



Columbia College

Disability Services Administration Manual

2013 - 2014

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Purpose of the Manual

The purpose of this manual is to provide information for staff and faculty regarding services to students with both permanent and transitory disabilities. The Columbia College Accommodations Policy for Students with Disabilities and the Handbook for Students with Disabilities is located on the Columbia College website. This electronic version is considered the most recent. Please consult it when necessary.

Columbia College's Obligation to Accommodate

Columbia College is required to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities to the point of undue hardship as outlined in the *Columbia College Accommodation Policy for Students with Disabilities (located on our web site and Document Manager)*. As well, the Human Rights Commission has prepared a document entitled *Duty to Accommodate Students in Post-secondary Educational Institutions (located at Alberta Human Rights Commission website)*

Important Legal Principles

Legal principles from case law provide direction on a wide range of issues important to the provision of services in the education sector. The following lists some of the more specific principles that apply to accommodating students with disabilities in an educational institution. (*Duty to Accommodate Students with Disabilities in Post-secondary Educational Institutions – Interpretive Bulletin Sept. 2010*)

Education-specific duty to accommodate principles AHR Act – Alberta Human Rights Act

Jurisdiction

1. The AHR Act applies to the provision of all services in the educational setting, including extracurricular services such as those provided by clubs and the students' union.
2. Students with disabilities have the right to access services and environments generally available to other students in the same course or program.

Reasonable and Justifiable Requirements

3. The educational institution may establish the necessary requirements and essential elements of a course or program. If the student does not meet the requirements and/or participate in the essential elements, this would amount to an undue hardship for the institution.
4. Assessments or evaluations of a student's work must be based on ability or performance and not on the presence of a disability.

Responsibility of Students and Institutions in the Accommodation Process

5. Students must provide reasonable documentation of their disability if they want to be accommodated.
6. A student's past decision not to disclose that they have a disability does not prevent the possibility of present or future accommodation.
7. Educators may be responsible for accommodating a student who has not disclosed a disability where the disability is obvious.
8. Both the student and educator are responsible for working towards a successful accommodation strategy.

9. Educators have a duty to seek professional advice and guidance outside their own area of expertise during an accommodation process.
10. Educational institutions must demonstrate that they have considered a range of possible accommodations. Documentation of the process and conclusions are required.
11. Students have a duty to be open to trying different options for accommodation, even though they may not be the exact accommodations requested.

Determining Undue Hardship

12. Educational institutions must demonstrate that the benefits of a rule outweigh the costs of reducing the participation of a student with a disability or a group of students with disabilities.
13. The point of undue hardship related to cost is only reached when the institution has made a rigorous attempt to estimate the costs of accommodating the student with a disability. These costs, if incurred, must have a significant negative effect on the viability of the program, service, or organization.
14. The point of undue hardship related to safety is often only reached when:
 - the safety concern is borne by persons other than the person seeking the accommodation and
 - the safety hazard outweighs the negative effect that the policy, rule, or standard imposes on persons with disabilities.
15. Students are entitled to reasonable accommodations to the point of undue hardship. There is no duty to provide instant or perfect accommodation.

Protected Areas and Grounds

The following are protected areas and grounds under the *Human Rights Act*:

Protected Grounds

- The *Act* provides protection from discrimination under the following grounds:
- Race – Belonging to a group of people related by common heritage.
- Religious belief - System of belief, worship and conduct (includes Native Spirituality).
- Colour – Colour of person's skin. This includes, but is not limited to, racial slurs, jokes, stereotyping, and verbal and physical harassment.
- Gender – Being male, female, or transgender. Also protected under gender are pregnancy and sexual harassment.
- Physical disability – Any degree of physical disability, deformity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by injury, birth defect or illness. This includes, but is not limited to, epilepsy; paralysis; amputation; lack of physical coordination; visual, hearing and speech impediments; and physical reliance on a guide dog, wheelchair or their remedial appliance or device.
- Mental disability – Any mental disorder, developmental disorder or learning disorder regardless of the cause or duration of the disorder.

- Marital status – The state of being married, single, widowed, divorced, separated, or living with a person in a conjugal relationship outside of marriage.
- Ancestry – Belonging to a group of people related by a common heritage.
- Age – Age is defined in the *Act* as “18 years or older.” Persons who are 18 years or older can make complaints on the grounds of age in all of these areas:
 - Statements, publications, notices, signs, symbols, emblems or other representations that are published, issued or displayed before the public
 - Employment practices
 - Employment applications or advertisements
 - Membership in trade unions, employers’ organizations or occupational associations

It is important to know that age is not a protected ground in the areas of tenancy, goods, services, accommodations or facilities.
- Place of origin – Place of birth.
- Family status – Being related to another person by blood, marriage, or adoption.
- Source of income – Source of income is defined by the *Act* as lawful source of income. The protected ground of source of income includes any income that attracts a social stigma to its recipients, for example, social assistance, disability pension, and income supplements for seniors. Income that does not result in social stigma would not be included in the ground.
- Sexual Orientation – This ground includes protection from differential treatment based on a person’s actual or presumed sexual orientation, whether homosexual, heterosexual or bisexual.

In addition to the areas and grounds discussed above, the *Act* protects Albertans in the area of equal pay. When employees of any sex (female, male or transgender) perform the same or substantially similar work, they must be paid at the same rate.

Students Eligible for Services

- Services are provided to students with a documented disability or a chronic condition or with a temporary (transitory) illness or impairment.
- Some examples of a chronic condition may be Crohn's Disease, Diabetes, Celiac Disease, Chronic fatigue syndrome, epilepsy, etc.
- Some examples of a temporary (transitory) illness or impairment may be recovery from surgery, a broken arm, medication side effects, infectious diseases, non-complicated pregnancy, etc.
- The student is required to provide documentation in support of his/her condition.
- Where students see themselves as having “**exam or test anxiety**,” these students should be referred to career services for help with exam-writing techniques, time management, study skills and other possible supports. Self-diagnosis is not accepted. If a student were to have a documented anxiety disorder, this situation would fit under disability services.

Services Provided

- Planning for reasonable accommodations
- Advising regarding disability-related academic matters
- Assistance in accessing government funds for disability-related services or equipment
- Assistance with securing exam writing accommodations
- Assistance with securing Note-taking support
- Assistance with securing Tutoring
- Assistance with securing Academic Strategist support
- Assistance with securing Assistive technology training and support
- Assistance with planning for field placement (practicum, work experience)
- Assistance in converting print materials to alternate formats
- Classroom accommodation
- Library resources assistance
- Advocacy

Disability Services Staff

Manager Student Services – Lucy Dooley

- Responsible for the overall management of Disability Services

Disability Services Lead – Doug Leong

- Responsible for the administration and coordination of Disability Services within the Student Services Department
- Responsible for providing student support in the area of assisted technology

Disability Services Advisors

- Act as the primary contact for students with disabilities in disability-related matters

Test/Exam Assessment Staff – Jodie Luna, Elena Molchanova

- Responsible for administration and coordination of accommodated tests/exams
- Responsible for supporting students with disabilities who require alternate format materials

Basic Information on Accommodation

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Accommodation is the process of making alterations to the delivery of services so that those services become accessible to more people, including people with disabilities. In educational environments, the goal of accommodating students with disabilities is to ensure full participation in all aspects of their educational experience. (Columbia College Accommodation Policy for Students with Disabilities)

As the above definition states, accommodations are intended to remove barriers to learning and help students to master course content while maintaining the academic standards and objectives of the course and program of studies. Accommodation does not relieve the student of his/her responsibility to develop the essential skills and competencies expected of all students upon graduation.

The provision of accommodation is based on shared responsibilities between the student and the College and is determined on an individual basis.

Notification of Disability:

While the College is required to accommodate students to the point of undue hardship, it is the student's responsibility to notify the College of his/her needs as soon as possible. It may take four to six months or more to proceed through a request for accommodations where there is assistive technology involved, as an individual may need to be assessed by the government and then request funding in order to provide funded services. A student with a disability does not have to disclose that he/she has a disability when applying to the College, but can do so at any time. It is to the student's benefit to disclose the disability to Disability Services prior to starting a program, as the process for accommodations can take time.

Disclosing a Disability:

If a student discloses a disability to staff or faculty, the student should be asked to make an appointment with Disability Services. Sometimes, a student may believe that he/she has made an official disclosure by telling someone on staff. A student must be registered with Disability Services to be eligible for accommodations. It is up to the student to take this step and see Disability Services. Faculty and staff cannot grant accommodations.

Short-term Accommodations:

If a student requests short-term accommodations for circumstances such as a broken leg or other condition of this nature, the College is required to provide accommodation. The student will need to provide documentation and meet with a Disability Services Advisor. We may not be able to accommodate the need immediately. The College's Accommodation Policy provides a process and timelines for responding to a request for accommodation.

Knowledge of the Disability Diagnosis:

Consideration must be given to who is entitled to know the disability information and who is not. According to Human Rights Legislation and our Accommodations Policy for Students with Disabilities, no other party is entitled to know the reason for an accommodation except Disability Services. All other parties are entitled to know only what accommodations have been granted.

Exceptions:

There are exceptions as to who could be given the reason for an accommodation. This would be determined by the Disability Services Advisor. An exception would be a situation such as a person who may pose a safety concern in the workplace or where some skills training may not be possible due to the person's disability. In each case the Disability Services Advisor will discuss with the student the advisability of informing the Program Chair and/or other relevant staff members to help create an accommodation that will work effectively. Should a student refuse to have this information disclosed and the Disability Services Advisor feels it is necessary, the Disability Services Advisor will inform the student that the Disability Services Advisor is going to reveal the information to the Program Chair and/or other relevant stakeholders.

Procedure for Admission

Students with disabilities must meet all admission requirements as outlined by the College. Accommodations are possible at entry point with documentation. This means that a student could be permitted an accommodation as early as at the point of having to take the Columbia College Assessment.

Information for Admission Advisors

Note: It is important to provide proof that good faith was demonstrated in accommodating an otherwise qualified candidate. Record all efforts systematically in CRS.

1. The Columbia College application allows a student with a disability to self-identify. If a student self-identifies, the disability services advisor will call the student to discuss procedures and questions.
2. A student must register with Disability Services, by filling in the **Disability Services Registration Form (See Appendix)**, in order to receive services.
3. Should the program advisor contact an applicant and begin the regular admission process, and the individual requests an accommodation to take the assessment test, the admission advisor must refer the student to Disability Services. Do not book the person for an assessment if the person requests an accommodation.
4. The disability services advisor will determine what form of documentation is needed for the applicant to proceed ahead. No accommodations will be granted without proper documentation.
5. The Assessment Centre staff will be notified through Event Centre (Note section) of any additional needs the applicant may have for administration of a Columbia College Assessment.
6. Applicants with Mental Health Disabilities – It is discriminatory to make admission inquiries about a student’s mental health based on a revealed or suspected mental health issue. Where it is admissible to inquire about mental health is for suitability for a program, particularly where the person will be working with a vulnerable sector of people. For example, in Human Services, a student may be engaged in assisting others (often vulnerable people) through counselling them. The same applies to the Practical Nurse and Health Care Aide programs, where a student will be working with a vulnerable people in a care facility or hospital. It would be advisable that applicants have resolved their personal issues before attempting to assist others.
 - It is acceptable to ask the applicant: “Is your condition being managed satisfactorily? How is it being managed? (a plan in place) If the answer is yes and the explanation satisfactory, the admission advisor should not pursue the matter further.
7. Applicants/Current students with Substance Abuse Issues – Present/Past – If an applicant reveals information regarding substance abuse or the advisor discovers this information in another way (through records), the advisor needs to consider the following:
 - A person who is currently enrolled or has successfully completed a drug and alcohol rehabilitation program is considered to be a person with a disability

and is protected from discrimination under the law as long as the person is not currently using drugs or alcohol.

- As with many health-related issues, consideration is given as to whether the individual and the advisor feel that the situation is in control. For example, if a person is attending methadone treatment, the person would be considered as having a disability and would not be denied entrance to a program based on this fact. Where the decision making becomes more complicated is when one factors in whether the individual will be working with vulnerable people and whether the present condition may put this population at risk.
 - It is acceptable to ask the applicant: “Is your condition being managed satisfactorily? How is it being managed? (a plan in place) If the answer is yes and the explanation satisfactory, the admission advisor should not pursue the matter further.
8. Applicants/Current students who reveal that they are pregnant – Applicants or current students who are pregnant are protected under the Act. Inform the applicant of our Accommodations policy. To be informed of our Accommodations Policy, a student does not have to reveal any medical health details. Students who are pregnant cannot be denied access to education. The only concern might be whether a student can perform the physical demands of a program. For example, can the student do lifting, etc. The admission advisor should request a clearance from a doctor before acceptance.
 9. Applicants/Current students who reveal that they have a learning disability – Applicants or current students who reveal that they have a learning disability should be referred to Disability Services and the our Accommodations policy. Self-diagnosis is not acceptable. Advisors should not give students the impression that all accommodations requested will be granted.
 10. Possibility of working at home to complete a course – This is not an accommodation that should be suggested to a student. There are implications to this accommodation that may not be beneficial to or feasible for either the College or the student.
 11. Recording Confidential Information: Do not record confidential information in CRS. This information is recorded separately and stored in the Confidential Information file with the Registrar’s office. Please note in CRS that “Confidential information is stored in the Registrar’s office.” Make notes containing the confidential information and submit it to the Registrar’s office.
 12. Bona Fide Occupational and Educational Requirements - For entrance, consideration has to be given to essential skills and abilities required of the chosen program and profession. For example, a person would need to have sight to become a practical nurse. This area is defined in the Accommodations Policy under “Bona fide” requirements. There are Bona fide occupational and education requirements.
 13. Conflict of Interest: A student’s Admission Advisor cannot act as the student’s Disability Advisor.
 14. Information Storage – See Section 10.

If a Student Requests an Accommodation from a Facilitator

Facilitators are very important to the student's successful learning experience. It is important to remember that facilitators cannot make a decision to grant an accommodation. The student should be referred to Disability Services.

Where accommodations have been granted by Disability Services, the following will take place:

1. The Program Chair will receive a Letter of Accommodation from the Disability Services Advisor, outlining what accommodations have been granted to a student.
2. The Program Chair or designate will deliver a copy of the Letter of Accommodation to the facilitators and discuss it with them.
3. The letter stays in effect for each semester. When updates on accommodations occur, the Disability Services Advisor will forward the updates to the Program Chair for distribution and discussion.
4. It is the Program Chair's responsibility to ensure that each semester facilitators are made aware of the student's accommodations.
5. If assistance is needed in implementing the accommodations, facilitators should contact their Program Chair and/or the Disability Services Advisor named on the Letter of Accommodation.
6. Implementation of accommodations as presented in the letter is mandatory. Facilitators cannot make the decision to cease granting an accommodation or modifying the accommodation from what is stated in the Letter of Accommodation.
7. Faculty is to keep all information confidential.

Consultation before an Accommodation is Granted

Usually, the Program Chair is consulted, and it is the program chair's responsibility to discuss relevant information with his/her staff, as well as, to provide information to the Disability Services Advisor who is preparing the accommodations.

The position of the legislation is that there is no need for anyone outside of Disability Services to know the diagnosis of a disability, but only to know about the required accommodations. A student may reveal his/her disability to anyone. The Disability Services Advisor may encourage the student to share his/her disability with relevant stakeholders in order to ensure the best possible results.

While the Program Chair may be consulted in most cases, there are simple situations where this may not be necessary. For example, a student is taking medication that requires the student to leave the classroom to go to the washroom on a more frequent basis than normal. This type of accommodation would be granted without consultation, based on medical documentation provided by the student.

Where safety or public interest is at stake, the Disability Services Advisor will inform the student that the disability diagnosis will be shared with the Program Chair.

Suspicion That a Student in the Class Has a Disability

Facilitators should discuss the matter with their Program Chair. The Program Chair will provide guidance. Facilitators may also approach a Disability Services Advisor for advice. This should be done prior to discussing this suspicion with the student.

Accommodated Test and Exam Service

Introduction

The Disability Services Advisor will help faculty and students with accommodations in this area. It is the student's responsibility to take the initiative in planning for taking his/her accommodated tests/ exams. This is, of course, conditional to the student's language competency. Our goal is to empower students with disabilities to manage their own lives and responsibilities.

All test and exam accommodations must be approved by Disability Services in a formal manner as outlined in the Columbia College Accommodations Policy for Students with Disabilities. A facilitator or staff member cannot informally provide accommodations such as extra time for a test or exam. This would be discrimination against other students.

The Assessment Centre in the library plays a key role in the provision of Accommodated Test and Exam Services.

Test/Exam Accommodation Information

1. Test/Exam accommodations will vary from student to student. Disability Services may grant a student such accommodations as extended time, use of a computer, adaptive technology, alternate forms of print material, special equipment, use of a scribe, reader, etc.
2. Small Group: If a student is to write in a small group, in most cases, the size of the group would be 8-10 students. In special circumstances, the group might be 3 or 4 students.
3. Student Conduct Regarding Tests/Exams form: Students, who receive accommodations in test/exam situations, will have signed a **Student Conduct Regarding Tests/Exams form (See Appendix)**. This form represents the student's commitment to a code of conduct of academic honesty regarding cheating, providing information to others, plagiarism, and behaviours that are considered academic dishonesty.
4. Number of exams: Usually, only one exam per day may be recommended for students with disabilities or students with conditions that affect their ability to sustain concentration or manage fatigue. For a student who might have more than one exam to write in a day, and the recommendation by the medical professional is that the student write only one exam per day, the Disability Services Advisor would first, determine if this accommodation can be granted. If it is determined that this accommodation be granted, the Disability Services Advisor would collaborate with the Program Chair to plan how this accommodation would occur and inform the various stakeholders.
5. Time Extensions: Another accommodation that could arise is the extension of time for taking the exam. It is common for students to receive time-and-a-half (i.e. 1.5x). For example, for an exam that takes 2 hours – the student would get an accommodation that equals 3 hours. This accommodation, common across North America, is supported by research showing that students with learning disabilities performed significantly better with the 1.5X extended time accommodation, while their non-learning disabled peers did not perform better given the same accommodation.
6. Planning Extended Time Implementation: Where extended time has been granted, the Disability Services Advisor will plan out how this accommodation will be arranged and communicate the plan to the Assessment staff in the library and other stakeholders.

It is possible that a student may be granted an accommodation which exceeds 1.5X, depending on factors such as multiple disabilities, the use of technologies that are new to the student, time needed to read Brailled charts, etc.

7. Use of Exam Scribe: This should be a rare accommodation. This accommodation may be granted for students with manual or upper body mobility limitations where assistive technology would not be possible. Our goal is to prepare students for the work world and a scribe would not be possible in this environment. Therefore, our first step would be to try to find ways in which the student can be empowered to be independent and able to cope with their disability.

Should a scribe be required, the scribe would write in longhand or keyboard precisely what the student dictates. No assistance would be given to the type of answer provided, spelling, grammar or interpretation of the questions. The student would be expected to provide correct spelling of technical terms and proper nouns. For essay questions, the student would tell the scribe how the essay will be formatted and where to begin a new paragraph. During dictation, the student would be able to see what is being recorded and would be responsible for any revisions. The student would then approve the final version of the dictation.

8. Use of Spell/Grammar Check function: A student with a disability may be permitted to use a Spell/Grammar Checker, but this will need to be part of permitted accommodations related to the particular disability. Normally, students do not use Spell/Grammar checkers. Facilitators cannot grant this accommodation if the student asks for it.
9. Use of Electronic Translator: An electronic translator would not be permitted as it is not part of a disability.
10. Distraction-Free Environment - Assessments by medical professionals often recommend an accommodation that has the student take his/her test/exam in a distraction-free environment. A distraction-free environment can be defined as a quiet place where students will not be easily distracted or will not distract others.

Distractions can be:

- people coming into the room
 - people talking
 - phones ringing
 - visual clutter
11. Sometimes an assessment recommends that a student should read aloud, move around, do relaxation exercises, wear ear plugs, and listen to music or white noise as ways to improve concentration. Therefore, a student could bring in a CD player or iPod and headphones into an exam room. If music is being used, the assessment staff will screen the music prior to exam start. The student would be asked to bring this equipment in two days prior to the exam being taken.

A study found that psychologists recommend a distraction-free exam environment in 64% of assessments done on students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Learning Disabilities (LD) – Samuels, University of Calgary.

12. Guidelines for Taking Tests/Exams in Distraction-free Environment

- I. Usually, a student would take the exam in a small group (up to 10 students).
 - II. If the student is to take an exam alone in a room, usual precautions for ensuring academic honesty would be taken, but an invigilator would not usually be present throughout the writing of the exam. This is common for most universities and colleges.
13. **External Special Accommodation** – This refers to an accommodation where the student will need to write in a space/time outside of the classroom and/or classroom location. At times, the location can be a combination of in class and an external space outside of the classroom.

Procedure for the student to arrange for test/exam accommodations:

1. If the student requires specialized test and/or exam accommodations, the student will approach the facilitator and have filled out the top portion of the form entitled **Request for Testing Accommodations (See Appendix)**. It is the student's responsibility to manage his/her own accommodated testing arrangements. This form requests arrangements for the exam/test be written wholly or partially outside of the classroom under Disability Services arrangements.
2. The Request for Testing Accommodations is filled out each time a test or exam needs to be taken external to the classroom. It may be filled out as soon as the student receives the course syllabus which provides information about exams, etc. Exam/test dates and times for the entire semester would be generally stated on the syllabus. If the dates for testing/exams are provided on the syllabus, the student may fill out one form for the entire semester.
3. The facilitator will fill out the remainder of the form and sign it.
4. The student will deliver the completed form to the Test/Exam Assessment staff in the library within established timelines.
5. Timeline: The student must submit the request at least 5 days in advance of each exam or one form could be filled out for an entire semester. If a student does not make the request within this timeline, no accommodation would be provided. For daily tests, this requirement would not apply, but a plan would be put in place in by the Disability Services Advisor in collaboration with stakeholders.
6. The facilitator would be responsible for delivering the test/exam to the Assessment staff, either in electronic format (preferred) or in hard copy a minimum of 3 days prior to the test/exam being taken.
7. Return of test/exam to the facilitator: The completed test/exam will be scanned by Assessment staff and forwarded to the Program Chair who will forward it to the facilitator. The original will be kept at the Assessment centre for one year and destroyed.
8. Test/Exam Assessment staff would make arrangements for the student to write his/her test/exam. The staff would either make arrangements for the taking of the test/exam at the time the request is made or the student may be contacted by email or phone.
9. A student's Request for Testing Accommodations forms would be stored at the Assessment Centre. When the student leaves the College, the student's forms would be submitted to the Registrar's office for processing.

10. Students may contact the Assessment Centre at any time by emailing assessment@columbia.ab.ca or phoning (403) 235-9308.

Reduced Course Load

A student with a disability may elect to take a reduced course load.

Grant funded student: The student may maintain full-time learner benefits while taking a minimum of 40% course load each semester. The student may receive 50 funded months of training benefits to complete their service plan. Reduced course loads must be approved by an Alberta Human Services official in order to receive funding.

Student Loan funded student: The student would be considered full-time while taking at least 40% of a full course load each semester. Reduced course load must be approved by Alberta government Student Finance.

In this situation, it is important for the Disability Services Advisor to inform the Registrar of this accommodation. This may be done by email.

Work Experience/Practicum

Students with disabilities may require accommodation support in clinical placements, co-operative education placements/practicums and work experience. The responsibility for this arrangement lies with the Program Chair/designate.

It should be recognized that programs have required competencies that need to be mastered. The student should be consulted on possible ways to demonstrate these required competencies, as well as, help to problem solve a placement problem. It is the College's responsibility to work with the placement site which is also obligated to provide accommodations.

Note: Columbia College is obligated to protect vulnerable people and the public in general by ensuring that students who are placed in a practicum situation are able to act professionally, and display competency and safe practice at all times.

The Columbia College Accommodation Policy for Students with Disabilities, therefore, makes provision for and defines the following:

Bona fide occupational requirements (BFOR'S) are standards or rules that are integral to carrying out the functions of a specific position or occupation. (Human Rights Commission) Thus, there are reasonable and justifiable components of a training program that may limit entry to, or completion of, a training program.

Bona fide educational requirements (BFER'S) are important requirements of a training program that may limit entry to, or completion of a training program due to the Bona fide occupational requirements of the specific position or occupation.

It may be advisable to have the student with a disability meet with the host practicum site representative in order for the student to have an opportunity to present themselves to the host site. This meeting would be arranged by the Program Chair/designate. The Disability Services Advisor may also be invited by either the student or the Program representative to attend the meeting. The student would be prepared for the meeting by the Disability Services Advisor and the Program representative.

The Disability Services Advisor's responsibility would be to support the student, to ensure that proper procedures are followed regarding the rights of the student, and to help the host site understand any principles regarding the student's disability and accommodations needed.

The Program representative's role would be to arrange for the meeting, facilitate the meeting, and ensure that the information provided at the meeting is sufficient to protect vulnerable people, ensure the safety of all, and protect the College from any legal suits.

The Role of the Student would generally be to present oneself to the practicum site in a positive manner, discuss any accommodations that he or she may need, provide information on his/her disability as requested by the host site, and ask/answer any questions.

Specialized Assessments

- Columbia College will assess students for general placement in course levels and entry into programs. If a specialized assessment is needed, a referral may be placed by the Disability Services Advisor to the Government of Alberta Human Services, Disability Related Employment Supports (DRES). There is no financial charge for this service for Alberta residents if an assessment is approved by Alberta Human Services
- Staff and faculty should not advise the student to get a private assessment. If the student decides to have an assessment done, pays for it, and is not found to have a disability, the student will not have his/her money refunded. Even at best, the student will probably not receive all moneys expended back. There is a financial cap for this service. A typical psychological assessment could cost \$2000 to \$3500.
- The procedure for making a referral is found in the DRES policy found in the Alberta Works manual. A facilitator may recommend testing by speaking to their Program Chair. The Program Chair will notify the Disability Services Lead of the request. Evidence will need to be provided for a specialized assessment to be recommended.
- If a student wishes to have a private assessment, the student may go to their doctor and ask for a referral. The student could also go to a Canada Service Centre and initiate their own assessment. A student would pay for a private assessment, but not for one initiated by a Canada Services Centre Consultant.

Specialized assessments may be:

- **Educational** - To determine the basic education level, learning difficulties or learning disabilities, preferred learning styles or strategies. Educational psychologists frequently complete these types of assessments.
- **Functional** - To determine physical ability to perform a variety of work-related tasks, for example, manual dexterity. Physiotherapists or Occupational Therapists often complete these types of assessments.
- **Vocational** - To determine, through job tryouts or other means, what elements of a job can be completed. These are often completed by Occupational Therapists.
- **Medical** - To obtain a current report on health conditions and disability completed by a medical professional.
- **Psychological** - To determine the individual's mental health situation and the ability to function in social, training and workplace contexts. A medical professional or a clinical psychologist may complete these.
 - Useful for anxiety disorders, including panic attacks
 - Depression
 - Personality disorders
 - Behavioural problems
 - Other emotional problems
- **Psycho-Educational** - To determine information related to intelligence, achievement, behaviour and learning. These assessments use standardized test batteries. Use for identifying:

- Intellectual Capabilities
- Giftedness
- Learning Disorders (math, reading, spelling)
- Intellectual Deficiencies
- School Readiness
- Neuropsychological screens to identify brain function problems, memory, processing efficiency, etc.
- Eye-hand coordination and dexterity tests
- **Learning Disabilities, Attention Deficit Disorder and Attention/Hyperactivity Disorder** - The assessment is made by a psychiatrist, a registered psychologist with ADD/ADHD training, neuro-psychologist, or a relevantly trained medical doctor.
- **Neuro-Psychological** - A neuro-psychological assessment is designed to assess the change in brain function when brain damage occurs due to injury, stroke or a medical condition.
- **Speech and/or Language** - To determine conditions that will affect communication within social, educational, training, or workplace environments. Speech therapists may complete these assessments.

Arranging for Alternate Format Materials

The library plays an important role in providing this service to students with disabilities.

Print material may need to be converted into alternate formats to help students who, for example, are blind or have low vision or students with certain learning disabilities. Often materials can be submitted electronically and students with assistive technology can work from this format. If this is not suitable, then alternate formatting may take some time to be completed.

Where a student requires e-texts, the Disability Services Advisor will assist the student in requesting that the library determine if such formats are available from the publisher by assisting the student in filling out a Request for Alternate Format Materials form.

The student is responsible for initiating an alternate format request.

The process for requesting Alternate Format Materials is as follows:

1. The student and facilitator must fill out a **Request for Alternate Format Materials Form (See Appendix)**. This form must be submitted a minimum of 3 weeks prior to the start of classes or when required.
2. There is no guarantee that this will be sufficient time to produce materials, as often the College is reliant on other sources to produce the materials.
3. This form is submitted to the library. Library staff may need to contact such sources as publishers, the Alberta government, CNIB, etc.
4. Other forms of alternate materials may require enlarging materials, creating taped materials, etc. There may be costs involved for these services.
5. Library staff will contact the student and notify them regarding the alternate format request.

It is important that student information be kept confidential for both disabled and non-disabled students. A breach of privacy and confidentiality may result in a human rights complaint. Should a breach occur, please notify the Privacy Officer, Patrick Simmons, as soon as possible, so that steps can be put in place to contain the breach and appropriate steps taken. A student may wish to share information with staff or faculty and this is the student's choice, but Columbia College staff and faculty are still required to maintain the confidentiality of that information.

Emails - One area that is subject to breach is the writing of emails. Take great care with what is stated in e-mails and the source to whom the email is addressed.

Recording information in CRS – Action Logs. Care must be taken not to reveal confidential information in the Action Logs that are available for others to read. You can note the following: "Confidential information is stored in the Registrar's office." Make a record of the information and submit the information to the Registrar's office.

Information Storage

As is the case for every student, a student with a disability will have a regular file stored in the regular file cabinets. A student's information is stored as follows:

Regular Student File:

- A copy of the Accommodation Plan
- Letter of Accommodation

Disability Services Office – Restricted Access

- Information should be kept in a separate file in the Disability Services Advisor's office and contain the following:
- Supported Medical Documentation of Disability
- Assessments from a registered professional (ie. psychologist, psychiatrist)
- Academic Accommodations Requested
- Accommodation Plan
- Letter of Accommodation

Library Services Office:

- Request for Testing Accommodations
- Request for Alternate Format Materials

Registrar's Confidential File – Restricted Access

- Confidential Information

Accessible Facilities

An access map is available on the Columbia College website and from Administration office Bldg. 802.

Doors and ramps

All the buildings used by Columbia College students for their education have access ramps. At this time there are no electronic doors. *Please note that some of the ramps are fairly steep. Since the doors are not electronic, a student using a wheelchair would have to be strong enough to open the doors. Another alternative would be to have an assistant who will open the doors for the student in a wheelchair.*

Elevators

Building 803 has an elevator that takes students up to the third floor.

Transportation

At present, the Access Calgary bus drops off and picks up students at Bldg. 802. *The implication here is that a student using a wheelchair will need to navigate through the parking lot snow and ice. It is probable that the person would need an assistant to push the wheelchair through the snow and ice.*

Accessible Handicapped Parking

All of the buildings have designated handicapped parking. A student will need to have a handicapped parking placard to hang on his/her windshield. A student would see their doctor to initiate the process of getting a disability placard through Alberta Registries. For further information, a student may visit Service Alberta's website at www.servicealberta.ca or call toll-free 310-0000.

Washrooms

All our buildings have handicapped washroom facilities.

Safewalk – Any student may request to be accompanied to their car by calling the 24 hr. security at (403)313-7709. Willowglen Security can also be called at 619-7704. Arrangements should be made ahead of time.

Emergency Evacuation: Students with physical limitations – In case of fire or other emergency, a staff member will be assigned to assist the student to exit the building as quickly as possible. *This arrangement should be made by the Disability Services Advisor and the Program Chair. Notification of the arrangement should be provided to the Facilities Manager.*

Examples of Possible Accommodations

The following are examples of accommodations and services that may be available to students with disabilities. Individually funded services means that there is a fee for this service, but is dependent on individual circumstances and needs. This type of service may be covered by applying for a grant.

Examples of Classroom Accommodations and Services

*Individually funded services

- Use of assistive devices (e.g. spell checkers, laptops for note-taking)*
- Use of oral and sign language interpreters*
- Permission to audiotape lectures (see information in this manual)
- Special seating and preferential seating location
- Access to facilitators' overheads, when available
- Extra breaks during class-time
- Use of note takers* - dependent on individual circumstances and needs
- Use of adaptive technology in the classroom and labs (scanner, screen reading software, etc.)*

Examples of Test and Exam accommodations

* Individually funded services – dependent on individual circumstances and needs

- Extra time to write tests/exams*
- Distraction-free environment*
- Exams divided into sections in order to permit breaks
- Alternate exam formats for all or portions of the exam*
- Taped test/exam*
- Oral test/exam*
- Use of assistive devices (JAWS, ZoomText, etc.)*
- Use of adaptive technology (spell checkers, calculators, computers)*
- Reader or scribe*
- Access to computer

Students, who have been granted exam reader/scribe accommodations, will be responsible for paying the reader/scribe at the time of the test/exam.

Specialized Academic Strategist Support

*Individually funded service – cost dependent on individual circumstances and need

The Academic Strategist will provide disability-related academic support for students who are registered with Disabilities Services. It may be necessary to provide additional specialized support from a program specialist where strategy implementation is needed to gain competency within a specific program. For example, the student may need both Academic Strategist support, as well as, support from a nurse facilitator in order to transfer specific strategies to gain nursing competency and skill development. The same situation may apply to any of the professional program content areas or work experience areas.

Examples of Specialized Academic Strategist Supports include:

- Individualized strategy training including special techniques for students with specialized needs
- Demonstrating and modeling of appropriate learning techniques
- Opportunities to practice strategies using actual course work
- Application of general strategies for organization, time management, test-taking, study skills, reading skills, writing skills, note-taking skills, and critical thinking skills, and concentration
- Use of adaptive technologies to support strategy development

Tutoring

*Individually funded service – cost dependent on individual circumstances and need

A student with a disability will first be asked to use the free tutoring services that the College provides. Should the student require more tutoring or intensive or specialized tutoring, the student would be responsible for payment of the tutor. The Disability Services Advisor will assist the student in finding a tutor, but if a tutor cannot be found, the student is responsible for finding a tutor.

Tutoring is available free for students enrolled in:

- English as a Second Language
- Academic Upgrading
- Integrated Training
- Practical Nurse Program & Health Care Aide Program
- Dental Assistant Professional Program
- Other professional programs – writing support on an as needed basis

Note-Taking

*Individually funded service – cost dependent on individual circumstances and need or Volunteer Services

Since the College programs are intended to prepare a student for employment, a note-taker would only be considered as an accommodation if all other avenues have been exhausted. *If a*

student does not have physical limitations, a focus would be for the student to learn a short-hand version of note-taking as a life skill.

Recruitment of a Note-Taker:

1. The Disability Services advisor will approach the class and recruit two volunteer note-takers. Two note-takers are recruited for each course. One will be the key note-taker and the other will be a back-up.
2. At the end of each class, the student will make a copy of the notes presented to him/her by the note-taker.
3. The note-taker will only take notes when the student is present in class.
4. Columbia College will be pleased to provide a letter of acknowledgement to the note-takers at the end of the semester, recognizing this volunteer contribution should the individuals be responsible, diligent and competent. The student, who is receiving the service, should inquire if the note-takers would like to receive a letter of acknowledgement. The student would then notify their Disability Services Advisor who would prepare the letter.

Guidelines for students who have been granted an accommodation of a note-taker:

- a) Be on time for class. Note-takers will not substitute for the student. If the student does not show up for the class, the note-taker will not take notes for the student. A paid note-taker who is not a member of the class will leave the class and will need to be reimbursed by the student.
- b) Provide minimum 24 hours' notice to the note-taker for absence from class. Failure to do so means that a paid-note taker will be reimbursed for the class.
- c) Meet and discuss with the paid note-taker the type of notes you want taken. i.e. bulleted style, full sentence, etc. If a volunteer note-taker is used, this may not be possible if the student is a member of the class.
- d) Students are responsible to pick up their notes from the note taker.

Obtaining Alternate Format Textbooks Materials:

*May be a funded service – dependent on individual circumstances and need

See Section 8 – Arranging for Alternate Format Materials.

Canadian copyright law permits the reproduction of published work for people with print disabilities. Print disabilities include:

- Vision loss or blindness or the inability to focus or move one's eyes
- The inability to hold or manipulate a book
- Reading disabilities

Obtaining textbooks in alternative format is a time consuming process.

If a student is blind or has dyslexia, the student can contact Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D) for access to an extensive library of textbooks on tape, as well as a recording service for new titles. Membership with RFB&D is required to access materials. The student would apply online at www.rfbd.org or telephone at 1-800-RFB-TEXT.

Adaptive Technology Training

*Individually funded service if adaptive equipment needs to be purchased.

This service provides the following:

- Demonstration and trials of adaptive technologies which address a particular learning need
- Training on specific adaptive technologies to promote learner independence

Audio Taping of Lectures

Federal and provincial legislation places an ethical and legal responsibility on all faculty and staff at Columbia College to ensure that students with disabilities are not at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to students who do not have a disability. In particular, audio taping may be an appropriate support for students where a class may have a substantial lecture component.

Permission to Audio-Record Classes:

- Permission to audio-record classes may be considered by Disability Services for students who have submitted appropriate documentation that identifies this accommodation as supportive of their disability. Permission is related to the suitability of recording information in a particular course and class.
- Students for whom this is an approved accommodation will be required to complete the **Audio-Recording Agreement Form (See Appendix)** with their Disability Services Advisor, confirming that the recording will be used exclusively for the purpose of private study by the student.
- This accommodation may not be appropriate, particularly where classes have personal discussion and self-disclosure. It is at the discretion of the Program Chair to determine if audio recording would be a suitable accommodation.
- If the accommodation is granted, the facilitator would then be responsible for indicating when the student can begin recording a lecture and when the lecture has ended. No student discussion would be allowed during the lecture.
- Violation of the agreement may result in the withdrawal of the authorization to audio-record, as well as, to a review of access to similar services in the future. Violation is viewed as an academic misconduct and subject to sanction.

Information on Various Disabilities

Adapted from:

- <http://www.ucalgary.ca>
- <http://www.mayoclinic.com>
- http://alis.alberta.ca/pdf/cshop/whatworks/ww_developmentaldisabilities.pdf

Each category provides a brief description of the disability, followed by sample accommodations. This is not meant to be an all-inclusive list.

Mobility

Some students with physical and mobility impairments may require physical accommodations such as those listed below. A mobility impairment may be a condition that affects the ability to move, ranging from lack of coordination to complete paralysis. There are many different types of mobility impairments. Some are described below:

Cerebral Palsy (CP)

In this case, parts of the brain that control and coordinate motor action are affected. In addition, hearing and sight may be impaired. It can affect one, two or even all limbs and may also affect control of the muscles used in speech. Most people with CP can handle manual or power wheelchairs, while others walk with and without mobility aids.

Multiple Sclerosis (MS)

MS is a condition that affects the nervous system. Often leg and arm movement, sight, hearing, and internal organs are affected. Students may appear well one day and be using a wheelchair the next day. Medication is used to control inflammation and pain. Students with MS often experience fatigue.

Spinal Cord Injuries

Athletic and vehicle accidents often cause spinal cord injuries. Paralysis varies with the extent of the injury. Some spinal cord injuries leave people with little feeling or movement in their lower limbs and full control over their upper body. More severe injuries cause loss of feeling and motion and usually affect bladder control. This is called paraplegia. If all four limbs are involved, this is called quadriplegia. Some students may have attendants to help them with personal needs.

Common Accommodations Include:

- Assistive technology
- Note-takers
- Scribes
- Test/Exam accommodations
- Specialized transportation (e.g. for field study or practicums)

Learning Disabilities (LD)

Learning disabilities refer to a variety of disorders that affect the acquisition, retention, understanding, organization or use of verbal and/or non-verbal information. Adults with learning disabilities manifest a significant discrepancy between their estimated learning potential and their actual performance. Often adults with LD have certain characteristics that fall into three types of areas of difficulty: (1) cognitive (2) social-interpersonal and (3) academic.

Learning disabilities are distinct from intellectual disabilities and range in severity. Often these disabilities interfere with one or more of the following important skills: oral language (e.g. listening, speaking, understanding), reading (e.g. decoding, comprehension), written language (e.g. spelling, written expression) or mathematics (e.g. computation, problem solving). Learning disabilities may also cause difficulties with organizational skills. We suggest that all students begin their year with some form of a Day-Timer or agenda, whether hard copy or electronic. Other conditions that are related to learning disabilities may be attentional conditions, behavioural and emotional disorders, sensory impairments or other medical conditions.

Cognitive Characteristics:

1. Reasoning, problems with

- a) Logical reasoning and abstract thinking
- b) Organization of information, i.e. Dealing with distractions, asking questions, posing hypotheses, evaluation information
- c) Non-verbal and spatial temporal reasoning
- d) Slow rate of comprehension

2. Memory, deficits in

- a) Short-term auditory memory, particularly
 - a) Ability to code, recode, and recall information to benefit from explicit feedback

3. Problem Solving

- a) Few strategies to improve memory or to solve problems generally
- b) Perseverative, disinhibited, and qualitatively different approaches to problem solving

4. Language

- a) Difficulty in phonemic discrimination, particularly when words are lexically unfamiliar and multi-syllabic
- b) Difficulty with sound blending and phonemic segmentation
- c) Immature syntactical patterns and restricted and imprecise vocabulary
- d) Problems with oral formation and written language
- e) Little variety in sentence structure and overuse of simple sentences

5. General Cognitive Problems

- a) Poor fund of general knowledge
- b) Poor attention span
- c) Difficulty sequencing events and ideas

- d) Poor ability to distinguish important from unimportant information
- e) Poor ability to organize ideas and information
- f) Poor ability to generalize from one situation to another
- g) Poor ability to switch strategies
- h) Poor ability to spontaneously employ cognitive strategies

Social-Interpersonal Characteristics

- Common accommodations:
 - Alternate format materials – CD, audiotape, e-books
 - Copies of overheads, lecture notes
 - Audio taping of lectures
 - Assistive technology and training
 - Note-takers/scribes
 - Print materials on alternate format (e.g. texts on audiotape)
 - Test/Exam accommodations (i.e. audio format); extra time for quizzes, exams - compensates for slower reading rates, difficulties in comprehension of written materials, slower information processing, or difficulties with organizing and expressing ideas
 - Preferential seating
 - Academic strategist support in the areas of note-taking, reading a textbook, organizing and writing a research paper, studying and writing exams

Developmental Disabilities

A developmental disability is defined as a “state of functioning that begins in childhood and is characterized by significant limitations in both intellectual capacity and adaptive skills.” Developmental disabilities may be synonymous with terms such as learning disability, cognitive disability, intellectual disability, mental retardation and mental handicap.

Three criteria to determining developmental disability:

1. Significantly below average intellectual capability based on administered intelligence testing
2. Beginning prior to age 18
3. Limitations in two or more of the following adaptive skills:
 - Communication
 - Home living
 - Community Use
 - Health and Leisure
 - Self-Care

- Social Skills
- Self-Direction
- Functional Academics
- Work

Types of Developmental Disorders

- General Developmental Disability
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (Autistic disorder and Asperger disorder)
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Characteristics

- Limited intellectual capacity
- Slower to learn and prefer reliability and consistency
- Simple, unsophisticated understanding of things
- Benefit from informal training or learning through active participation in real-life activities

Common Accommodations

- Use of spell/grammar check checker
- Written information on audiotape
- Memory aids including notes and Powerpoint slides
- Computers with synthesized speech
- Use voice input on computer
- Use of voice activated recorder to record verbal instructions
- Provide ample space on quizzes/exams requiring written response

Attention Disorders

Some students have been diagnosed with attention disorders such as ADHD (attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder). Students with this neurological disorder will typically have difficulty sustaining attention. They may also present as impulsive, easily distractible, and restless. Two other areas of possible difficulty are time management and organization. This could appear to be a difficulty with being on time for classes and exams and getting assignments in on time. These students may need reminders about deadlines.

Common accommodations:

- Academic Strategist Support - help with increasing self-awareness, coaching for support with organization and time management, learning metacognitive strategies, using accommodation
- Preferential seating at front of class in order to minimize distraction and assist the student in focusing

- Test/Exam accommodations, including extra time and/or exams in a distraction-free room – the use of a distraction-free environment for writing tests and exams is often a major accommodation for students with ADHD
- Permission to record lectures
- Assistive Technology and Training
- Use of audio systems to reduce environmental distractors
- Extra breaks, moving around to help with refocusing

Deaf or Hard of Hearing

A hearing impairment is a condition involving the entire range of hearing loss. Deafness refers to a severe hearing loss and the person may use sign language, speech reading and other non-verbal means of communication. Hard of hearing refers to a less severe condition of hearing loss.

It is not uncommon to encounter people who are hard of hearing using sign language or people who are deaf using oral communication. Students who are deaf or hearing-impaired may lip-read, rely on amplification devices, and/or use sign language interpreters in the classroom. The communication system the student uses should be available in all areas of learning.

Please note that It can be difficult to identify a person with a hearing loss if it has not been identified by the student.

Common accommodations:

- Interpreting services
- CART services (Communication Access as Real-Time)
- Amplification systems
- Tutoring or scribe services
- Provision of all assignments in written format
- Test/Exam accommodations
- Closed captioned films
- Preferential seating – regarding need for lip-reading or to control noises that interfere with amplification (papers shuffling, drinking, eating etc.)

Tips for facilitators who have students who are lip reading:

- Do not obscure your face with your hands or other objects. Speak directly to the class or person when possible.
- Do not pace or step from side to side while speaking.
- Avoid incomplete sentences, colloquialisms and slang.
- Avoid prolonged pauses in your sentences.
- Do not exaggerate the speed or enunciation of your speech as this distorts the lip patterns.

- Repeat and then paraphrase if the student does not understand.

Use of sign language interpreters:

- The sign language interpreter lags slightly behind the speaker and any comment by the student is also a few minutes behind. Give time for catch-up before moving to the next topic.
- Most students who are lip-reading or watching an interpreter cannot take notes.

Mental Health

Some students have been diagnosed with psychiatric disabilities such as anxiety disorders, depression, bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia. Usually, these students are receiving outside medical support.

Although mental illness is not an intellectual disability, symptoms can affect academic performance. Some possible areas of difficulty may be:

- Fear of authority
- Difficulty with concentration
- Difficulty screening out environmental stimuli
- Fatigue
- Reclusiveness, difficulty working with others
- Time management and deadlines
- Inability to tolerate noise and crowds
- Difficulty focusing on multiple tasks simultaneously
- Extreme reaction to negative feedback
- Noticeable anxiety and confusion when given verbal instructions
- Limited ability to tolerate interruptions
- Absence, lack of punctuality

Common accommodations:

- Test/Exam accommodations, often the use of a distraction-free environment and extended time on exams
- Use of tape/digital recorder in class
- Accommodations regarding timelines for assignments as a result of periods of illness
- Accommodations for attendance or lates

Supports:

- Personal Development Coaching
- Stress Management Training
- Assistance with prioritizing study time

- Time management and study skills training
- Advocacy

Visual Impairment

Visual impairment reflects a range of vision from legal blindness to impairments such as color blindness, tunnel vision, night blindness, and a lack of visual acuity. Legal blindness in Canada is defined as a range of vision from the perception of light up to 10 percent vision. Those who have residual vision prefer to be called visually impaired or partially sighted. Some people are born blind, but the majority of persons who are blind have acquired sight problems as adults. Students may use a white cane or a guide dog for mobility.

Common accommodations:

- Alternate format material (Braille, CD, enlarged print, audio-taped)
- Preferential seating in class
- Note-taker or scribe
- Audio taping of lecturers
- Visual aid software, Braille, magnifier or other assistive devices
- Test/Exam accommodations
- Voice recognition software, scanner or other assistive technology
- Extra breaks to avoid eyestrain

Tips for facilitators:

- Visual aids should be accompanied by verbal descriptions to ensure full understanding of the content.
- Avoid saying “this” or “that” while pointing to a part of a diagram.
- Be clear in your speech as blind students cannot rely on body language, gestures or facial expressions to gain meaning.

Etiquette When Meeting a Person Who is Blind or Partially Sighted

- Ask the individual if you can help and if so how.
- Guide a person by allowing him/her to take your elbow.
- Speak directly to the person.
- Make note of obstacles or landmarks.
- Try using a clock reference to describe locations (e.g. the door is at three o'clock for you).
- If others join in discussion, introduce them.
- Don't leave without giving an indication that you are going to do so.
- Never pet or talk to a service animal while it is “working”.

- If you are passing a visually impaired student in the hall and wish to say “hello” in passing, remember to identify yourself (e.g. “Hi Amber, its Jessica.”)

Adapted from the Glenn Crombie Centre:

<http://homepages.cambrianc.on.ca/snrrc/etiquet/etiquet.htm>

Epilepsy

Epilepsy is a disorder that results from the generation of electrical signals inside the brain, causing recurring seizures. Seizure symptoms vary. Some people with epilepsy simply stare blankly for a few seconds during a seizure, while others have full-fledged convulsions. (Mayo Clinic)

While students with epilepsy usually take medication to control seizure activity, there still remains a chance that a student may experience a seizure.

Sensitivities and Allergies

Chronic hypersensitivities to environmental substances (synthetic or natural) and severe allergies can cause difficulties in breathing, asthma attacks or severe congestion. A wide range of other reactions are also possible. Students with specific problems must avoid situations or conditions that affect them. This may mean having a scent-free environment in class. The student should be referred to Disability Services.

Funding for Students with Disabilities

If a student has a documented disability, he/she may be eligible for government funding for assistive services (examples include tutoring, note-taking, interpretation, assistive technology and other such supports). For students who are transitioning from high school to a college education, it is important that students understand that individual learning supports have a cost attached to them and these are not funded in the same way as they were when the individual was in school. In the high school environment, the student supports were planned by the school in conjunction with the government. The student would come to school and an educational assistant would have everything ready. In post-secondary, the student must take responsibility for active involvement in planning and taking charge of for his/her education.

Funding for the cost of disability related supports can come from a variety of sources including Workers Compensation Board, private insurance companies, Canada Student Loan or provincial government disability services. Grants are sources of funding that do not have to be paid back. Student Loans have to be paid back, but there are grants and bursaries built in that do not have to be paid back.

In general, if a student is applying for **Canada Student Loans**, he/she may be eligible to access the Canada Student Grant. Information and instructions are on the back of "Schedule 4" of the Student Loan Application.

If a student is not eligible for Canada Student Loans, he/she may be eligible for funding from provincial services. In Alberta, services may be covered by **DRES (Disability Related Employment Supports) funding**, which can be accessed through Alberta Human Services. A learner with a disability must apply for a Canada Student Loan and the Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Persons with Permanent Disabilities if the program of study is designated for loan funding. Columbia College's professional programs are all eligible for Student Loan Funding. Pre-Career programs AU, ESL and Integrated Training are not eligible for Student Loans. All sources of funding must be accessed before applying for DRES.

In addition to the available types of post-secondary funding, a student with a documented disability may be eligible to receive the following funding:

- *Canada Student Grant for Persons with Permanent Disabilities
 - Up to \$2,000 per year to help with costs of accommodations, tuition, and books and/or
- *Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Persons with Permanent Disabilities
 - Up to \$8,000 per year and having exceptional education-relation costs such as tutors, note-takers, interpreters, brailers or technical aids and/or
- Alberta Grants for Students with Permanent Disabilities
 - Up to \$3,000 per year for students not eligible for federal funding

*These two grants are available for full-time and part-time post-secondary students.

Students may also apply for the Alberta Skills Investment Grants to cover their education and living costs. Students must meet eligibility criteria.

The student would meet with the Disability Services Advisor who would work with the student to create a suitable proposal for an external funding agency. The proposal outlines the student's needs and the estimated costs. In some cases, written price quotes and product descriptions must be obtained.

Disabilities

ALIS: Accommodations – Working with Your Disabilities
<http://www.alis.alberta.ca/ep/eps/tips/tips.html?EK=165>

ALIS: What to Say About Your Disability – and When
<http://www.alis.alberta.ca/ep/eps/tips/tips.html?EK=163>

ALIS: Succeeding in the Workplace as a Person With a Disability
<http://www.alis.alberta.ca/ep/eps/tips/tips.html?EK=162>

The Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work – a resource on employment diversity
<http://www.workink.com/>

National Educational Association of Disabled Students
<http://www.neads.ca/en/>

Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta
<http://www.ldaa.ca/>

LD Online
<http://www.ldonline.org/>

Attention Deficit Disorder Association
<http://www.add.org/>

Learning Disabilities Association of Canada
<http://www.ldac-taac.ca/index-e.asp>

Canadian Mental Health Association
<http://www.cmha.ca/youreducation/introduction.html>

Policies/Legislation

Alberta Human Rights Commission (Sept. 2010), Interpretive Bulletin: “Duty to accommodate student with disabilities in post-secondary educational institutions.”
http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca./Bull_Duty_to_accom_students.pdf

Alberta Human Rights Act
<http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca./about/legislation.asp>

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA)

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP)

Funding

Alberta Human Services – Disability Related Employment Supports
<http://www.employent.alberta.ca/AWonline/ETS/4345.html>

Canada Study Grant
http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/en/goc/accommodation_disabilities.shtml

Student Funding Contact Centre
www.alis.gov.ab.ca

National Student Loans Service Centre
www.canlearn.ca

Learning Strategies

Successful Strategies for Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities
<http://www.ldaamerica.org/aboutld/teaches/understanding/strategies.asp>

For Teachers –Information on teaching students with disabilities
<http://www.ldanatl.org/aboutld/teacher/index.asp>

Learning Strategies for students with Learning Disabilities
<http://www.nichcy.org/pubs/bibliog/bib14txt.htm>

The Learning Toolbox – for teachers, students and parents
<http://coe.jmu.edu/Learningtoolbo/>

Learning Strategies Database
<http://www.muskingum.edu/~cal/database/general/memory.html>

Learning Strategies Handouts
<http://www.cla.purdue.edu/asc/studentsupport/handouts/>

Assistive Technology

Aroga
<http://www.aroga.com/contact.asp>

<http://www.humanware.com/en-canada/home>

Other

<http://www.accd.net/Alberta> Committee of Citizens with Disabilities

<http://www.disabilityresources.org/> Disability Resources on the Internet is an excellent searchable database

<http://www.enablelink.org/> EnableLink links to over 5000 Canadian disability organizations, as well as, to international resources. There is also a section on employment related sites.

<http://www.neads.ca/> NEADS (National Educational Association of Disabled Students)
“advocating for full access to postsecondary education and employment opportunities to serve Canadians”

<http://www.pwd-online.vs/en/home.jsp> Government of Canada site for persons with disabilities

Words with Dignity

People with a disability can and should be described in words and expressions that portray them in an appropriate, positive and sensitive manner. The following guidelines are suggested/preferred by some 200 organizations that represent or are associated with Canadians with a disability. Avoid images designed to evoke pity or guilt.

Please remember: Describe the person, not the disability; refer to a person's disability only when it is relevant.

If in doubt, ask. People with a disability will be more than willing to help.

Instead of...	Use...
Disabled or	Person with a disability
(the) disabled	People or persons with disabilities
Invalid	Person with a disability
Crippled by, afflicted with, or suffers from...	Person who has... or person with ...
Physically challenged	Person with a disability
Victim, sufferer	Person with a disability
Cripple	Person with a disability
Lame	Limited mobility
Mobility impaired	Limited mobility
Confined, bound, restricted or dependent on a wheelchair	Wheelchair user
Normal	Able-bodied or non-disabled
Deaf and dumb, deaf mute	Person who is hard of hearing or deaf
Hearing impaired	Person who is hard of hearing or deaf
Retarded, mentally retarded, person with a mental handicap,	Person with an intellectual disability or person with a developmental disability
Spastic (as a noun)	Person with Cerebral Palsy
Deformed, congenital defect	A person born with...
Visually impaired	Blind or partially sighted

The terms paraplegic, quadriplegic and amputee are used and accepted by persons with those disabilities.

Compiled by: ACTIVE LIVING ALLIANCE FOR CANADIANS WITH A DISABILITY
 Supported by: Fitness Canada Government of Canada Fitness and Amateur Sport; Government du Canada Condition physique et Sport amateur.

For those who can read and write large print without too much eye fatigue.

Some Guidelines for Making Print Easier to Read

1. Printed materials can be made easier to read by producing them using appropriate styles and sizes of type fonts, spacing of lines, spacing of characters, and contrast.
2. Copy machines should not be used to prepare printed materials for visually-impaired students because they do not have the capacity to reformat the print to meet specific needs beyond simple enlargement. Moreover, they often produce blurry or grainy or faint images of the text.
3. The variety of styles and sizes of fonts available on today's computers make it easy to provide print tailored to the specific needs of each individual.
 - a) Font Styles
 - Choose a font with easily recognizable characters, either Roman or Sans Serif fonts. A good choice is the sans serif style, Arial.
 - In general, avoid bold type. Very many people with low vision find bold letters difficult to read. But, some people prefer bold type because the thickness of the letters makes the print more legible to them.
 - Avoid using italics, and capitalizing all the letters in a word. Both these forms of print make it more difficult for many people with low vision to differentiate among letters.
 - Avoid decorative, script, and display fonts, because they are almost always a problem for low-vision print users.
 - b) Print Sizes
 - Some people find large print easiest to read. Those who need to use large print often find 20 point best for the main part of texts. But some will benefit from smaller or larger sizes.
 - Not everyone finds that large print helps them read more easily. For example, people who have limited peripheral or limited central vision, sometimes benefit more from a simple, clear font than from large print. People with conditions that restrict their field of view, sometimes feel most comfortable with enhanced print with a size of 13 points.
 - c) Use of Colour
 - The use of different coloured lettering for heading and emphasis is difficult to read for many people with low vision. If you need to use colours other than black for lettering, it is generally best to use dark blues or dark greens. When preparing print materials for a specific individual with a visual impairment, check to find out if there are any specific colours that are difficult for that person to see or distinguish from each other. You should also check to find out if there are any specific colours that are especially easy for that person to see or most easily distinguish from each other.
 - d) Contrast

- Contrast is one of the most important factors in making print materials readable. Some electronic visual aids help to enhance contrast in a variety of ways that can be adjusted by the user. When printing text on paper, you should use the clearest contrast, by the juxtaposition of the greatest possible saturation with the least amount of any colour whatsoever, and juxtaposition of clearly different colours.
- e) Paper Quality and Colour
- Avoid using glossy finish paper such as that typically used in magazines and some journals. Glossy pages create glare, which adds to difficulty in reading for many people who have low vision. Although white paper is best for most readers, there are some for whom various pastel paper colours greatly enhance readability and reduce eye fatigue. Students can be shown the same text printed on papers of various colours to determine if using one specific coloured paper can optimize their reading experience and literacy acquisition process.
- f) Space Between Lines of Text
- Some people who are visually impaired have difficulty finding the beginning of the next line when single spacing is used. This can be alleviated by adjusting the spacing from the bottom of the letters on one line to the bottom of the letters on the next line of text to 1.5 times the height of the letters. Another way to deal with this problem is to use single spacing with shorter lines of print, most typically by using wider margins.
- g) Spacing Between Letters
- Normal letter spacing is useful for many low-vision readers. Never use condensed fonts or reduced letter spacing, as it greatly reduces legibility for all readers. Expanded fonts or expanded letter spacing can cause problems for some low-vision readers, and so should be used only for those students who you know for use they help.
- h) Margins
- Many low vision devices, are easiest to use on a flat surface. A wide binding margin makes it easier to hold the material flat while keeping all text visible. A minimum of one inch should be used; one and a half inches is preferable.

Kaizen Program for New English Learners with Visual Limitation, (2004). How to Make Print More Readable for People with Visual Limitations. Workshop document; Seattle, USA.

- **Audio Recording Agreement**
- **Disability Services Registration Form**
- **Request for Alternate Format Materials**
- **Request for Testing Accommodations**
- **Student Conduct Regarding Exams**