

## Guidebook for Students with Disabilities

### Contents:

- Guidebook Purpose
- Legal Mandates
- Eligibility
- Definition of a Disability
- Procedure for Students Seeking Accommodations
- Categories of Disabilities
- Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
- Psychological Disabilities
- Medical Disabilities
- Hearing Impairments
- Visual Impairments
- Speech Impairments
- Mobility and Dexterity Disabilities
- 504 Letter and Accommodations
- Kinds of Accommodations
  - Extended time on tests
  - Minimal-distraction testing environment outside of the classroom
  - Use of student-owned computer with spell check for in-class tests and essays
  - Use of 4-function calculator
  - Permission to tape lectures
  - Assistance with note-taking
  - Tests in large print
  - Audio textbooks
  - Accessibility
- Faculty Referrals
- Issues and Answers
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Adapting Emergency Procedures for Individuals with Disabilities
- Student Grievance Procedures for Individuals with Disabilities
- Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities

This guidebook is based on St. Edward's University's Faculty Guidebook for Students with Disabilities. Lorrain Perea, MEd. LPC, Coordinator of Student Disabilities Services in Academic Planning and Support, granted permission to do so.

The sections on mobility and dexterity, speech impairments and student grievance procedure are based on The University of Notre Dame's Students with Disabilities. Scott Howland, Program Coordinator for Students with Disabilities, granted permission to do so.

The sections on The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and hidden disabilities were adapted from the Office for Civil Rights of the United States Department of Education.

The section on adapting emergency procedures for individuals with disabilities is based on Adapting Emergency Procedures for Individuals with Disabilities by Mary Farrell, Ph.D., published by the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD). Richard Allegra, Associate Executive Director, granted permission to do so.

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# HOLY CROSS COLLEGE

at Notre Dame, Indiana

Dear Faculty, Staff, and Students:

Holy Cross College's mission statement recognizes and values a diversity of backgrounds among its students. We accommodate a broad spectrum of needs, interests and backgrounds with a challenging and supportive environment. Holy Cross College affirms that all students are valued members of the College's community, and we strive to provide the same access to programs and activities to students with disabilities.

This Guidebook should be used to directly support the efforts by Academic Support Services to remove any existing barriers, whether physical, programmatic, or attitudinal through the cooperation of all associated with Holy Cross College. This guide will foster better communication among students, faculty, and staff and facilitate the learning of those for whom accommodations are appropriate.

Sincerely,

Thomas DeHorn  
Director of Counseling and Health

## **Holy Cross College**

To meet the standards set forth by our Mission Statement and in compliance with the legal requirements of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Director of Counseling and Health at Holy Cross College determines appropriate accommodations for all qualifying students with disabilities. The Director of Counseling and Health provides counsel and advocacy to students and works to promote the development of personal independence and self-reliance.

### **THE LAW**

Holy Cross College has a responsibility to individuals with disabilities as mandated by federal laws such as the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). It is the focus of the Director of Counseling and Health to address procedures and practices which impact students with disabilities.

The law states that an institution cannot discriminate in the recruitment, admission, educational process, or treatment of students with disabilities. Students who have voluntarily disclosed that they have a disability (self-identified), provided documentation of the disability, and requested accommodations are entitled to receive: approved, reasonable modification of programs; appropriate academic adjustments; and proper auxiliary aids. These accommodations allow students to participate in and benefit from all of the educational programs and extracurricular activities at Holy Cross College.

### **The Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was the first “civil rights” legislation to prohibit discrimination against people with disabilities. This law applied to programs conducted by federal agencies, those receiving federal funds such as college participation in federal student programs, federal employment, and employment practices of businesses with federal contracts. The standards for determining employment discrimination under the Rehabilitation Act are the same as those used in Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provides for “reasonable accommodations” for qualified individuals and requires that these persons not be excluded from, denied access to, or subjected to discrimination under any program. Agencies that provide financial assistance are governed by regulations covering all entities that receive federal aid. In addition to reasonable accommodations, Section 504 requires access to participation in all programs, facilitates communication for people with hearing or visual disabilities, and provides accessible construction and alterations in physical facilities.

The Section 504 regulation defines a qualified individual with handicaps for postsecondary education programs as a person with a handicap who meets the academic and technical standards requisite for admission to, or participation in, the college's education program or activity.

A college has no obligation to identify students with handicaps. In fact, Section 504 prohibits a postsecondary education recipient from making a preadmission inquiry as to whether an applicant for admission is a handicapped person. However, a postsecondary institution is required to inform applicants and other interested parties of the availability of auxiliary aids, services, and academic adjustments, and the name of the person designated to coordinate the college's efforts to carry out the requirements of Section 504. After admission (including the period between admission and enrollment), the college may make confidential inquiries as to whether a person has a handicap for the purpose of determining whether certain academic adjustments or auxiliary aids or services may be needed.

Many students with disabilities, seeking college degrees, were provided with special education services during their elementary and secondary school years. It is especially important for these students to understand that postsecondary institutions also have responsibilities to protect the rights of students with disabilities. In elementary and secondary school, their school district was responsible for identifying,

evaluating, and providing individualized special education and related services to meet their needs. At the postsecondary level, however, there are some important differences. The key provisions of Section 504 at the postsecondary level are highlighted below.

At the postsecondary level it is the student's responsibility to make his or her handicapping condition known and to request academic adjustments. This should be done in a timely manner. A student who requests academic adjustments or auxiliary aids because of a handicapping condition may be requested by the institution to provide documentation of the handicap and the need for the services requested. This may be especially important to an institution attempting to understand the nature and extent of a hidden disability.

The requested documentation may include the results of medical, psychological, or emotional diagnostic tests, or other professional evaluations to verify the need for academic adjustments or auxiliary aids.

### **The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)**

According to the ADA, "no qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by such entity."

ADA is the civil rights guarantee for persons with disabilities in the United States whether or not they are citizens and without regard to racial or ethnic origin. International students with disabilities are entitled to any and all of the same services and support provided by law to any other student with a disability enrolled in a program of higher education in this country. ADA provides protection from discrimination for individuals on the basis of disability. The ADA extends civil rights protections for people with disabilities to employment in the public and private sectors, transportation, public accommodations, services provided by state and local government, and telecommunication relay services.

### **The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Amendments Act Of 2008**

On September 25, 2008, the President signed the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 ("ADA Amendments Act" or "Act"). The Act makes important changes to the definition of the term "disability" by rejecting the holdings in several Supreme Court decisions and portions of ADA regulations. The Act retains the ADA's basic definition of "disability" as an impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment. However, it changes the way that these statutory terms should be interpreted in several ways. Most significantly, the Act:

- expands the definition of "major life activities" by including two non-exhaustive lists:
  1. the first list includes many activities that were not specifically recognized (e.g., reading, bending, and communicating);
  2. the second list includes major bodily functions (e.g., "functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions");
- states that mitigating measures other than "ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses" shall not be considered in assessing whether an individual has a disability;
- clarifies that an impairment that is episodic or in remission is a disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active;
- provides that an individual subjected to an action prohibited by the ADA because of an actual or perceived impairment will meet the "regarded as" definition of disability, unless the impairment is transitory and minor;
- provides that individuals covered only under the "regarded as" prong are not entitled to reasonable accommodation; and
- emphasizes that the definition of "disability" should be interpreted broadly.

## ELIGIBILITY

**Students with disabilities have met the same admission standards as non-disabled students. Holy Cross College cannot limit the number of qualified students with disabilities admitted to the college.**

**Qualifying:** A student is eligible for accommodations when qualifying criteria set forth by the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), with support from the U.S. Department of Justice, have been met. Adequate information from a licensed professional qualified to diagnose the particular disability must be presented to the Director of Counseling and Health. Accommodations are then determined based on the individual needs of students and the recommendations of the documentation.

**Identifying:** Although students are legally entitled to request accommodations at any time during the semester, faculty members are encouraged to help identify students as soon as possible.

**Confidentiality:** All documentation of a disability is treated as a confidential medical record. These records are maintained and kept with the DSC confidential files until the student leaves Holy Cross College.

## DEFINITION OF A DISABILITY

Under the ADA and according to the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), a “person with a disability” is someone with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits or materially restricts one or more major life activities. A person is considered to be a person with a disability if s/he has the disability, has a record of the disability, or is regarded as having the disability. An impairment does not have to limit or be perceived to limit a major life activity for a person to meet this definition. Impairments that are transitory and minor are not included in this definition. A transitory impairment is a condition with an actual or expected duration of no more than six months.

**“Physical Impairment”** means any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the major bodily functions including functions of the immune system; normal cell growth; and digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain respiratory, circulatory, endocrine and reproductive functions.

**“Mental Impairment”** means any psychological disorder, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, specific learning disabilities, mental retardation, and any psychological disorder as diagnosed by a licensed professional using the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders — Fifth Edition (DSM-V).

**“Substantially Limits”** means unable to perform a major life activity or significantly restricted as to the condition, manner, or duration under which a major life activity can be performed. This is in comparison to the average person or to most people; the availability of some mitigating measure (such as a hearing aid for someone with a hearing loss that brings hearing acuity within normal limits) is not to be considered when determining if the disability substantially limits the individual.

**“Major Life Activity”** means functions such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, eating, sleeping, hearing, speaking, standing, lifting, bending, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating and working. The impairment must be severe enough to result in substantial limitation of one or more life activities. Impairments that do not affect a major life activity do not qualify. Assessment of whether a person has a disability is made without regard to availability of a reasonable accommodation, assistive technology, learned behavior, adaptive neurological modifications, or auxiliary aids or services.

## Hidden Disabilities

Hidden disabilities are physical or mental impairments that are not readily apparent to others. They include such conditions and diseases as specific learning disabilities, diabetes, epilepsy, and allergy. A disability such as a limp, paralysis, total blindness or deafness is usually obvious to others. But hidden disabilities such as low vision, poor hearing, heart disease, or chronic illness may not be obvious. A chronic illness involves a recurring and long-term disability such as diabetes, heart disease, kidney and liver disease, high blood pressure, or ulcers.

The following examples illustrate how Holy Cross College can address the needs of students with hidden disabilities.

- A student with a long-term, debilitating medical problem such as cancer, kidney disease, or diabetes may be given special consideration to accommodate the student's needs. For example, a student with cancer may need a class schedule that allows for rest and recuperation following chemotherapy.
- A student with a learning disability that affects the ability to demonstrate knowledge on a standardized test or in certain testing situations may require modified test arrangements, such as oral testing or different testing formats.
- A student with a learning disability or impaired vision that affects the ability to take notes in class may need a note taker or tape recorder.
- A student with a chronic medical problem such as kidney or liver disease may have difficulty in walking distances or climbing stairs. Under Section 504, this student may require special parking space, sufficient time between classes, or other considerations, to conserve the student's energy for academic pursuits.
- A student with diabetes, which adversely affects the body's ability to manufacture insulin, may need a class schedule that will accommodate the student's special needs.
- An emotionally or mentally ill student may need an adjusted class schedule to allow time for regular counseling or therapy.
- A student with epilepsy who has no control over seizures, and whose seizures are stimulated by stress or tension, may need accommodation for a stressful activity such as lengthy academic testing.

These are just a few examples of how the needs of students with hidden disabilities may be addressed.

## PROCEDURE FOR STUDENTS SEEKING ACCOMMODATIONS

Holy Cross College recognizes that many students with learning, psychological, or medical disabilities, or an attention disorder can succeed in college if they are provided support services and appropriate accommodations. Holy Cross College provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities to help them meet academic requirements and to ensure that they have access to campus life.

### ***To obtain accommodations, students must:***

**1. Submit documentation of a disability.** If submitting a prior evaluation, full documentation completed within the past three years is required. The evaluation must include a specific diagnosis and the evidence that supports that diagnosis (including test results where appropriate), and must make specific recommendations for accommodation. The evaluator must be a professional qualified to diagnose a disability including but not limited to a licensed psychologist, psychiatrist, a neurologist, or in some cases, general practice physicians. The diagnosing professional must have expertise in the differential diagnosis of the documented mental disorders and follow established practices.

**2. Specify the kinds of accommodations that they are requesting.** These accommodations must be consistent with your evaluator's recommendations. Students must complete and submit a Request for Accommodation (below).

The Director of Counseling and Health will review your request form. Holy Cross College reserves the right to deny your request if the diagnosis is not adequately supported or properly documented. In some cases, the college may ask you to submit additional information. The Director will inform you of the outcome of the college's assessment. Once the college approves an evaluation, it will be recognized for three years after the date of the evaluation.



# HOLY CROSS COLLEGE

at Notre Dame, Indiana

## Request for Accommodations Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

1. If you have been diagnosed as having a disability that requires special accommodations in an academic setting, please complete this request form for accommodations.
2. To qualify for accommodations, a copy of a recent evaluation (completed within the past three years) that documents necessary academic accommodations must be submitted.
3. Prescribed recommendations for accommodations should also be submitted with this form.
4. You must meet with the Director of Counseling and Health at the beginning of each semester in order for the accommodations to be sent to all of your professors.

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**Briefly describe the condition that qualifies you for accommodations:**

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**Mark the following accommodations that you are requesting:**

- Extended test time on exams and quizzes
- Minimal-distraction testing environment outside of classroom
- Use of student-owned word processor with spell checker for tests, writing assignments, taking notes, etc
- Use of four-function calculator
- Tape recording of classes by student
- Assistance with taking notes
- Large print on handouts and test materials
- Audio textbooks
- Wheelchair space

**List additional accommodations that you are requesting:**

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*I acknowledge that by requesting accommodations, I am authorizing the Director of Counseling and Health to contact and discuss information relevant to my recommended accommodations with faculty and staff who have a need to know. I understand that, as with all Holy Cross College activities, I am required to comply with the Student Conduct Code which "presumes a high moral character and an attitude of self-respect" and discourages "dishonesty such as cheating of all kinds [including]...knowingly furnishing false information to the College."*

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(Signature of Applicant)

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(Date)

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## CATEGORIES OF DISABILITIES

All disabilities fall into three broad categories: educational, medical or psychological. According to national 1998 statistics, approximately one of eleven full-time college freshmen reported having a disability of some kind.

### Learning Disabilities

Learning disability is a general term that refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning, or mathematical skills. These disorders are intrinsic to the individual, presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction, and may occur across the life span. Problems in self-regulatory behaviors, social perception, and social interaction may exist with learning disabilities but do not, by themselves, constitute a learning disability. Although learning disabilities may occur concomitantly with other disabilities, or with extrinsic influences, they are not the result of those conditions or influences (NJCLD: 1990).

*A Learning Disability is:*

- **Individual-specific.** These are commonly recognized as affecting performance in basic academic functions. Less frequent, but no less troublesome, are problems in organizational skills, time management, and social skills. Many adults with LD may also have language-based and/or perceptual problems.
- **Like interference on the radio or a fuzzy TV picture,** incoming or outgoing information may become scrambled as it travels among the eye, ear, or skin and the brain.
- **Often inconsistent.** It may present problems on Mondays but not on Tuesdays. It may cause problems throughout grade school, seem to disappear during high school, and then resurface again in college. It may manifest itself in only specific areas, such as math or foreign language.
- **Frustrating!** Persons with learning disabilities often have to deal not only with functional limitation, but also with the frustration of having to “prove” that their invisible disabilities may be as problematic as physical disabilities.

*A Learning Disability is **NOT**:*

- A form of mental retardation or an emotional disorder. In fact, the marked discrepancy between intellectual capacity and achievement is what characterizes a learning disability.

### **Characteristics of a Learning Disability**

Remember that each student has deficits in some of these skills. Each deficit may occur in a very mild form or a more severe form.

- Reading skills
- Oral language skills
- Written language skills
- Mathematical skills
- Organizational and study skills
- Social skills

***Suggested Tips for Instructors:***

- Select a well-written textbook. Try to choose one with a study guide or provide your own study guide and sample questions.
- Provide students with a detailed course syllabus early. It is the responsibility of the student to make sure s/he contacts all available resources to obtain the proper materials.
- Make all expectations of the class clear (e.g., grading criteria, materials to be covered, due dates, and test dates). Give assignments both orally and in writing to avoid confusion.
- Present new or technical vocabulary visually (e.g., handout, overhead, or board) and use in context for clarity of proper use.
- Allow students with learning disabilities to demonstrate mastery of course materials using alternative methods when applicable.
- Encourage students to use available campus support services.
- Copies of overhead materials, lecture notes, and expanded syllabi in hard copy or electronic formats can be very helpful to students.

***Students with Learning Disabilities may qualify for these accommodations:***

- Reduced course load
- Exam accommodations
- Audio textbooks
- Assistance with taking notes
- Tape record lectures

**Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder**

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit with Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a neurobiological disorder that interferes with a person's ability to sustain attention or focus on a task or delay impulsive behavior. Its core symptoms are inattention, impulsivity, and over-activity.

***Characteristics of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder:***

ADD/ADHD is characterized by varying degrees of difficulty within these symptoms:

- attention span
- impulse control
- hyperactivity (may or may not be present)

***Associated difficulties include:***

- Distractibility
- Memory problems
- Disorganization
- Procrastination
- Chronic boredom Low self-esteem

- Chronic lateness Restlessness
- Depression
- Mood swings
- Anxiety
- Relationship problems
- Poor social skills Underachievement
- Employment problems

***Students with ADHD may qualify for these accommodations:***

- Assignments and multi-step instructions in written as well as verbal form
- Reduced course load
- Exam accommodations
- Tape record lectures

**Documentation of a Learning Disability (LD), Attention-Deficit Disorder (ADD), or Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)**

In order for Holy Cross College to provide disability-related services, the Coordinator of Disability Services needs to establish that this student has a disability under Indiana law, which defines a disability as an impairment that limits a major life activity.

***Qualifications of the Evaluator***

Professionals conducting assessments, rendering diagnoses of learning disabilities or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and making recommendations for appropriate accommodations must be qualified to do so. For example, the following professionals would generally be considered qualified to evaluate specific learning disabilities: clinical, counseling, or educational psychologists, school psychologists, neurologists, learning disabilities specialists, medical doctors, or other appropriate specialists.

***Documentation***

The provision of all reasonable accommodations and services is based upon assessment of the impact of the student's ADD, ADHD or LD on his or her academic performance at a given time in the student's life. Therefore, documentation verifying this must be current (i.e. within the last three years). Documentation should validate the need for services based on the individual's current level of functioning in the educational setting. A school plan such as an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a 504 plan is insufficient documentation, but it can be included as part of a more comprehensive assessment battery.

***Substantiation of a Learning Disability***

The evaluation for the diagnosis of ADD, ADHD or a specific learning disability must provide clear and specific evidence that ADD, ADHD or a learning disability does exist.

A diagnostic summary based on a comprehensive evaluation process is a necessary component of the report. The clinical summary should include:

1. demonstration of the evaluator's having ruled out alternative explanations for academic problems as a result of poor education, poor motivation and/or study skills, emotional problems, behavioral problems and cultural language differences;

2. indication of how patterns in the student's cognitive ability, achievement and information processing reflect the presence of ADHD or a learning disability;
3. indication of the substantial limitation to learning or other major life activity presented by the learning disability and the degree to which it impacts the individual in the learning context for which accommodations are being requested; and
4. indication as to why specific accommodations are needed and how the effects of the specific disability are accommodated.

The summary should also include any record of prior accommodation or auxiliary aids, including any information about specific conditions under which the accommodations were used (e.g., standardized testing, final exams, licensing, or certification examinations). The diagnostic report should include specific recommendations for accommodations as well as an explanation as to why each accommodation is recommended.

The final determination for providing appropriate and reasonable accommodations rests with the institution.

All information provided to Holy Cross College is considered confidential and any part of the documentation will not be released without the student's informed and written consent.

## **Psychological Disabilities**

Psychological disabilities cover a wide range including depression, anxiety, and chronic mental illness. While these illnesses may not be curable, they usually can be greatly improved with medication, therapy, and social support. Students with psychological disabilities may require treatment or, on occasion, hospitalization. Emotional concerns may manifest themselves in negative or apathetic attitudes and behavior. It may be helpful to remember that these students have as little control over their disabilities as students with physical disabilities.

### ***Description:***

- Disabilities affect people regardless of age, gender, income, ethnicity, and religion. One in five Americans has some form of mental illness (U.S. National Institute of Mental Health). Those under treatment may have few periods of active symptoms.
- Disabilities can be controlled with medication. However, some medications cause undesirable side effects such as drowsiness and disorientation that can affect academic performance.
- Depression and anxiety, two of the more common psychological disabilities, may be acute or chronic.
- Psychological impairments may result in additional symptoms such as poor concentration, irritability, fatigue, anxiety, apathy, perception problems, physical symptoms, and learning disabilities.
- Behaviors may be of concern in a classroom environment. If behavior is a concern:
  1. Discuss classroom behavior with the student privately and candidly. Be specific.
  2. Do not attempt to diagnose or treat the psychological disorder: focus on the student's behaviors.
  3. If it seems appropriate, refer the student to the Director of Counseling and Health.
  4. If the student's behavior is abusive or threatening, refer the matter to the VP for Student Life

***Suggested Tips for Instructors:***

- If the student initiates the conversation, it may be appropriate to discuss problems and side effects associated with medications.
- Hold these discussions in private when possible.
- Be willing to clarify assignment and class performance expectations several times if necessary.
- Establish clear boundaries regarding your relationship with students. Refer them for counseling, if necessary.
- Protect confidentiality whenever possible.

***Students with Psychological Disabilities may qualify for these accommodations:***

- Reduced course load
- Exam accommodations
- Facilitate incompletes or late withdrawals in place of course failures in the event of prolonged illness
- Modifications for in-class presentations and group projects

**Medical Disabilities**

A wide range of conditions may interfere with stamina and mobility and affect academic functioning. Common conditions may include hepatitis, Muscular Dystrophy, Cerebral Palsy, Chronic Asthma, any sight or hearing impairment, Epilepsy, Spinal Cord Injuries, ADD/ADHD, Arthritis, auto-immune diseases such as HIV/AIDS, Diabetes, Cancer, Chronic Fatigue Immune Deficiency Syndrome, Fibromyalgia, Lupus, Multiple Sclerosis, or Multiple Chemical Sensitivities. There are many other health disabilities that can be determined by a licensed medical professional. Functional limitations and abilities will vary widely even within the same type of disability. Students may have difficulty getting to or from class, performing in class, and managing out-of-class assignments and tests. Accommodations vary greatly and can only be determined on an individual basis.

***Things to Keep in Mind:***

- Occasional absence or tardiness may be unavoidable. These problems may be the result of fatigue, severe pain, illness, or other health-related concerns.
- Scheduling may be an issue. Special projects and testing may require some time flexibility to allow students to work during optimal time periods of the day.
- Chronic health problems may create secondary disabilities such as depression and anxiety.
- Progression of illness is unpredictable. Periodic remissions may allow for added energy and euphoria, while exacerbations may require hospitalization.

***Tips for Instructors:***

- Be familiar with the building's emergency evacuation plan and insure that it is manageable for students with health concerns.
- Consider seating arrangements carefully. Individual considerations may be necessary.
- Arrange for the assistance of an aide to help a student in a lab course if necessary.
- Flexibility with coursework is especially helpful. The student and instructor should meet early in the semester to discuss timelines and agree to the suggested deadlines.

***Students with Medical Disabilities may qualify for these accommodations:***

- Extended deadlines and time-limited “incomplete” grades when appropriate if the completion of required work is delayed due to illness or disability issues
- Assistance with contact with instructor in cases of hospitalization or other severe circumstances
- Assistance from library personnel to access databases and card catalogues, bookshelves, microfiche, and other equipment or to manipulate the pages of publications
- Tape-recorded lectures and/or textbooks
- Assistance with taking notes
- Exam accommodations

## **Hearing Impairments**

More individuals in the United States have a hearing impairment than any other type of physical disability. A hearing impairment refers to any type or degree of auditory impairment; deafness is an inability to use hearing as a means of communication. Hearing loss may be mild, moderate, or profound. A person who is born with a hearing loss may have language deficiencies and exhibit poor vocabulary and syntax. People with acquired deafness may have excellent speech. Some students with hearing loss may use hearing aids and rely on lip reading. Many students learn communication through American Sign Language (ASL) and will require an interpreter.

***Things to Keep in Mind:***

- Students who are hard of hearing may use speech, lip reading, and hearing aids to enhance communication. Some students are highly skilled in speech reading; however, only 30-40% of spoken English is understandable by speech reading alone.
- Students who are hard of hearing may use an FM amplification system. Instructors wear a clip-on microphone. The system’s limitation may affect participation, so instructors may need to repeat classroom comments.

***Tips for Instructors:***

- Offer front row seating. Students should be able to see the instructor, the interpreter, and the visual aids in one unobstructed line of vision.
- Face the class as much as possible during lectures.
- Repeat the questions and remarks of other people in the room.
- When speaking to the student, speak directly to the student not the interpreter.
- Allow time to translate speech to another language.
- Use visual aids and chalkboard as much as possible. Concepts are more easily understood using visual methods.
- Help students locate a qualified note-taker.
- Assist with evacuation in an emergency if needed.

***Accommodations to Consider:***

- Coordination of interpreter and note-taker services with the DSC and the student
- Adaptive equipment loaned for academic use
- Captioned films and video materials
- Assigned or arranged classroom seating
- Interpreters for instructions on examinations
- Exam accommodations
- Peer assistance with classroom participation and group discussions

## Visual Impairments

There are many types of visual impairments that may require special assistance. Depending on the condition, a student with a visual impairment may experience a wide variety of difficulties with sight. While one student may be totally blind, another student may have spotty vision. The DSC works closely with each student with a visual impairment in selecting the appropriate combination of services and technology, which will best assist the student in being successful at Holy Cross College.

### ***Suggested Tips for Instructors***

- Some students with a visual impairment will have guide dogs to assist them with daily activities. If a student brings a guide dog to class, the dog should not represent a distraction for the class. Guide dogs are well trained to be “on-the-job” when they are in harness. Ask the student to give a brief description of the guide dog’s responsibilities in the classroom. This will allow students to ask questions and help dispel any myths or concerns.
- It is important for the student and professor to discuss how lectures will be recorded in class. Some students have a note-taker, some instructors will let students copy lectures and transparencies, and some students will tape record the lecture. It is important for the student and professor to agree to terms for each class.
- Some students have scanners at their homes where information from a disk can be scanned and then put into Braille from any computer. Be aware of what technology and equipment will be needed for your class.

### ***Accommodations to Consider:***

- Tape record lectures
- Audio textbooks from the Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic
- Volunteer note-taker or assigned peer assistant
- Scribe appointed for written assignments
- Exam accommodations
- Appointed lab assistant for classes with a lab requirement

## Speech Impairments

Speech impairments may have many causes — hearing loss, illness, injury, and congenital or psychological conditions. Speech impairments are found alone and in combination with other disabilities. Speech impairments range from problems with articulation or voice strength to an inability to speak at all. Unless the impairment is recent, students with speech impairments generally have had some speech therapy.

### ***Things to Keep in Mind:***

- Many speech-impaired students are unable or reluctant to participate in activities that require speaking. Even if the students have adjusted well to speech impairments, new situations may enhance past anxieties.
- Self-expression should be encouraged; however, pressure to speak is not likely to be helpful. Speaking in front of a group can be an agonizing experience for a speech-impaired student.



### ***Suggested Tips for Instructors***

- Be patient and listen.
- Do not provide words or finish sentences for a person who stutters or speaks with difficulty; let the person complete his or her thoughts.
- Give students with communication disabilities the opportunity to participate in class discussions as much as possible even if extra time is necessary
- If the course requires oral communication and the student is unable to communicate orally, arrange for alternative methods such as written communication that might be shared with the class.
- Encourage participation, but do not require a student with a communication difficulty to speak in front of the class.
- If you do not understand what is being said, do not pretend to know; tell the student you do not understand, and allow him or her to repeat the communication.
- Keep all information confidential.

### ***Accommodations to Consider:***

- Let the student participate through written assignments or responses to specific questions that are read to the class by a reader.
- Written assignments or responses to specific questions that can be shared with the class by someone else's reading them aloud are an alternative to oral presentations.
- For students who choose to participate orally, faculty and class members should be patient offering encouragement and an opportunity to develop self-confidence in a challenging situation.

## **Mobility and Dexterity Impairments**

Most mobility limitations result from neuromuscular and orthopedic disabilities that result in wide variations in the remaining physical abilities. The most common mobility disabilities among students are spinal cord injuries, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, post-polio paralysis, spina bifida and others that result in quadriplegia and paraplegia. Do not generalize with regard to specific limitations of persons with these kinds of disabilities. Functional abilities vary widely not only among the disabilities, but also among students with the same disability. General conditions affecting the degree of limitation may include age at onset, progression rate, disorder, level and extent of injury, and response to treatment. Some disabilities are progressive (as in muscular dystrophy); others are not. Limitations associated with some disabilities fluctuate with periods of remission and exacerbation (as in multiple sclerosis and arthritis), some may remain constant (as in spina bifida), and others may improve with time and therapy.

*The student with the disability is the best source of information regarding his or her disability and accompanying specific limitations.* Although it is difficult to generalize about classroom needs of students with physical disabilities, the major limitations affecting college participation generally involve mobility and hand dexterity.

### ***Mobility Limitations***

Access and timely travel are the major concerns of students who use wheelchairs, crutches, canes, walkers, braces, or other mobility aids. These students must learn the routes across campuses that do not present barriers (stairs, curbs, narrow walkways, heavy doors, and some elevators).

### ***Suggested Tips for Instructors:***

- Most mobility-impaired students try to consider travel time in planning class schedules, but they are not always able to avoid tight schedules; therefore, when they have classes in sequence, they frequently may be a few minutes late or, on occasion, may need to leave early. If a student's lateness becomes chronic, it is appropriate to discuss the situation and seek solutions that may include better planning on the part of the student.
- If the class involves field work or field trips, care should be taken in selecting the site to ensure that the facility is accessible enough for the mobility-impaired student to participate and benefit from the experience.

### ***Accommodations to Consider:***

- Almost all students with dexterity problems will engage classmates as note takers.
- Another possible accommodation is for the professor to provide a copy of his or her notes at the end of each class session. This helps alleviate confusion of note content or completion of ideas.
- Persons with mobility limitations may prefer to sit near the classroom entrance to avoid additional walking or the difficulty of moving through crowded aisles with crutches, canes, or walkers. Students who use wheelchairs will need adequate floor space in the front, on the side, or in the rear of the room so that they can park without blocking the flow of traffic. Some students who use wheelchairs, depending on their disabilities, may be able to walk short distances and may prefer to get out of their wheelchairs and use regular desks during lectures.
- Students remaining in their wheelchairs may require special desks or tables that comfortably accommodate them. The DSC can help make arrangements for such furniture. Using a wheelchair only part of the time does not mean that a person is faking a disability. It usually is a means to conserve energy or move about more quickly. Some students who normally use a mobility aid other than a wheelchair may use a wheelchair sometimes because of weather conditions or medical flare-ups. Classes taught in laboratory settings usually require some modification of the work stations for wheelchair users. The amount of under counter space, working reach, and aisle widths are the primary concerns. Some wheelchair users may be able to use regular work stations if they can transfer from the wheelchair to another seat at the work station. Sometimes a special work station can be set up at an accessible table.

### ***Hand and Arm Dexterity Limitations:***

Students may have hand and arm dexterity limitations alone (carpal tunnel syndrome where the nerve in the wrist is compressed) or in conjunction with mobility limitations (spinal cord injury quadriplegia). Generally speaking, hand dexterity limitations have greater impact on academic functioning than mobility limitations, but again, the specific limitation will depend on the type and severity of the disability.

### ***Things to Keep in Mind:***

- Some students with hand dexterity impairments are able to write to some degree; others cannot write at all. Those who do their own writing usually require additional time to do so. Students with hand and arm limitations often tape record class lectures or have note takers. Some can type their own papers by using regular or adapted keyboards or key guards; others use typists.
- Unless tests are all objective with answers that can simply be marked or circled, most will require special test accommodations often in the form of extra time or the use of a scribe or a word processor.
- Students with hand dexterity and arm limitations should be allowed and encouraged to participate to the fullest extent possible in laboratory classes. If the lab objective is to learn a procedural process and resulting reaction, as in a chemistry experiment, the objective can usually be

achieved if the student has an aide or is paired with a classmate who can carry out step-by-step instructions given by the student (e.g., type of test tube to use, what chemical to add when and where, and how to dispose of used chemicals). In this way, the student who has a disability is actively involved and will learn everything except how physically to manipulate the chemicals.

***Suggested Tips for Instructors:***

- Students with mobility limitations will ask for assistance when they need it. Do not assume that assistance is needed.
- When conversing with someone in a wheelchair, sit so that you are at that person's eye level whenever possible.
- Leaning on a wheelchair is tantamount to leaning on a person's shoulder - it is an invasion of personal space.
- When discussing a student's disability and accommodation/adaptation needs, talk only about needs that are relevant to the successful completion of course work.
- Refer to a person in a wheelchair as a "wheelchair user," not as "confined" to a wheelchair. Most people using wheelchairs transfer to furniture, automobiles, etc., using wheelchairs only as means of movement from one point to another.
- If a student's speech is affected by the disability and is difficult to understand, do not hesitate to ask the student to repeat.
- Keep all information confidential.

***Accommodations to Consider:***

- Support the use of note takers and taped lectures
- Restructure laboratory experiences to include the use of a partner for students with hand and arm dexterity or other mobility imitations. The partner can perform the active parts of the assignment at the direction of the disabled student.
- Work with students to arrange for appropriate time for completion of class assignments.
- Allow adequate time for testing.
- Be realistic in seeking solutions when a student is late to class. Although inclement weather, circuitous routes, elevator problems and crowds are contributing causes, chronic lateness is generally not acceptable and needs to be discussed with the student.
- Allow for adequate break time during class if the class meets for an extended period so that the student can attend to such physical needs as stretching, medication, and restroom use.

## **THE 504 LETTER AND ACCOMMODATIONS**

It is the institution's obligation under Section 504 and the ADA to provide reasonable accommodations to qualifying students with disabilities. These accommodations afford equal opportunity to participate in the college's educational program.

Accommodations are indicated on the 504 Letter/e-mail (below), which the instructor receives from the Director of Counseling and Health. **Only students who have received a 504 Letter legally qualify for accommodations.** *If an instructor does not receive the 504 letter, the instructor is not in any way required to make accommodations.*

Students must complete a Request for Accommodations form in order for the Director of Counseling and Health to contact their instructors. Because courses and instructors change each semester, students must contact the Director during the first week of each semester and request that the Director contacts their instructor. The accommodations go into effect when students request them; they are not retroactive.

It benefits both student and instructor to discuss the accommodations indicated in the 504 Letter. Most students do not mind speaking openly about their disability, but some do. Discussions should be confidential, and the student's privacy should be considered. To reduce any concern the student may have, the instructor might begin with, "I don't need to know your diagnosis, but having an understanding of the accommodation letter will benefit us both."

## **KINDS OF ACCOMMODATIONS**

### **Extended time on tests**

The customary time extension granted for "extended time" is double time. For example, if a test is scheduled for 50 minutes in the classroom, the accommodation would be for 75 minutes.

### **Minimal-distraction testing environment outside of the classroom**

Instructors must provide this accommodation to their students in a minimal-distraction testing environment outside of the classroom. This accommodation is particularly important for students with Attention Deficit Disorders, Anxiety Disorders or Reading and/or Writing Disabilities.

### **Use of computer for in-class essays**

Computers with spell check may be used during exams and in-class essays for students with a Writing Disability or Reading Disability or students with limited writing ability.

### **Use of a 4-function calculator**

Use of a calculator during exams is recommended for some students with a Mathematics Disability

### **Permission to tape lectures**

Students with writing, hearing or processing deficits may qualify to tape record class lectures. Students are instructed always to inform the professor when they are recording. Faculty members may request that students turn off their tape recorders if an off-the-record remark needs to be made. The DSC advises students that these tapes are intended only as study aids for individual use, and they should not be shared with other students.

### **Assistance with taking notes**

Students may ask instructors for a copy of the outline of lecture notes or transparencies prior to class. Students may also ask instructors for assistance with copying another student's notes.

### **Tests in large print**

Students who are visually impaired or have a Reading Disability qualify for and request this accommodation, which is usually provided by faculty.

### **Audio Textbooks**

Students may request textbooks recorded on a CD. Because Holy Cross College loans these items, students are required to return any materials to the DSC; failure to do so may result in a fine.

### **Accessibility**

Classroom buildings must be readily accessible and usable to individuals with disabilities. If a class, workshop or class-related event is scheduled in a building that does not provide access, the location must be changed to provide equal accessibility to disabled students. All programs and services must be provided in a manner that affords the student maximum integration with non-disabled peers.

## **ISSUES AND ANSWERS**

**Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability in any program or activity offered by an institution of higher education. YES.**

The Rehabilitation Act (1973), Section 504, Subpart E Post-secondary Education, states that qualified persons with disabilities may not be denied, on the basis of their disability, access to any program or activity offered by an institution of higher education that receives federal assistance. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (1990), Title III, extended this mandate to include private institutions. With the accessibility of postsecondary education programs, more than 800,000 students with disabilities were reported to be enrolled in higher education institutions in the 1992-1993 academic year (Facts in Brief, 1995).

**Holy Cross College must operate its programs so individuals with disabilities may have access to the greatest extent possible. YES.**

Section 504 mandates that programs be accessible to students with disabilities. Wichita State University violated Section 504 by hiding a medallion in an inaccessible location. Students with mobility impairments could not participate in the contest (Kincaid & Simon, 1994). Section 504 also states that activities developed to be separate but equal are inappropriate unless they can be shown to be developed to meet the specific, unique needs of students with disabilities (Jarrow, 1991).

**Student requests for accommodations must be granted when the accommodation would result in a fundamental alteration of the program/course. NO.**

Academic requirements that the institution can show are essential to the student's course of study do not have to be modified/accommodated. In other words: the institution would not have to change a requirement if it could demonstrate that such a change would fundamentally alter the nature of the course. The Ohio Civil Rights Commission upheld Case Western Reserve University's refusal to accommodate a student because such accommodation would unduly burden the school and require it to modify the essential nature of its program (Kincaid, 1995). The case relied on federal law (*Southeastern Community College v. Davis*, 1979) in its decision that the student was not otherwise qualified with or without accommodation.

**Faculty and/or staff are required to provide a student with a disability accommodation even if the student does not request it. NO.**

The student has the responsibility to self-identify to the Disability Services Coordinator, provide documentation of a disability and ask for accommodation before the institution is required to provide that accommodation. In the case of *Salvador v. Bell*, the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) ruled in favor of Roosevelt University because the student had not self-identified and requested the necessary accommodation (Jarrow, 1991).

**Faculty and/or staff are prohibited from counseling a student with a disability into a more restrictive career path than are recommended to a non-disabled student with similar abilities and interests. YES.**

Section 504 specifies that counseling services, including personal, academic, vocational guidance, and placement counseling, be provided without discrimination on the basis of disability. The institution is responsible to provide counseling services that are not restrictive but based on the student's abilities, interest, and career choices (Jarrow, 1991).

**A student with a learning disability must have a diagnostic evaluation that is less than three years old to be eligible for reasonable accommodations. YES.**

Although OCR has not made a specific ruling on this issue, it is generally accepted procedure to ascertain that appropriate academic accommodations can only be made on the current functioning level of the student. OCR was aware of the ruling at the University of Arizona and did not indicate that it was inappropriate (D. Perreira, personal communication, October 4, 1995). Boston University has indicated that it follows the three-year limit on documentation for learning disabilities and recently announced that currently enrolled students must keep their documentation updated (Lewin, 1996).

**A student with a learning disability may ask for an expect accommodations in a program, service, or classroom even though the student has not provided documentation to the Disability Services Coordinator. NO.**

A student is required to provide the Disability Services Coordinator with the necessary documentation from a licensed professional that the disability exists before any classroom accommodation need be provided. This documentation must be current within the last three years. In *Salvador v. Bell*, the OCR ruled that the institution was under no obligation to provide accommodation for a student with a disability who fails to provide documentation of the disability (Jarrow, 1991).

**A program or classroom location should be changed if necessary to provide accessibility for a student with a mobility disability. YES.**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973) mandates that programs be accessible to students with disabilities. The institution does not need to make every classroom accessible but must allow the participation of students with disabilities when "viewed in its entirety." Therefore, the institution may choose to move a class to an accessible location without making every campus building accessible (West et. al., 1993).

**A student with a speech disorder must be given an alternate assignment to presenting an oral report if identified as a needed accommodation. YES.**

Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973), the institution must operate its programs in such a way that students with disabilities are not excluded on the basis of their disability. The institution must make modifications to academic requirements to ensure that they do not have the effect of discriminating against students solely on the basis of disability.

**Faculty and staff members have the right to access diagnostic information regarding a student's disability. NO.**

Faculty members do not have the right to access the student's diagnostic information (Jarrow, 1991). The Department of Education follows the rules of confidentiality that are described in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973). A number of court cases as well as OCR findings have further defined Section 504 as the standard for compliance. According to the rules of confidentiality, faculty and staff members need only know the accommodations that are necessary to guarantee an equal opportunity for the student.

**If a student's disability documentation specifically recommends a quiet testing area with no distractions, the instructor must allow the student to take an exam in a room different from the classroom. YES.**

The Rehabilitation Act (1973), Section 504, specifically calls for the accommodations in testing of a separate proctored setting if the student's documentation specifically recommends this. This

mandate was tested in the case of Weintraub v. Board of Bar Examiners; separate private room accommodations for testing was upheld (Lathan, 1995)

**An individual faculty or staff member who fails to provide an accommodation to a student with a documented disability may be held personally liable. YES.**

In the case of Dinsmore v. University of California at Berkeley, a professor refused to allow extended time on math tests to a student with a learning disability whose documentation specified the need for that accommodation. The professor maintained that giving the student extended time provided an unfair advantage. The Office of Disability Services and the university's administrators supported the student's request. However, the professor still refused to allow the accommodation. The OCR found the institution violated Section 504 and ordered the university to establish necessary procedures to ensure that no student would be denied necessary accommodations for equal access. The student filed a civil suit against the professor for abridgment of civil rights, and the court accepted the case. The case was settled out of court for an unspecified amount. The case signaled that a faculty or staff member would be held liable if his/her behavior denied a student necessary accommodations (Jarrow, 1992).

**The instructor's academic freedom permits the instructor to decide if s/he will provide special aids and services for students with disabilities in the classroom. NO.**

The individual faculty member's academic freedom cannot supersede the rights of a student with a disability for the provisions of documented accommodations (Jarrow, 1991).

## **STUDENT, FACULTY AND STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### ***Students with Disabilities:***

- should identify themselves to the Director of Counseling and Health if they are requesting accommodations.
- must submit documentation of a learning disability, current within three years.
- Must provide physician recommendations for accommodations.
- must provide the instructor with an accommodations email from the Dean of Academic Support Services before expecting accommodations; however, the diagnosis of the disability is kept confidential.
- are expected to meet the academic performance standards of the class after an accommodation is provided.

(Adapted from Project Opportunity and Access Special Education and Rehabilitation Services Programs, The Pennsylvania State University, 1999)

### ***The Director of Counseling and Health:***

- stores and keeps records of students with disabilities confidential.
- evaluates the disability and makes decisions regarding appropriate accommodations.
- provides the verification of the disability and the accommodation considered appropriate to the instructor, and works together with the student and the faculty to make the activities successful.
- is a representative to the campus for students with disabilities.

### ***Faculty:***

- makes a reasonable effort to be informed about ADA policies.
- provides in their syllabus information on where to seek ADA accommodations.
- demonstrates sensitivity to the issues that may present themselves in their classes by students with disabilities.
- respects the issues related to confidentiality of the students' disability.
- serves as supporters and role models of the Holy Cross College Mission Statement regarding the acceptance of students with disabilities.
- provides alternative testing for students, whenever possible, to the greater benefit of the student/instructor communication during tests.

### ***Staff:***

- is aware of the Director of Counseling and Health office location and the services provided.
- refers students to the Director of Counseling and Health regarding any disability issues.
- does not give an opinion regarding accommodations that a student with a disability may, or may not, receive through the Director of Counseling and Health.
- forwards any documentation of a disability that they may receive to the Director of Counseling and Health without reading or commenting on it.

(Adapted from 1999 Publication: *Disability Compliance for Higher Education*)



# ADAPTING EMERGENCY PROCEDURES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

## GUIDELINES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

There is consensus that **individuals with disabilities should take responsibility themselves, both before and during an emergency to prepare for evacuation.** To assist them in assuming this responsibility, these guidelines suggest what should be done before and during an emergency situation. It is recommended that individuals with disabilities have two escape plans - one for when they are in the company of a non-disabled individual and one for when they are alone.

It is equally **important for the entire faculty and staff of Holy Cross College to be aware of the procedures as well.** These individuals are often responsible for the safety of those in their charge. They need to be aware of the particular procedure involved in the evacuation of all individuals with disabilities and know information such as the areas of refuge and the location of safety equipment.

### Before an Emergency

- **There is no single totally acceptable procedure for evacuation** during an emergency. Prior to an emergency, individuals with disabilities must determine for themselves, with professional consultation if necessary, what adaptations to Holy Cross College's evacuation plan will be needed for them including exit routes, alternative carry and/or communication methods, and availability and location of evacuation equipment (e.g. evacuation chair, walkie talkie).
- **Individuals with disabilities must study and remember important locations in each building they enter:** exits, stairways, phones, and elevators (and procedures for use).
- **Individuals with disabilities should identify two routes out of each building excluding the elevator.** Pre-planning should include: requesting information from campus security on the location of the evacuation point in each of the buildings they will occupy, determining the best way to get to the evacuation point from their assigned rooms or classrooms, and for the Vincent Classroom Building requesting information on the location of the areas of rescue assistance.
- **The areas of rescue assistance are on the second floor of the Vincent Classroom Building.** One area is located mid-way in the hallway that runs east and west, and the other is at the south end of the hallway that runs north and south. Each is marked with an "Area of Rescue Assistance" sign in the hallway. Each is located behind a door at the top of the stairs; each has a device for two-way communication.
- **Individuals with disabilities should assume responsibility for asking several reliable people in their classes and residence halls to assist them** in case of an emergency and should instruct them in the best way to do so. For example, an individual with a hearing loss should advise volunteer assistants to write down the nature of the emergency and then lead him or her through the evacuation route as s/he may be unable to follow oral commands during an emergency. A wheelchair user should explain the best method of carry and the number of people needed for assistance. Once these arrangements are made, **they should be shared with instructors and residence hall directors, and they should be practiced beforehand.** Arrangements and appropriate instructions should be written on a card and carried at all times by any individual who has difficulty with communication.
- **Individuals with disabilities should "register" with campus security** regarding the nature of the assistance they need in an emergency. Although the college may not legally require this registration, it is in the best interest of individuals with disabilities to do so voluntarily.
- **Individuals with disabilities who need to work in isolated areas after hours should determine telephone availability;** if none is available, they need to notify campus security of their location in advance, giving the building, floor, room, and time.

## During an Emergency

**During an actual emergency, individuals with disabilities should call campus security immediately**, giving the location and the type of assistance needed. If they are in class, they should tell the instructor to notify campus security of the need for assistance with evacuation. At other times, they should go to the nearest classroom or office and inform faculty or staff of the need for assistance.

- **Individuals are generally advised**, in case of emergency, **to move toward the nearest exit**. For example, it is not safe to leave a room if the door is excessively hot or if there is smoke in the hallway. At the initial shock of an earthquake, individuals should take cover, moving away from the windows. In tornado or severe weather conditions, individuals may be advised to proceed to a designated weather-safe area or the center of the building.
- **Individuals with disabilities who are unable to leave the room** they are occupying should try to **communicate with campus security** and local authorities. If conditions permit, they should **open a window** and **wave a length of colorful fabric to draw attention** to their location from the outside. If there is smoke or fire, they should try to seal the room by padding doorways and cracks with wet towels.
- **Individuals who use wheelchairs or have mobility impairments may use the building elevator as a first choice but never in the case of fire, earthquake or tornado**. If there is no immediate danger, these individuals should either stay in place or be moved to a fire-rated stairwell until emergency personnel determine the nature of the situation. **A stairwell is a good place to await rescue as the individuals will be in plain view** and, providing the stairwell door has been kept closed, there will be sufficient air even if the ventilation system in the building is shut down. Officials may decide that no evacuation is necessary, they may remove the individuals using the elevator with an override key, or they may carry the individuals out of the building using special techniques and evacuation chairs. **The use of an elevator during an emergency should be done only under the direction of a professional rescue and response team**.
- If it is not safe for an individual with a disability to leave the building (as determined through communication with a professional rescue and response team), **one person who does not have a disability should remain with the individual** while another person tells safety personnel of their location. This step may not be necessary if it is possible for the individual with a disability to make this communication.
- When an individual with a disability reaches a barrier such as a staircase, s/he should request assistance from others in the area if not accompanied by a pre-designated volunteer assistant.
- If that assistance is not immediately available, the individual with a disability who cannot continue on alone should stay in the exit corridor, on the stairway or landing, and continue to call for help until rescued. Individuals who cannot speak loudly should carry a whistle or have other means of attracting the attention of others.
- If there is imminent danger and evacuation cannot be delayed, the individual with a disability should be carried or helped from the building in the best and fastest manner. **The individual is the best authority on how to move him or her out of the building**.

# DISABILITY SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

## INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

The severity of hearing loss can be expressed in decibel levels. An individual with profound hearing loss or deafness can't hear sounds lower than 90 decibels and is not helped by a hearing aid (heavy traffic or the sound of an alarm clock two feet away is 80 decibels). Someone who can hear decibel levels of 70 to 90 and above is considered to have a severe hearing loss, but a hearing aid can be of some help. A person who is hard of hearing is someone whose sense of hearing ranges from mild (25 to 40 decibels) to moderate (40 to 70); a hearing aid is helpful. (Rice Krispies are a 30 decibel sound; ordinary conversation is 50-60 decibels). Some individuals with hearing loss can sign or lip read, but lip reading is a technique with limitations because only 26% to 33% of spoken English can be lip-read.

**Provide alternative warning techniques.** As the individual with a hearing loss may not perceive an audio emergency alarm, alternative warning techniques, such as the ones listed below may be needed:

- Write down the nature of the emergency and the nearest evacuation route (e.g. "Fire! Go out the rear door to right and down. Now!")
- Switch the light on and off to gain attention; then use gestures or writing to state the emergency and directions.
- Escort the person with a hearing loss during egress as s/he may not be able to follow oral commands issued by authorities.

**Observe general guidelines for oral communication.** As each individual with a hearing loss functions differently, s/he is the best source of information about communication tips. There are, however, a few general guidelines for oral communication during an emergency:

- Get the attention of the person with a hearing loss before speaking.
- Look at the person when speaking.
- Refrain from smoking, chewing gum, or otherwise blocking the area around the mouth while speaking in order to facilitate lip reading.
- Speak naturally and clearly without shouting or exaggerating lip movement. Slow down slightly.
- Try to avoid standing in front of windows or other light sources. The glare from behind makes it difficult to read lips and other facial expressions.
- Do not hesitate to ask the person with a hearing loss to repeat what was said. If that does not work, then use a pen and paper.
- Speak directly to the person who has a hearing loss, not to the interpreter who may be present.
- Use short sentences: they are easier to understand than long sentences with several clauses.
- Repeat the messages if the person does not understand; if repetition does not help, rephrase the message or use a different word order. Initial misunderstandings will clear up over time.
- Use facial expressions, gestures and other body language to help convey the message.

## INDIVIDUALS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

Individuals with learning disabilities constitute a heterogeneous group: while one individual may have particular difficulty in reading, another may have difficulty in oral communication, and still another may have difficulty in interpreting floor plans, or in a combination of these areas. The characteristics that might require adaptation in emergency evacuation procedures will not pertain to all students with learning disabilities but will pertain to some. Following are compensatory techniques that may help individuals with learning disabilities.

**Provide alternatives for individuals who may have difficulty reading printed directions.** In order to ensure that students with reading difficulty fully comprehend direction, the following would be helpful:

- Ensure that information about emergency evacuation is provided through oral presentation in a variety of settings.
- Provide visual back-up for individuals who may have difficulty comprehending lengthy oral directions.
- Encourage individuals guiding groups to give instructions slowly and clearly with repetition.

## **INDIVIDUALS WITH MOBILITY IMPAIRMENT**

Individuals with mobility impairments represent a range of conditions both temporary and permanent. Some individuals with mobility impairments may need special equipment such as wheelchairs, braces, or crutches to move around the campus; others whose impairments are less visible may have decreased coordination or stamina and may need to move at a slower pace or rest frequently.

It is extremely important for people with mobility impairments to be aware of the procedures in the event of an emergency. **They should participate in all emergency drills to practice these procedures.** At these drills, the effectiveness of the procedures can be measured and the appropriate modifications made.

**Individuals with mobility impairments need to be aware of the evacuation routes for the different buildings they will encounter.** If the individual is aware of a safe means of egress prior to an emergency, safety personnel will be free to assist those in areas that are less accessible.

If you use a wheelchair or a walking aid, you are very likely well aware of impediments and barriers created by building features. While some of these barriers are normally a nuisance, they can be a life saver in case of fire. In a fire you want to have protective walls and closed doors between yourself and the fire. In fact a solid wood door can usually hold back a raging fire for about 15 minutes giving you extra time to escape or arrange for help.

If you can manage the stairs without assistance, keep in mind that a crowd of people can descend at a speed about three or four stories each minute. You may want to go down the stairs behind such people. The corners of exit stairway landings often provide adequate space for you to stand or to park your wheelchair without seriously obstructing others while you rest or wait.

Be aware of all your evacuation and refuge options. Locate the other exit or exits. Other refuge options may be available if each story of the building is divided into special compartments each of which has direct access to an exit. But be cautious. The elevator in the Vincent Classroom Building, is not generally usable for evacuation in case of fire.

You will also benefit from doors and evacuation options in your dorm room. For example, a second bedroom door into an adjoining bedroom provides another route when the corridor is impassable due to smoke. Something like a mechanic's creeper or dolly, normally kept under your bed, might help you to move faster to a safer room. If you are comfortable with the idea and if it works, have some people serve as "buddies." Tell them how they can best help you in an emergency. You are the expert here.

**People communicating with an individual with a mobility impairment should speak directly to the individual** as they would to any other. For an individual in a wheelchair, conversation is often difficult because each person is at a different eye level. In an emergency situation, it is advisable to maintain eye contact to insure that all directions are heard and understood. This will require adjusting body position to achieve the same eye level as the individual in the wheelchair. An individual whose speech is difficult to

understand can be asked to repeat what was just said. An individual can be asked if s/he is able to walk with assistance. This may speed up evacuation.

There are other models of evacuation that involve individuals physically carrying persons from the building. Given the possibility of injury, these are not advisable options except in the most extreme of circumstances. Certainly at no time is it advisable that an untrained person attempt to carry another individual to safety.

## **INDIVIDUALS WITH PSYCHOLOGICAL DISABILITIES**

In the past, few special accommodations have been made for individuals with psychological disabilities. Many of these individuals hesitate to self-identify, fearing the stigma that is often associated with these disabilities.

Individuals with psychological disabilities who are willing to self-identify may make arrangements prior to an emergency to use the areas of rescue assistance located in the Vincent Classroom Building; each has a two-way communication system so that the individuals will be able to communicate with safety personnel

## **INDIVIDUALS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT**

Some individuals with visual impairment are totally blind and see no light at all or may have some light sensation. However, most individuals with visual impairment would be considered "legally blind." Those individuals range from those who can see shapes well enough to walk around without a cane during the day to those who have little obvious difficulty short of a need to read large print. It is common to be "more blind" in dark areas or at night than in light areas or daylight.

**Provide orientation to building.** In an emergency individuals with sight can often look around quickly to find a fire exit, alarm box, or phone, but individuals with visual impairment must already know where alarms and emergency exits are located in order to be able to respond rapidly in an emergency. It is important for them to become oriented to the buildings where they spend time such as the dorm, library, office, computer center, and classroom. This orientation is usually done by a trained orientation and mobility specialist or other qualified person who works with them to learn the building layout and then helps them familiarize themselves with vital safety information

There are a number of day-to-day situations when an individual is alone and must be able to evacuate from the building independently, and if escape routes are blocked, protect him/herself and ask for help quickly. For places where an individual with a visual impairment tends to be alone, s/he must:

- Practice escape safe routes to learn them kinesthetically.
- Know where the nearest telephones and alarm boxes are in order to call for help if necessary, how to describe their exact location in the building, and how to hang something out the window to attract attention.
- Be comfortable with the options for self-protection including procedures to follow if a fire is between him or her and all escape routes (close doors, seal cracks under doors, etc.)

**Individuals with visual impairment or blindness should be evacuated together with sighted students.** The presence of a blind individual will not interfere with the evacuation. In fact an individual who is blind makes an excellent guide in the dark when s/he is familiar with a building. In a case where lights are out and there is not enough light for sighted people to find their way around, a blind individual can usually lead the evacuation. In the dark a blind individual can also dial the telephone easily to call for help because s/he has memorized the telephone keypad.

**Provide guides.** In an emergency an individual with a visual impairment may want to be guided out of a building by a classmate, roommate, and friend or by the professor, R.A., or supervisor. The person in charge should ask the individual in advance to determine if s/he would like to be guided in an emergency. If it is unclear at the time of an actual emergency, the person in charge should ask again in case the individual with the visual impairment has had a change of mind.

- For example, using a cane is very comfortable for some individuals who are legally blind, but in a dense crowd there may not be enough space to tap the cane. It is the individual's choice whether or not to request a human guide in an emergency situation. An individual with a visual impairment should never be forced to accept a guide, and in an emergency no one should decline an individual's request for one.
- If a trained volunteer is not present when a crisis starts, the evacuation should proceed using the people at hand. If an individual with a visual impairment wants a guide, anyone in the room may offer his or her near arm and make sure that the individual grasps the guide's arm just above the elbow with his or her near arm. The guide should keep that arm straight down and not out from the body. When both people are walking, the person being guided will naturally be a half step or so behind and will sense any changes in direction.
- The guide should mention any major obstacles as they appear, (e.g. stairs and doorways), but it is usually not necessary to stop when reaching them. As the guide enters the doorway, s/he should mention which side the door is on so the individual can hold it open as s/he follows through. Both should keep as normal a pace as possible. As long as it is not dangerous, a steady pace tends to be easier for the person being guided. With human guides individuals with visual impairment or blindness often walk briskly.
- Once evacuated safely, the guide should describe the new location and ask if help is still needed. If the situation is uncertain, the guide may be asked to stay nearby.
- Even when an individual does not need a guide, s/he may want someone to walk alongside in case something on the way out interferes with clear evacuation (e.g. smoke, a blocked hallway). The supervisor/instructor, concerned about an individual with visual impairment who wishes to leave the building alone, can keep him or her in view on the way out of the building and offer assistance if the individual encounters a significant problem.
- An individual interested in having a guide should choose one or two interested people from the group with whom s/he feels comfortable, and they should be shown how to be an effective guide if they have not guided anyone before. One of the two guides immediately needs to be available to the individual in an actual emergency. An individual with visual impairment or blindness can usually teach the volunteer the basic tasks of a guide.
- An individual with visual impairment or blindness who is comfortable using a trained guide dog to navigate to safety should be allowed to do so. The professor, R.A., or the person in charge may offer assistance along the way if needed.
- When there are likely to be unfamiliar obstacles (e.g. debris from an earthquake or tornado), or when the dog needs a break, the individual may want a human guide. In that case, the volunteer should offer the arm on the individual's free side so the dog can continue to walk on the other side.

## **Student Grievance Procedures Relating to Complaints Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the ADA Amendments of 2008**

### *Purpose and Scope*

Holy Cross College prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. The purpose of these procedures is to provide the process for addressing student disability discrimination grievances. These procedures do not replace any other College policies or procedures.

### **Definitions**

- *Grievance:* Grievance means a complaint alleging any policy, procedure or practice which would be prohibited by the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or ADA Amendments of 2008.
- *Grievant:* Grievant means a student who submits a grievance relevant to the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or ADA Amendments of 2008.
- *Respondent:* Respondent means any College officer, administrator, faculty or staff member acting in their official capacity and alleged to be responsible for the violation(s) alleged in a grievance.

### **Filing of Grievance**

- *Eligibility for Filing:* Any Holy Cross College student may file a grievance relating to the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or ADA Amendments of 2008.
- *Pre-Grievance Meeting:* Prior to the filing of a written grievance, the grievant should first consult with and have a meeting with the respondent alleged to be directly responsible for the possible violation and/or persons with immediate supervisory authority related to the grievance. These persons will make reasonable efforts to meet with a Holy Cross grievant to discuss a complaint. If the matter cannot be resolved informally at this level, a written grievance may be submitted to the VP for Academics or the VP for Student Life.

### **Formal Grievance Procedure**

- *Grievance Filing:* All grievances shall be in writing and shall provide the following information:
  - (1) Name, address and telephone number of grievant(s);
  - (2) The nature, date and description of the alleged violation(s);
  - (3) The name(s) of the person or persons responsible for the alleged violation(s);
  - (4) The requested relief for corrective action; and
  - (5) Any background information the grievant believes to be relevant.
- *Time Limit for Grievance Filing:* A grievance must be filed within 30 days of the alleged violation.
- *Notification of Respondent(s):* Upon receipt of a formal grievance, the Dean of Faculty or Dean of Students will review the student's written complaint. If it meets the above requirements, the Dean will forward the written complaint to a Grievance Review Committee and shall send the respondent a copy of the complaint and ask the respondent to reply to the charges within 20 calendar days. The response may include any denial, in whole or part, of the charges.
- *The Grievance Review Committee:* When the VP for Academics or the VP for Student Life receives a response to the complaint, or 21 days after sending the respondent a copy of the complaint, whichever occurs first, he or she shall convene the Grievance Review Committee, which, in turn, shall conduct a Review Committee meeting on the complaint within 30 calendar days thereof. The Grievance Review Committee shall consist of members of the college community as appointed by the VP for Academics or the VP for Student Life, the Dean of Academic Support Services shall not be eligible to serve on the Grievance Review Committee.

## **Grievance Review Committee Procedure**

- All parties shall be afforded reasonable opportunity for informal opening statements and for the presentation of relevant witnesses and pertinent documentary evidence to the committee.
- The committee shall have the right to question any and all witnesses, to examine documentary evidence and to summon other witnesses as the committee deems necessary. Witnesses shall not be present during the testimony of any party or any other witness.
- All parties shall have the right to be privately counseled by an attorney; however, the attorney shall not be allowed to participate or be present at the grievance proceedings. Grievance proceedings shall not be public and shall be open only to the committee members and the parties and witnesses while testifying.
- The grievant and respondent shall provide to the chairperson of the Grievance Review Committee all documents to be used and relied upon at the Review Committee meeting, and the names of any witnesses they intend to call, no later than seven days prior to the Review Committee meeting. There shall also be a simultaneous exchange of this information between the parties. Witnesses and documents not so disclosed shall not be presented to the Review Committee meeting.
- After the Review Committee meeting is concluded, the Grievance Review Committee shall deliberate its findings and forward its recommendation to the Dean of Faculty or Dean of Students. Within 10 days after the Review Committee meeting is concluded, the VP for Academics or the VP for Student Life shall transmit a written copy of its findings and recommendation(s) to the parties involved.
- Either party may appeal to the President within 10 days of receiving the Grievance Review Committee's recommendations if one or both of the following criteria are met:
  - (1) There was a flaw in the manner in which the grievance process was implemented;
  - (2) There is significant new and relevant information that was not available at the time of the Review Committee meeting, and if considered, might change the outcome.



Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities

**U.S. Department of Education**

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More and more high school students with disabilities are planning to continue their education in postsecondary schools, including vocational and career schools, two- and four- year colleges, and universities. As a student with a disability, you need to be well informed about your rights and responsibilities as well as the responsibilities postsecondary schools have toward you. Being well informed will help ensure you have a full opportunity to enjoy the benefits of the postsecondary education experience without confusion or delay.

The information in this pamphlet, provided by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) in the U. S. Department of Education, explains the rights and responsibilities of students with disabilities who are preparing to attend postsecondary schools. This pamphlet also explains the obligations of a postsecondary school to provide academic adjustments, including auxiliary aids and services, to ensure the school does not discriminate on the basis of disability.

OCR enforces Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Title II), which prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. Practically every school district and postsecondary school in the United States is subject to one or both of these laws, which have similar requirements.\*/

Although both school districts and postsecondary schools must comply with these same laws, the responsibilities of postsecondary schools are significantly different from those of school districts.

Moreover, you will have responsibilities as a postsecondary student that you do not have as a high school student. OCR strongly encourages you to know your responsibilities and those of postsecondary schools under Section 504 and Title II. Doing so will improve your opportunity to succeed as you enter postsecondary education.

The following questions and answers provide more specific information to help you succeed.

**As a student with a disability leaving high school and entering postsecondary education, will I see differences in my rights and how they are addressed?**

Yes. Section 504 and Title II protect elementary, secondary and postsecondary students from discrimination. Nevertheless, several of the requirements that apply through high school are different from the requirements that apply beyond high school. For instance, Section 504 requires a school district to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to each child with a disability in the district's jurisdiction. Whatever the disability, a school district must identify an individual's education needs and provide any regular or special education and related aids and services necessary to meet those needs as well as it is meeting the needs of students without disabilities.

Unlike your high school, your postsecondary school is not required to provide FAPE. Rather, your postsecondary school is required to provide appropriate academic adjustments as necessary to ensure that it does not discriminate on the basis of disability. In addition, if your postsecondary school provides housing to nondisabled students, it must provide comparable, convenient and accessible housing to students with disabilities at the same cost.

Other important differences you need to know, even before you arrive at your postsecondary school, are addressed in the remaining questions.

**May a postsecondary school deny my admission because I have a disability?**

No. If you meet the essential requirements for admission, a postsecondary school may not deny your admission simply because you have a disability.

**Do I have to inform a postsecondary school that I have a disability?**

No. However, if you want the school to provide an academic adjustment, you must identify yourself as having a disability. Likewise, you should let the school know about your disability if you want to ensure that you are assigned to accessible facilities. In any event, your disclosure of a disability is always voluntary.

**What academic adjustments must a postsecondary school provide?**

The appropriate academic adjustment must be determined based on your disability and individual needs. Academic adjustments may include auxiliary aids and modifications to academic requirements as are necessary to ensure equal educational opportunity. Examples of such adjustments are arranging for priority registration; reducing a course load; substituting one course for another; providing note takers, recording devices, sign language interpreters, extended time for testing and, if telephones are provided in dorm rooms, a TTY in your dorm room; and equipping school computers with screen-reading, voice recognition or other adaptive software or hardware.

In providing an academic adjustment, your postsecondary school is not required to lower or effect substantial modifications to essential requirements. For example, although your school may be required to provide extended testing time, it is not required to change the substantive content of the test. In addition, your postsecondary school does not have to make modifications that would fundamentally alter the nature of a service, program or activity or would result in undue financial or administrative burdens. Finally, your postsecondary school does not have to provide personal attendants, individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or other devices or services of a personal nature, such as tutoring and typing.

### **If I want an academic adjustment, what must I do?**

You must inform the school that you have a disability and need an academic adjustment. Unlike your school district, your postsecondary school is not required to identify you as having a disability or assess your needs.

Your postsecondary school may require you to follow reasonable procedures to request an academic adjustment. You are responsible for knowing and following these procedures. Postsecondary schools usually include, in their publications providing general information, information on the procedures and contacts for requesting an academic adjustment. Such publications include recruitment materials, catalogs and student handbooks, and are often available on school Web sites. Many schools also have staff whose purpose is to assist students with disabilities. If you are unable to locate the procedures, ask a school official, such as an admissions officer or counselor.

### **When should I request an academic adjustment?**

Although you may request an academic adjustment from your postsecondary school at any time, you should request it as early as possible. Some academic adjustments may take more time to provide than others. You should follow your school's procedures to ensure that your school has enough time to review your request and provide an appropriate academic adjustment.

### **Do I have to prove that I have a disability to obtain an academic adjustment?**

Generally, yes. Your school will probably require you to provide documentation that shows you have a current disability and need an academic adjustment.

### **What documentation should I provide?**

Schools may set reasonable standards for documentation. Some schools require more documentation than others. They may require you to provide documentation prepared by an appropriate professional, such as a medical doctor, psychologist or other qualified diagnostician. The required documentation may include one or more of the following: a diagnosis of your current disability; the date of the diagnosis; how the diagnosis was reached; the credentials of the professional; how your disability affects a major life activity; and how the disability affects your academic performance. The documentation should provide enough information for you and your school to decide what is an appropriate academic adjustment.

Although an individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan, if you have one, may help identify services that have been effective for you, it generally is not sufficient documentation. This is because postsecondary education presents different demands than high school education, and what you need to meet these new demands may be different. Also in some cases, the nature of a disability may change.

If the documentation that you have does not meet the postsecondary school's requirements, a school official should tell you in a timely manner what additional documentation you need to provide. You may need a new evaluation in order to provide the required documentation.

### **Who has to pay for a new evaluation?**

Neither your high school nor your postsecondary school is required to conduct or pay for a new evaluation to document your disability and need for an academic adjustment. This may mean that you have to pay or find funding to pay an appropriate professional for an evaluation. If you are eligible for services through your state vocational rehabilitation agency, you may qualify for an evaluation at no cost to you. You may locate your state vocational rehabilitation agency through the following Web page:

<http://www.jan.wvu.edu/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?902>

### **Once the school has received the necessary documentation from me, what should I expect?**

The school will review your request in light of the essential requirements for the relevant program to help determine an appropriate academic adjustment. It is important to remember that the school is not required to lower or waive essential requirements. If you have requested a specific academic adjustment, the school may offer that academic adjustment or an alternative one if the alternative would also be effective. The school may also conduct its own evaluation of your disability and needs at its own expense.

You should expect your school to work with you in an interactive process to identify an appropriate academic adjustment. Unlike the experience you may have had in high school, however, do not expect your postsecondary school to invite your parents to participate in the process or to develop an IEP for you.

### **What if the academic adjustment we identified is not working?**

Let the school know as soon as you become aware that the results are not what you expected. It may be too late to correct the problem if you wait until the course or activity is completed. You and your school should work together to resolve the problem.

### **May a postsecondary school charge me for providing an academic adjustment?**

No. Furthermore, it may not charge students with disabilities more for participating in its programs or activities than it charges students who do not have disabilities.

### **What can I do if I believe the school is discriminating against me?**

Practically every postsecondary school must have a person—frequently called the Section 504 Coordinator, ADA Coordinator, or Disability Services Coordinator—who coordinates the school's compliance with Section 504 or Title II or both laws. You may contact this person for information about how to address your concerns.

The school must also have grievance procedures. These procedures are not the same as the due process procedures with which you may be familiar from high school. However, the postsecondary school's grievance procedures must include steps to ensure that you may raise your concerns fully and fairly and must provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints.

School publications, such as student handbooks and catalogs, usually describe the steps you must take to start the grievance process. Often, schools have both formal and informal processes. If you decide to use a grievance process, you should be prepared to present all the reasons that support your request.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome from using the school's grievance procedures or you wish to pursue an alternative to using the grievance procedures, you may file a complaint against the school with OCR or in a court. You may learn more about the OCR complaint process from the brochure *How to File a Discrimination Complaint with the Office for Civil Rights*, which you may obtain by contacting us at the addresses and phone numbers below, or at <http://www.ed.gov/ocr/docs/howto.html>.

If you would like more information about the responsibilities of postsecondary schools to students with disabilities, read the OCR brochure *Auxiliary Aids and Services for Postsecondary Students with Disabilities: Higher Education's Obligations Under Section 504 and Title II of the ADA*. You may obtain a copy by contacting us at the address and phone numbers below, or at <http://www.ed.gov/ocr/docs/auxaids.html>.

Students with disabilities who know their rights and responsibilities are much better equipped to succeed in postsecondary school. We encourage you to work with the staff at your school because they, too, want you to succeed. Seek the support of family, friends and fellow students, including those with disabilities.

Know your talents and capitalize on them, and believe in yourself as you embrace new challenges in your education.

**To receive more information about the civil rights of students with disabilities in education institutions, you may contact us at :**

Customer Service Team  
Office for Civil Rights  
U.S. Department of Education  
Washington, D.C. 20202-1100  
Phone: 1-800-421-3481  
TDD: 1- 877-521-2172  
Email: [ocr@ed.gov](mailto:ocr@ed.gov)  
Web site: [www.ed.gov/ocr](http://www.ed.gov/ocr)

\*/You may be familiar with another federal law that applies to the education of students with disabilities—the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). That law is administered by the Office of Special Education Programs in the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services in the U.S. Department of Education. The IDEA and its Individualized Education Program (IEP) provisions do not apply to postsecondary schools. This pamphlet does not discuss the IDEA or state and local laws that may apply.

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