumb.edu/SDAC/resources

**How can I interact effectively with students with mobility impairments in my class?**

When talking with a wheelchair user, attempt to converse at eye level as opposed to standing and looking down. A wheelchair is also a part of a student's personal space; please do not lean on or touch the chair.

- If a student has communication impairment as well as mobility impairment (for example, in the case of an individual with moderate cerebral palsy), repeat what you understand, and when you don't understand, ask for clarification.
- A student with a physical disability may or may not want assistance in each situation: please ask before giving assistance.

Back to Contents Page

# PSYCHOLOGICAL DISABILITIES

Psychological disabilities are one of the most common non-apparent disabilities. Providing a supportive environment and resources to the student, such as SDAC, can help them to succeed.   Students may   be reluctant to reach out for help for a psychological disability due to the perceived stigma and misconceptions surrounding diagnosis and treatment.

**What accommodations are available to students with psychological  disabilities?**

Psychological disabilities may affect the ability to focus, to learn, or to demonstrate knowledge in consistent ways. Some examples of accommodations include:

- Noise reduction
- Testing accommodation
- Alternative ways of completing assignments
- Breaks
- Attendance/absence support
- Reduced course load
- Alternate semester for course

**What help is available in an emergency crisis situation, or for a student who needs greater support?**

In the event of an emergency, call 9-1-1. Allow trained first responders to take on emergency or crisis situations.

The Personal Growth and Counseling Center (PGCC) at (831) 582-3969 is staffed with professionally trained counselors and staff who are able to help students in crisis situations. In the unlikely event that a student becomes stressed to the point of needing immediate assistance, advise the student of the availability of such services or call the University Police Department for a welfare check. PGCC is located in Health & Wellness Services (Building 80). Guidance is at http://csumb.edu/pgcc.

Back to Contents Page

# BLINDNESS AND LOW VISION

*This section is currently being developed. SDAC will send an updated version upon its completion.*

*Future content will include:*

- **How can I work effectively with students who are blind or have low vision?**

- **Interacting with Students who are Blind or Visually Impaired**

Back to Contents Page